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HUDSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

RE:

REGULAR MEETING : TRANSCRIPT OF  
OF THE :  
HUDSON COUNTY BOARD OF : PROCEEDINGS  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS :  
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O P E N S E S S I O N  
Hudson County  
Administration Building,  
Commissioners Chambers  
567 Pavonia Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Thursday, May 08, 2025  
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

**CERTIFIED ORIGINAL**

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

A L S O P R E S E N T:

EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQ., Board Counsel  
ALBERICO DEPIERRO, Asst. Hudson County Counsel  
DAVID DRUMELER, Deputy County Administrator  
CAROL JEAN DOYLE, County Commissioner Clerk  
Reported by: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Aponte-  
2 Lipski.

3 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: And Chairman Romano.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

18 THE CLERK: Please stand for the

19 Pledge of Allegiance.

20 (Flag Salute.)

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If everyone would  
22 please remain standing, I was just informed that a  
23 dear friend of this County, and of labor, Susan  
24 Cleary, who recently retired, apparently passed  
25 away.

1 (Moment of Silence.)

2 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. May she  
3 rest in peace.

4 THE CLERK: Adequate notice of this  
5 Meeting has been provided as follows:

6 Posting notice of Resolution No. 8-1-2025  
7 on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board, First  
8 Floor, Administration Building Annex, Jersey City,  
9 New Jersey.

10 Copies of the above mentioned resolution  
11 have been sent to the County Clerk and the editors  
12 of the Kearny Observer and the Star Ledger.

13 May I have a motion to approve the minutes  
14 of the Caucus Meeting of April 8th, and the regular  
15 meeting of April 10th?

16 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Sponsor.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
19 Aponte-Lipski.

20 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

22 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

24 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

1 Commissioner Kopacz.

2 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

6 Commissioner Walker.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Jerry, you're  
8 muted. He's on mute. Jerry, you've got to unmute  
9 yourself.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Walter, can you  
11 unmute him?

12 MR. TRUTH: By the way, can you all  
13 speak up because we can't hear you? I'm on the  
14 front row. Turn the mics up.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker, come  
16 on.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Jerry, you have to  
18 unmute yourself.

19 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: The next order of  
22 business is additional discussion on today's agenda.  
23 I turn it over to the Administration.

24 MR. DRUMELER: Mr. Chairman, we have  
25 nothing additional. We did replace Resolution No.

1 21 with the additions that were requested in the  
2 Closed Session. So that resolution now reflects all  
3 those discussions.

4 THE CLERK: I do have one laudatory.  
5 It's honoring the memory of Sister Gloria Felder to  
6 Plant a Tree, by the R.O. Kappa Omega Chapter. I  
7 need a motion and a second.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Motion.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
11 Aponte-Lipski.

12 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

14 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

16 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

18 Commissioner Kopacz.

19 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

23 Commissioner Walker.

24 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

1                   CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

2                   THE CLERK: Are you an eye on the  
3 minutes on the Caucus for April 8th, and also the  
4 regular meeting of April 10th?

5                   COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

6                   THE CLERK: Thank you. I have one  
7 resolution to be added. It's Resolution No. 22.  
8 It's authorizing a contribution to the Neighborhood  
9 Cats, Inc. for \$250.

10                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can we increase  
11 that amount? This was to spay and neuter cats. We  
12 have \$40,000 for the dogs that are in the K-9 unit.  
13 Can't we do \$1,000 for the cats?

14                  CHAIRMAN ROMANO: It has to do with  
15 the ordinance.

16                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Is our cap set  
17 by ordinance?

18                  THE CLERK: By ordinance.

19                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sure. There's  
20 an ordinance. How much can we contribute to a  
21 non-profit of \$250?

22                  THE CLERK: It's done by resolution.

23                  CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, Darice is  
24 going to help with that. Is Darice here?

25                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll sponsor the

1 resolution, but I mean, I'll write a check for \$250,  
2 too. I mean, come on. It's just spaying them.  
3 They're doing the service as a non-profit for no  
4 compensation. Many governments pay for-profit or  
5 pay not-for-profit to do the same service. I mean,  
6 they asked us for \$1,000, not \$250. Can we do it  
7 through another way? I was going to talk to Darice  
8 about how we can use that charity.

9 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes. A  
10 couple months ago, we had a subcommittee come  
11 together and come up with a model program and submit  
12 it to the County. If you ask for funding, we'll  
13 test out the program. But there are a lot of  
14 people, and there are a lot of people that do this  
15 on their own, and take it out of their own pocket.  
16 So what I think we can do, I think, is, yes, we can  
17 lobby, and you can, Bill, on that.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Look, so I'm  
19 going to move to change the amount to \$1,000, and if  
20 there's an ordinance that prohibits it, then we'll  
21 do it next week.

22 THE CLERK: Okay. I think it's a  
23 resolution application, so it's fine.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Why don't we do  
25 this? So if you have a resolution, any other

1 resolution overturns the resolution.

2 THE CLERK: That's correct.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: But we have to  
4 understand that this is not an exception to the  
5 rule.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's fine.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: It's a one-time  
8 thing. Yes, not any other non-profit.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's the  
10 nature of what they do. It's not like the one  
11 event. It is a service.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. So do all  
13 the Board agree with that?

14 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, do I change  
15 the dollar amount from \$250 to \$1,000?

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Make a vote. Go  
17 on, all the members.

18 THE CLERK: Okay. And that's  
19 Resolution 22. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

20 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

22 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

24 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

1 Commissioner Kopacz.

2 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

6 Commissioner Walker.

7 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

8 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Go ahead and  
10 continue, Madam Clerk. Oh, by the way, let's  
11 welcome Alberico. Alberico, welcome to the  
12 meetings.

13 MR. DEPIERRO: Thank you, Chairman.  
14 Much appreciated.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Welcome.

16 MR. DEPIERRO: Sorry. My mic was  
17 off. Thank you, Chairman. Much appreciated.

18 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Way better.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: This is Day 2.  
20 This is Day 3 of the 30-day waiting list.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Go  
22 ahead.

23 THE CLERK: According to the policy  
24 set by the Board of County Commissioners, members of  
25 the public are asked to limit their comments to five

1 minutes when discussing agenda items and three  
2 minutes at the conclusion of a meeting for persons  
3 who submitted a written request to discuss matters  
4 of public interest.

5 At this time, the public may address the  
6 Board on any item on the agenda only. Please keep  
7 your comments limited to five minutes. Are there  
8 any speakers on the agenda items only?

9 MR. TRUTH: Yeah. All right. Hello,  
10 everyone. I'm Leroy Truth, Leroy Truth  
11 Investigations. And I've got a question about  
12 Agenda Item No. 1. The Prosecutor's Office  
13 Resolution Approving an Application for and  
14 Accepting Grant Funds, if awarded from the State of  
15 New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety  
16 Division of Administration for \$2 million.

17 Now, I personally have experience with the  
18 Prosecutor's Office, and they seem to be extremely  
19 corrupt, especially Ester Suarez, allegedly, and she  
20 has allegedly buried three sexual assault complaints  
21 by three women who have personally come to me in  
22 Union City that say they were sexually assaulted by  
23 a fellow Union City worker. Those complaints  
24 disappeared. And the Attorney General took them,  
25 apparently, and he disappeared them. No

1 communication with the alleged victims.

2 So what justification is there to give \$2  
3 million to the alleged, very corrupt, Ester Suarez  
4 Prosecutor when she, from my personal experience,  
5 decides who to prosecute and who not to based upon  
6 politics, including Mayor Brian Stack telling her  
7 what to do, allegedly. So how do we know this money  
8 is going to be used properly?

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: At the end of your  
10 speech, sir. I'll answer it.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: All right. I'll  
12 answer it. Yeah, go ahead.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Let him finish  
14 speaking first. Yeah, because then it takes away  
15 from your time. Speak first. Do you have any other  
16 items?

17 MR. TRUTH: No. That's my specific  
18 question.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So this grant  
20 that they're applying for would provide funding to  
21 set up a mental health court, which is something  
22 that I've been advocating for probably a year and a  
23 half. And last year at the budget, the Prosecutor  
24 came on board to say she would support creating a  
25 mental health court.

1           .I actually pushed the Prosecutor's focus  
2 to apply for this grant up to a \$2 million grant  
3 that can only be used related to the creation of a  
4 mental health court. It could be used to pay for an  
5 additional judge, if necessary, additional  
6 prosecutors, support services for individuals that  
7 have mental health issues that get diverted out of  
8 the criminal justice system into treatment.

9           Currently, we have individuals sitting in  
10 our County jail or county correctional center that  
11 suffer from mental health issues. Probably the  
12 worst place, and for minor offenses like  
13 shoplifting, there's a chronic issue. If any of you  
14 get arrested or found guilty three times for  
15 shoplifting, there's a mandatory jail sentence. So  
16 in an effort to -- and this was something that was  
17 brought to me by the Public Defender's office about  
18 a year ago to work on.

19           So I'll plead guilty to pushing them to  
20 apply for it. They didn't think originally they'd  
21 be able to get the application done in time. They  
22 need this resolution in order to be able to submit  
23 the application. So in this particular case, I  
24 think it's a good thing.

25           MR. TRUTH: It sounds like from what

1 you've explained that it is, if it's used properly.  
2 I just don't trust Esther. But if it's used as you  
3 envision it, that's very important because there's a  
4 lot of people in jail who have severe mental health  
5 problems that should not be incarcerated.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So hopefully --  
7 I mean, look, we have to monitor any grant once we  
8 get it, and obviously that will be done. But beyond  
9 our monitoring it, the entity that provides the  
10 dollars, I think we have a very good chance to get  
11 the funding. On the State level, it is monitoring  
12 that they require too. They don't just give you a  
13 blank check and you don't have to provide whatever  
14 the backup is. If you put some of the dollars into  
15 an outside entity that provides mental health  
16 services or a place that individuals are go to for  
17 treatment, they're going to have to provide all that  
18 back.

19 MR. TRUTH: All right. So I hope it  
20 passes, then, with what you've shared. And I'll  
21 monitor it closely, and I want to work with you to  
22 monitor it to make sure it's used properly. And  
23 this gentleman.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: If I'm still  
25 here, I'll definitely make sure I monitor it.

1 MR. TRUTH: Okay. You'll be mayor.  
2 And you're the new counsel? You replaced Don  
3 Battista?

4 MR. DEPIERRO: That's what it is for  
5 tonight.

6 MR. TRUTH: All right. And you were  
7 going to answer something as well, sir?

8 MR. DEPIERRO: No, there's no  
9 questions for me, at least that I'm aware of.

10 MR. TRUTH: Okay. I don't know if  
11 you wanted to answer that as well. All right.  
12 That's complete. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If you have any  
14 more questions, there's a member of the Prosecutor's  
15 office here.

16 MR. TRUTH: All right. I'd love to  
17 talk with them. What's your name?

18 MR. SALZER: Adam.

19 THE CLERK: Are there any other  
20 statements?

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, sir. One  
22 more.

23 MR. KELLERHER: Good evening. My name  
24 is Patrick Kellerher. I represent -- I'm president  
25 of the Hudson County Building Trades, also a

1 business agent, Local 24. I'm here with D.J. Heal,  
2 business agent for IBW 164. And first, before I get  
3 into what I really want to talk about, I want to  
4 thank the County Exec and all the Commissioners here  
5 and not here that are at home for all their constant  
6 support of organized labor, project labor  
7 agreements, responsible contractor language, and  
8 making sure that the Hudson County Building Trades  
9 men and women go to work. And I want to thank you  
10 all for that constant support.

11 I'm here on a project that's been -- when  
12 I took over as president of Building Trades 15 years  
13 ago, it was Kopper's Cove.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Item 21.

15 MR. KELLERHER: Excuse me?

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Item 21.

17 MR. KELLERHER: Yes. Item 21 on the  
18 thing. I've been talking about the project. I've  
19 been helping the gentleman out on the project. I  
20 sent a letter of support for the project and stuff  
21 like that. You know, I'm hearing that, you know,  
22 he's looking for help. I've always been there for  
23 him, conversation with Building Trades. I have a  
24 National Building Trades PLA. It's been approved by  
25 the National. It's under Hudson County. Hudson

1 County residents will go to work on the project.

2 I know you Commissioners are going to be  
3 voting on something later on this issue. I did  
4 reach out to his attorney and the Mars Group. I got  
5 the PLA signed. Not completely executed, but a good  
6 faith signature by me and the president, as the  
7 president of Building Trades, and the owners from  
8 Mars Group. Fortunately, they're not ready to sign  
9 that at that time. I wouldn't have all the  
10 affiliates there. But it's important for us, this  
11 project, because the conversation, but we want to  
12 make sure -- I mentioned he's a union developer, but  
13 we want to make sure under the Project Labor  
14 Agreement, everybody goes to work and the  
15 consideration stays.

16 I just wanted to keep you all in the loop.  
17 If you have any questions for me, I'm happy to  
18 answer them.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, Pat.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So Patty, we put  
21 specific language into this that requires, that  
22 wasn't specifically in what was presented to us  
23 initially. And the first item said, The approval by  
24 the County of both closing agreements shall be  
25 conditioned upon and dependent upon the satisfaction

1 of the following conditions of the Project Labor  
2 Agreement. Mars shall enter into the project  
3 building agreement in a form acceptable to the  
4 County, and the Improvement Authority shall require  
5 all work to be performed in connection with the  
6 project.

7 And then secondly, for the First Source  
8 agreement, which would apply for all the permanent  
9 jobs that are created there, as well as security  
10 jobs, that the City of Kearny and then the County of  
11 Hudson have the first right to fill those jobs. We  
12 added those two items in there. That being said,  
13 one, is there a representative of the developer here  
14 today?

15 Pretty short-sighted for the developer to  
16 not have a person here representing them at the  
17 meeting today. If there are any members of the  
18 public that have a question. So if you remember  
19 from the beginning, before there was any need for  
20 all these other funding sources, pilots, the  
21 infrastructure, that money, all that, from day one,  
22 this project was required to be a PLA. When the  
23 proposals were entertained from potential  
24 developers, I sat on the committee. And we made it  
25 clear, and then County Executive Tom DeGise, and

1 then obviously Craig, as the Chief of Staff, were  
2 adamant that the project has to be a project  
3 building.

4 So again, from my own personal  
5 perspective, I think they should have signed it by  
6 now. This resolution wouldn't allow certain things  
7 to go forward without them signing it. And as I  
8 said on a call on Monday, it's in their best  
9 interest, that's why I wish they were here today, to  
10 get a firm timeline on it. It's in their best  
11 interest to sign it sooner rather than later,  
12 because they're going to now have to go to the City  
13 of Kearny to get a pilot, with a raft, not just a  
14 pilot, a pilot with a raft. And if I was a human,  
15 I'd want that document signed in my hand. Before I  
16 would go and support a pilot.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Just have,  
18 Alberico, if we can get an update for the next  
19 meeting on Wednesday.

20 MR. DEPIERRO: Absolutely, Chairman.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I mean, if  
22 you're just pressing to execute it, like, they can't  
23 execute the agreement, and if the project doesn't  
24 happen, then you can't make me do -- you can't make  
25 me build something for the PLA if I never build a

1 project, right?

2 MR. KELLERHER: Absolutely.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And honestly,  
4 the PLA should bind, not only them, it should be  
5 bound by anyone who may come after it, because  
6 they're going to have to set up a number of new  
7 corporations in order to be able to apply for a  
8 pilot from the City of Kearny. Thank you.

9 MR. KELLERHER: Thank you, everybody.  
10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam  
12 Clerk.

13 THE CLERK: Before we can move on the  
14 consent agenda, we need a sponsor for Resolution 5.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Could we ask if  
16 there are any more speakers?

17 THE CLERK: Are there any more  
18 speakers? Thank you.

19 Resolution No. 5, since Commissioner  
20 Rodriguez isn't on.

21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I'll do it.

22 THE CLERK: Also, I need Resolution 7  
23 for a sponsor?

24 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I'll take it.

25 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 8.

1 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Kopacz.

2 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 9.

3 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Kopacz.

4 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 11.

5 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Kopacz.

6 THE CLERK: On second, I need

7 Resolution No. 6.

8 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Kopacz.

9 THE CLERK: And Resolution No. 10.

10 Okay. May I have a motion to approve all the items  
11 listed on the consent agenda?

12 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second, Lipski.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner

15 Aponte-Lipski.

16 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

18 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

20 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

22 Commissioner Kopacz.

23 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.  
2 Commissioner Walker.

3 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Just for the  
6 record, Carrie. Addison's going to come over to  
7 you. Caridad's having a hard time getting up. She  
8 can't get up.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: If you skip me,  
10 I'll go down.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea. We  
12 have no ordinance for introduction, and we have no  
13 ordinance for second reading. This concludes the  
14 items of the business on today's agenda. Are there  
15 any comments from the Commissioners on the Board?

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So on Item No.  
17 21, I want to make it clear that this simply  
18 authorizes an agreement and doesn't have us voting  
19 on anything like guaranteeing the iBank bonding that  
20 they're going to seek to do. I would not entertain  
21 a vote for an iBank bond ordinance guarantee without  
22 an executed PLA, and I would urge the City of Kearny  
23 to not entertain voting on a Pilot without an  
24 executed PLA. Those would be the two things that I  
25 would say.

1           . And on item number one, I want to commend  
2 the Administration and the Prosecutor's office for  
3 going through this application for the funding for  
4 the mental health court. Four weeks ago, I was kind  
5 of told, I don't have my hopes up, but I'm glad that  
6 we were able -- the committee was able to pull  
7 through.

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

10                        COMMISSIONER WALKER: One thing,  
11 Chairman.

12                        CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You've got a deeper  
13 voice. Jerry, that's you. Jerry, go ahead.

14                        COMMISSIONER WALKER: This is  
15 Commissioner Walker. I just want to apologize to  
16 the public that I'm not in my absence in the  
17 chambers. I'm actually having my walkathon right now  
18 on the waterfront. It's a fundraiser we do for our  
19 summer program, so I apologize for not being there  
20 today.

21                        CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Craig,  
22 did you want to say something? Craig?

23                        COUNTY EXECUTIVE GUY: Chairman, I  
24 strongly agree with the Board of Commissioner O'Dea  
25 on the necessity of the mandatory PLA with this

1 agreement related to Koppers.

2 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Also, thank you for  
3 working together with the other item with regard to  
4 the mental health court. It's very important.

5 COUNTY EXECUTIVE GUY: Yes, it is.  
6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk.

8 THE CLERK: This is the time for  
9 persons who submitted a timely written request to  
10 address the Board on any matter of public interest.  
11 Please remember to limit your comments to three  
12 minutes. I do have speakers. The first one is  
13 Leroy Truth.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: It appears that  
15 Al Cifelli's here. He may have a problem. You can  
16 see his name. Sarge, can you just tell Walt also in  
17 the other room that Al's having trouble too.

18 MR. TRUTH: Hello again, everyone.  
19 I'm Leroy Truth, Leroy Truth Investigations. Now,  
20 I'm going to address this for a little time briefly.  
21 I was not allowed to speak at the last meeting.  
22 You're always supposed to address it if you have the  
23 full support of Commissioner O'Dea. With this  
24 ridiculous issue, you have to ask permission 24  
25 hours ahead of time to speak at a public meeting.

1           And as I've said, as corrupt, dirty as  
2 Senator Brian Stack is, we don't have to sign up to  
3 speak at his meetings. We've just arrived. So  
4 Carol Jean will be investigating you as well. We'll  
5 be going to your meetings in Kearny. And this is  
6 the core. So I'm asking you to get rid of that.  
7 It's unconstitutional. Get rid of it. It limits us  
8 from speaking. However, Sean Audit (ph.) did speak.  
9 So did Nolan Boyd (ph.) now who's president. Anyone  
10 who comes can speak.

11           Now, a few months ago, you passed a bill  
12 here, an ordinance that said we can record in public  
13 buildings, and it was Ordinance 58-1-2025. It said,  
14 Oh, we can record in public buildings. However,  
15 there are some stipulations here. And let's see  
16 what they were here. There's something called the  
17 Constitution, which I know Commissioner O'Dea knows.  
18 I don't know if any other know that. It says  
19 persons visiting or occupying public buildings may  
20 record or film or photograph while in public areas.

21           If you stop there, you would be  
22 constitutional supporters. But you don't. You say  
23 persons visiting, occupying public buildings may  
24 record, film, photograph while in public areas  
25 subject to the following: Recording, filming,

1 . photographing in these areas cannot be harassing in  
2 nature or disruptive to employees performing their  
3 duties. That is completely subjective. You know  
4 how many people have come up to me when I'm 50 feet  
5 away or 30 feet away from them, and they'll scream,  
6 get your camera out of my face. I'm 50 feet away.  
7 Their subjective perception is somehow the camera is  
8 miraculously in their face. So this leaves huge gaps  
9 in what is going to be considered harassment or  
10 interruption.

11           But it gets worse. Persons recording  
12 cannot record, photograph, or film any other member  
13 of the public, including children without prior  
14 authorization. This is the dumbest, most  
15 unconstitutional thing, and I think you probably  
16 know this is completely null and void, attorney over  
17 there. You can't film the public in public? This  
18 is a comedy of errors here.

19           Then it continues. The recordings, films,  
20 photographs are limited to people performing their  
21 public duties, and time's almost up. That ordinance  
22 was not passed unanimously. I was here.  
23 Commissioner O'Dea, he voted against it. But the  
24 public record, someone altered the public record,  
25 which is a federal crime that says all of you voted

1 . unanimously, and I just found it, Commissioner  
2 O'Dea. I have it right here.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You're correct.

4 MR. TRUTH: That's a federal crime.  
5 He voted against that ordinance.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I voted no on  
7 that ordinance, and I spoke against that ordinance.  
8 So I don't know who's trying to mislead the public  
9 from what was posted.

10 MS. FELICIANO: I was the one that  
11 did it accidentally.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You need to  
13 correct it right away, please. If it was anyone  
14 else, I would have had a called for a federal  
15 investigation. But I know you for a long time, so  
16 I'm going to say it was an honest mistake. Please  
17 correct it immediately, because someone else would  
18 use it politically to say I did something that I  
19 didn't do. So please.

20 MR. TRUTH: And I was a witness that  
21 you voted against it.

22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And I appreciate  
23 that you brought it up. Otherwise, it would have  
24 been out there in October, and somebody would have  
25 said, Bill O'Dea voted to take away people's rights

1 . to film.

2 MR. TRUTH: Absolutely.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Thank you very  
4 much.

5 THE CLERK: The next speaker is Alfa  
6 Patel. Alfa? Alfa Patel.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And I just  
8 think, like, going forward, can you please ensure  
9 that any item that a Member of this Board even votes  
10 against or abstains on that clearly sends us a  
11 record of that so we know? That way, if there's a  
12 mistake like this again, we don't need a  
13 well-appreciated supplemental to the public, finding  
14 out and pointing that out. Because for all I know,  
15 there might be other items that I voted against that  
16 the record said I voted for, and I want to make sure  
17 we don't have any of those instances.

18 THE CLERK: Okay, Commissioner. Our  
19 next speaker is Benny Lisojo.

20 MR. TRUTH: By the way, all the  
21 Commissioners' mics are too low. If you can pump  
22 them up. They lowered the volume.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I think we're  
24 going to start the video to allow people to watch it  
25 on YouTube.

1 MR. LISOJO: Commissioner, with  
2 permission, I'd like to hand each Commissioner. I  
3 agree with this question. We'll start now? Thank  
4 you for allowing me to speak again.

5 Yeah, so I'm back, again, on a lot of the  
6 issues that are currently happening at the  
7 Department of Corrections that I worked at for 23  
8 years. Here, I'm handing you guys each a letter  
9 from our attorney that represents well over 75  
10 unions in the state of New Jersey to the State PBA,  
11 as well as an election that we had last week where a  
12 lot of my members, they were able to speak  
13 anonymously without having to be shown, and you  
14 could read at some of those things.

15 There's a lot going on. A lot of my  
16 members are afraid to come forth because of  
17 retaliation. Like I said, we continue to have wings  
18 locked down. We continue to have assaults  
19 happening. Last week, I spoke briefly. The last  
20 time I was here, one of my members was attacked with  
21 boiling water. And after he's gone to the  
22 specialist a little less than two weeks ago, we  
23 found out that he's going to be deaf for the rest of  
24 his life in his left ear. So on top of being burned  
25 on his face and his chest and his back, even worse

1 now. He's 27 years old, and he's going to be deaf  
2 for the rest of his life in his left hand ear.

3 So you know, like I said, I'm going to  
4 continue to come here. Like I said, there's a lot  
5 of issues happening. There's a lot of wrongful  
6 doings happening as far as discipline. You know, in  
7 the New Jersey state law, it says clearly that you  
8 can't use sick time as a way of punishing the  
9 employees. Well, that's clearly happening.

10 My guys are being punished for calling out  
11 sick. They're coming to our houses. If you worked  
12 overnight shift, you call out sick maybe because  
13 you're sick. You think it's fair that you should  
14 come to our house at 1:30 in the morning? And if I  
15 don't answer your phone, now I'm being written up  
16 and I'm subjected to discipline?

17 We have a department that is short. We  
18 keep losing people, like I said. We're now  
19 currently active officers able to work in that jail  
20 with 249, 250. That is way below the budget of what  
21 we're supposed to have. And what are we doing here?  
22 Like I said, we can say we're out here recruiting  
23 and we're getting members in, and as fast as they're  
24 coming in, they're leaving.

25 You know, last week I said to you, Mr.

1 Romano, to the rest of the Chairmen, that Essex was  
2 about to settle their contract. Well, two days ago,  
3 Essex County settled their contract. They're a mile  
4 away from us. They settled for \$124,000 in six  
5 years; ten years sooner than we get there. On eight  
6 hours. Their members are faced with some  
7 difficulties, yes, but their members --

8           And I'm going to tell you this, and I can  
9 provide the documentation, my union has spent half a  
10 million dollars in legal fees over the last three  
11 years. Half a million dollars. No other department  
12 of corrections in New Jersey has spent that much  
13 money. I'll bring the State PBA president if you  
14 guys need here. This is a real issue that we're  
15 having. And again, I don't have 100 of my members  
16 here because they're afraid of retaliation, but the  
17 next meeting, I promise you, there's going to be  
18 more members here, and we're going to continue to  
19 come until something happens.

20           I have a handful of unfair labor  
21 practices. Just yesterday, we were in Trenton at  
22 PERC. For something that's as simple as a  
23 conversation should have been able to be fixed, was  
24 not. Was told by the director, no. It's going to  
25 be this way or no way. So like I said, thank you

1 for the time. I'll see you guys again, and please  
2 take the time to look at that because that's my  
3 members. That's the horse's mouth speaking. Thank  
4 you.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a couple  
6 of questions.

7 MR. LISOJO: Yes, sir.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So my first  
9 thought is you're the head of the union.

10 MR. LISOJO: Yes. Second biggest  
11 union in Corrections in New Jersey.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And there should  
13 be a better venue for you to be able to speak than  
14 having to sign up for three minutes at a meeting.

15 MR. LISOJO: Absolutely.

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I would think in  
17 a world of not only transparency, but in trying to  
18 get issues resolved, there's got to be a better way.  
19 If there's a serious lack of communication with the  
20 Director, which there appears to be, than whether  
21 it's Public Safety Committee, which I was  
22 unceremoniously kicked off of because I had the guts  
23 to stand up and vote a certain way. And I'm proud,  
24 and I don't regret doing that.

25 Then that may be the venue, or if the

1 chair thinks there's a better venue. These are real  
2 issues, right? These are things that you shouldn't  
3 wait two weeks, and then you bring 25 people. And  
4 here's the truth. If you bring 25 people here next  
5 week, or two weeks from now, and everybody speaks  
6 for three minutes, you'll get our attention. And  
7 then we'll have a hearing, or then we'll have a  
8 session.

9           So I think maybe the Chairman could think  
10 of a better way. I don't mind sitting here. I  
11 don't mind interacting with every speaker that comes  
12 here. But it might be more productive if there was  
13 another venue created. You're the president of a  
14 union. I have the highest respect for you. You've  
15 had to bring issues to our attention that, quite  
16 frankly, the Director should have.

17           When individuals were allowed to go to get  
18 trained for a certain type of certification, while  
19 we have a low level of personnel, a low number of  
20 correctional officers, I still don't know of those  
21 days whether there was additional, during the  
22 regular week lockdown, like there are on weekends.  
23 That Director should have reported to us, because I  
24 raised that issue, because you raised it with me.  
25 So during those two or three weeks, how many more

1 lockdowns occurred? And did, as a result of any of  
2 those lockdowns, violence occur? Were there any  
3 issues that spun out of that? Because I get more  
4 and more reports or concerns about --

5 MR. LISOJO: Yeah. During that  
6 period with the special training, the burning  
7 happened. The officer broke his finger trying to  
8 subdue an inmate down without hurting the inmate or  
9 hurting himself. He had his finger caught, breaks  
10 his finger. So things have occurred. Again, like I  
11 said. And then one of the bigger things, we've got a  
12 whole group of officers out right now that are  
13 facing disciplinary charges. And out of nowhere,  
14 we're getting now, for the first time in the history  
15 of this department, you have to sign a last chance  
16 agreement. Thank you, sir.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So my other  
18 concern is that, again, that's why I think we should  
19 sit down in a room and have a dialogue. Hopefully  
20 that's what happens. If not, I welcome you bringing  
21 20 or 25 or more. Let them each speak for three  
22 minutes and let their message get through.

23 But my other concern relates to how many  
24 officers are actually completing the academy? And  
25 then how many officers do we get here for a short

1. period of time and they go somewhere else? So if I  
2 could leave here after six months or a year, and  
3 there's no way to control that, and go to Essex, so  
4 now I'm making \$124,000 six years in and not 16  
5 years in, what's the reality of what are we doing?

6           One, we're being told, based on  
7 statistics, that we can't get officers, can't even  
8 get people to want the job, partly because we  
9 created the 12-hour shift. You tell a young man or  
10 a young woman, Good news, you're going to get  
11 \$54,000; bad news, you're going to work nights and  
12 weekends, and you're going to work 12-hour shifts.  
13 By the way, if you like making money, you're going  
14 to get paid because you're probably going to get  
15 overtime. Most of those days.

16           That young world is -- I'm not finished.  
17 So in that world, especially among young people,  
18 it's not attractive. And where it seems to be  
19 attractive, based on information I have, is  
20 individuals come, if they can keep the academy, they  
21 stay here for a while, and then they look for a  
22 better place to go. A place that may not have  
23 12-hour shifts, a place that may not have mandatory  
24 overtime.

25           MR. LISOJO: Discipline.

1.                   COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Or a place where  
2 they're worried about the level or the severity of  
3 discipline that's going to take place. I think it's  
4 a serious enough issue. We don't have enough  
5 officers. The overtime puts a strain on them. And  
6 I'd love you to get us to the next meeting. You  
7 don't need to bring the head here. Just bring us a  
8 memo that shows, county by county, how much each of  
9 those unions is having to spend. If you're spending  
10 a half a million, let us realize most are spending  
11 \$50,000 or \$100,000. I think that would speak for  
12 itself.

13                   CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. What we're  
14 going to do, if you have any questions, also after  
15 the meeting, meet up with Alberico, what can be  
16 discussed, what can't be. Also get a representative  
17 from the County Executive's office. And with the  
18 leadership of the facility, okay? We'll have a  
19 meeting together.

20                   THE CLERK: Okay.

21                   COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I would just  
22 suggest, again, I'm not on the committee anymore,  
23 but I think it would be helpful anyway. You should  
24 have a regular, until all this stuff gets resolved,  
25 maybe outside of your normal Public Safety Committee

1 meeting, Public Safety Committee meetings where you  
2 invite the union leadership in. You can have the  
3 Director and whoever the Director wants there, and  
4 you have the committee. And obviously, from the  
5 Exec side, whoever the Exec thinks is appropriate.  
6 Let's just talk things through. Obviously, they're  
7 not getting talked through and resolved just between  
8 you and the Director.

9 MR. LISOJO: I don't want to call it  
10 mediation, but, you know. I believe we have  
11 something in the works for the next week or two.  
12 Hopefully, Don Battista reached out to our  
13 attorneys, so we're supposed to. But at the end of  
14 the day, like I said last weekend, I'm going to say  
15 it again today, something has to change. You didn't  
16 see his face for 18 months.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Ben, Alberico is  
18 now taking for Don.

19 MR. LISOJO: Okay. So I'll speak to  
20 Alberico.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here's what you  
22 should do. Make sure you have that meeting. Start  
23 tomorrow. Just have your members sign up for the  
24 next meeting.

25 MR. LISOJO: I got you.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next speaker.

2 THE CLERK: Next speaker is Rashida  
3 Jackson. Rashida Jackson.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next speaker.

5 THE CLERK: Our next speaker is  
6 Raymond Mitchell. Next speaker.

7 MR. MITCHELL: Last meeting I was  
8 here, I received this from -- your name?

9 MR. FLORIO: Florio.

10 MR. MITCHELL: Florio?

11 MR. FLORIO: Yes.

12 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. So it stated  
13 that Hudson County Regional Health Commission  
14 participated in an exercise in September 19, 2019,  
15 at the Hackensack Meridian, not Emergency  
16 Management; is that correct? What happened?

17 So you guys pretty much knew about the  
18 pandemic before it happened? Anybody know about  
19 this? Alberico? Anybody? Yeah. Before it  
20 happened in March, right? Or January of 2020?  
21 COVID-19 happening. COVID-19. Did everybody know  
22 what was on its way in 2020? Is that why you had  
23 the emergency drill at Hackensack Meridian?

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Mr. Mitchell, speak  
25 first and then at the end, when you finish speaking,

1 I'll answer your question.

2 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you. We also  
3 have -- all right. Who's that? What's going on?

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: They've got to  
5 mute. They've got to mute.

6 MR. MITCHELL: Hey, I need my time  
7 back, too. Where is this voice?

8 (Indiscernible Zoom.)

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Mitchell.

11 MR. MITCHELL: All right. So also,  
12 everybody knew about Mr. Brian Stack, right? What  
13 happened in 2012, when he put his hands on my neck?  
14 Does everybody know about that? Yes or no? I went  
15 to court with him, okay? Now my father, for some  
16 reason, has a mark in his neck. So I'm trying to  
17 find out and investigate what is going on. It's  
18 going over five years that I've been having this  
19 issue here.

20 Also, Fannie, the letters with Miss  
21 Lilibeth. Can you tell me, did you find out any  
22 information? What happened to her?

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Excuse me. Do me a  
24 favor, please, Mr. Mitchell. With regard to  
25 Commissioner Cedeño, any questions concerning Union

1 City, bring it up with the Union City Commissioner,  
2 any other questions --

3 MR. MITCHELL: She said that she was  
4 going to find out the information.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, if it's a  
6 Union City issue, then the Union City Commission.

7 MR. MITCHELL: It's okay. But she  
8 said that she said she's going to find information,  
9 right? So did you find out any information?

10 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: I answered your  
11 question last week. I don't have anything to do  
12 with personnel.

13 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Now you have  
14 nothing to do with personnel. But before you said  
15 that you were going to help me find out information  
16 about her. So who's the person in personnel? Who's  
17 the person in personnel I have to speak to? Excuse  
18 me. Because I need that information.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Can you wait for  
20 this rebuttal until after you finish speaking?

21 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Now, look, the  
22 prosecutor here has been dodging me, and that's  
23 Ester Suarez's office. She should not get no money.  
24 It's not funny, O'Dea. Seriously, it's not funny.  
25 You're out here acting like you want to be mayor?

1 Don't laugh when I'm talking.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I wasn't  
3 laughing.

4 MR. MITCHELL: What were you doing?  
5 Talking to him?

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I was referring  
7 to him.

8 MR. MITCHELL: Don't be a Brian Stack  
9 there, okay? I'm not trying to disrespect you. It  
10 seems like you do very well in front of everybody.  
11 But you don't do that to me. When I'm talking to  
12 this guy over here. I haven't seen him in weeks.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Mr. Mitchell,  
14 continue. Don't get thrown off the subject you  
15 speak.

16 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. So now, can you  
17 tell me what's going on in Mr. Suarez's office?

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: After you speak.

19 MR. MITCHELL: And he's going to get  
20 up and speak about this. Because I want to know.  
21 Because now we confirm that there was an emergency  
22 drill September 19, 2019, okay? Where my father  
23 was. I went to the FBI. Department of Justice.  
24 Everywhere. Nothing.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

.1 MR. MITCHELL: And I would like to  
2 know. Before we -- did you -- anybody know here  
3 about this pandemic? Yeah, but I want to know who.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: After the  
5 meeting --

6 MR. MITCHELL: Over here, you allowed  
7 him to speak a little longer.

8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: After the meeting,  
9 I'll speak to you.

10 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. But one more  
11 question about this.

12 (Indiscernible Zoom.)

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Mr. Mitchell.

14 MR. MITCHELL: Because I'm basically  
15 going to say. I want to know about the pandemic. If  
16 you guys knew about it before. Because COVID-19.  
17 September 19, my father's mystery death at  
18 Hackensack Meridian.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You didn't ask the  
20 question if the Prosecutor had an update. Did you  
21 have an update?

22 MR. MITCHELL: Well, if he's speaking  
23 about what's going on.

24 MR. SALZER: Mitchell. There's no --  
25 I want to -- Mr. Mitchell -- we don't have the

1 authority.

2 MR. MITCHELL: Well, everybody should  
3 be on. If you don't have a badge, right? You'll  
4 have. Officials should be under, right? Public  
5 servants, right? Well, why have I waited so long?

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Excuse me.  
7 Mitchell. Okay. Time is up. He's going to answer  
8 your question. Anything, after the meeting, I'll  
9 definitely discuss with you after the meeting. Go  
10 ahead, Adam.

11 MR. SALZER: Mr. Mitchell. Has spoken  
12 with our office on previous occasions. It would be  
13 inappropriate to discuss the content of this  
14 conversation. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Mr.  
16 Mitchell, you may not speak anymore. After the  
17 meeting you can meet Mr. Adam over there. And I'll  
18 speak to you. With all due respect.

19 THE CLERK: Okay. Mr. Chairman. I  
20 have no other speakers.

21 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, guys.  
22 Appreciate it.

23 THE CLERK: There being no further  
24 business to come before the Board.

25 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.

1 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

2 THE CLERK: All in favor? Aye.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Hold on. Two  
4 things. One, we do have people here from Family  
5 Services. So I think it's important that you know  
6 that we had a closed session on Tuesday concerning  
7 issues that you have raised at prior --

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Finally.  
9 Hello. Can somebody listen to me? Can somebody  
10 hear me?

11 THE CLERK: Yes. Yes. Commissioner.  
12 We hear you.

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Well, I've  
14 been trying to go since 4:15 to vote on our  
15 resolution. And I've been trying desperately.  
16 Finally, I now for the last five minutes I was able  
17 to listen to the meeting, and now you're adjourning.  
18 Please --

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner.

20 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Vote on our  
21 resolutions.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner  
23 Rodriguez, the meeting is not yet adjourned.  
24 Commissioner O'Dea has the floor. But I believe  
25 he'll --

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll yield the  
2 floor for you to vote. Commissioner to vote.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: So Madam Clerk, on  
4 your minutes.

5 THE CLERK: On the minutes of the  
6 caucus meeting for April 8th, and the regular  
7 meeting of April 10th.

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Yes. Okay. We also had  
10 one laudatory.

11 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes. I  
12 understand that. Yes.

13 THE CLERK: And you heard that.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes. I saw  
15 that. Yes. Okay.

16 THE CLERK: And then did you hear  
17 Resolution 22? That was the one where Commissioner  
18 O'Dea changed it from 250 to \$1,000; is that a yes?

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I didn't  
20 hear that.

21 THE CLERK: Okay.

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry.  
23 I was even -- trying to get on.

24 THE CLERK: Okay. So this is what --  
25 this is on the consent agenda. It's the only one

1 that was added on. It's a Resolution 22, and it is  
2 authorizing contribution to Neighborhood Cats, Inc.,  
3 for \$1,000. That's the only one that.

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I would. I  
5 would say yes to that. Yes.

6 THE CLERK: Okay. And then we're  
7 going to move to the consent agenda, right? That's  
8 all of the items on the consent agenda.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: That I  
10 voted, yeah. Some that I sponsored?

11 THE CLERK: Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: I'm aware of  
13 all of them, and I voted yes as well.

14 MR. FLORIO: Okay. All your votes  
15 have been recorded, commissioner.

16 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so  
17 much.

18 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I -- can I  
19 finally chime in now?

20 THE CLERK: Thank you. Thank you,  
21 Commissioner.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I'm sorry I  
23 couldn't be there physically. As my colleagues  
24 know. I had surgery, and I can't get there.  
25 I can't walk. I can't drive. So that's why I've

1 had a terrible time trying to get on and listen to  
2 everything. I concur and add my vote to all the  
3 matters of the present agenda.

4 THE CLERK: Thank you. I would  
5 request everyone to mute so that Commissioner O'Dea  
6 can speak, there's a lot of background.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So just a couple  
8 of things. So first, we had a closed session on  
9 Tuesday after our regular caucus, we had a lively  
10 and lengthy discussion concerning issues that have  
11 been raised. I asked you previously, the vast  
12 majority of it without getting into detail, around  
13 the issue of hazard pay.

14 And I think that the Board, without  
15 getting into detail, made it clear that we would  
16 like to see the issue resolved. And there's data  
17 that was supposed to be provided to us that I did  
18 not see yet. So I don't know if that data was  
19 collected yet. I don't see Elinor Gibney here. She  
20 was the individual who had raised some of the  
21 questions or disputed our numbers. So if that  
22 information is not yet available, as soon as that  
23 information is available, it should be provided to  
24 us. Please don't wait for the next caucus and then  
25 wait for one of us to ask her again.

1 MR. DRUMELER: Chairman, I believe  
2 that was delivered to the Clerk's office and I  
3 believe disseminated to the Board.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Today?

5 THE CLERK: Yes, today.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So my apologies,  
7 I did not see that. But based off of that  
8 information, I think that this Board will continue  
9 to be very clear and vocal, and I know he's  
10 physically not here because he's doing his walk, but  
11 Commissioner Walker was also very vocal during that  
12 session.

13 Additionally, I thought we were going to  
14 have on the agenda some changes in our bylaws to  
15 make it easier for individuals to speak. I think  
16 we're going to, for the next meeting, have it so we  
17 can memorialize it.

18 MR. FLORIO: The next meeting I will  
19 have an ordinance amendment for the bylaws as  
20 directed by the Chairman and the Board.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And as of now,  
22 those changes will do two things. It doesn't make  
23 everyone happy, but it moves in the right direction.  
24 One will allow the public to call in, they don't  
25 have to e-mail in, up to noon the day of the

1 meeting, which I believe nearest Jersey City. If  
2 that's correct, that's what I was told. Secondly,  
3 they're going to have one speaking portion at the  
4 beginning of the meeting for everybody, on the  
5 agenda, off the agenda, at five minutes. So those  
6 would be two changes that we should have at the next  
7 meeting.

8           The last item I have relates to, maybe we  
9 don't have to resolve it today, but we may have to  
10 before the next meeting, is when and how we conduct  
11 our hearings on the different departments of the  
12 budget. I had suggested that we stream it and allow  
13 it to be done with everyone. We can come to the  
14 chambers if we want to, but allow it to be done  
15 Zoom-wise. So if we don't have a quorum, we can  
16 still have it. But allow all the directors, since  
17 they can be working for the hour until it comes  
18 before them, to continue to work. And then we can  
19 call them in as we need to.

20           But watching Zoom today with two  
21 Commissioners, I don't know, maybe I have to rethink  
22 my own recommendation. But we should be conscious  
23 of that. I think if we can allow the public to  
24 watch the way now they're going to be allowed to  
25 watch these meetings, to allow our budget hearings,

1 I think that is good. That's good transparency, and  
2 it lets the public see us in action, case to case.  
3 One of the things I give the county a lot of credit  
4 for, because I was a councilman for eight years, and  
5 I never had these. They have very, very, very  
6 detailed budget book breakdowns by how many persons  
7 and how many titles, et cetera, et cetera. So our  
8 budget hearings often are a little bit longer than  
9 some of the others. That was all I had.

10 THE CLERK: Under the direction of  
11 the Chairman, we're also live streaming the start  
12 next meeting on the 27th.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But I'd also  
14 like, since the budget meetings are also going to be  
15 with a quorum of the Board, we thought we'd  
16 advertise it in that way that they also be live  
17 streamed. Again, the public can't, even if the  
18 public is here, they're not allowed to speak at a  
19 budget hearing for the department, but at least they  
20 can see and participate.

21 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can you hear  
22 me now?

23 THE CLERK: Yes, we can.

24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Okay. Yeah,  
25 so what Bill said. Yeah, we ought to schedule of

1 budget hearings. Usually we have, like, three  
2 sessions; is that correct?

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We have two, Al.  
4 Two.

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: We're only  
6 going to have two. But usually, I think we have  
7 three in the past.

8 THE CLERK: That's to my knowledge, I  
9 only saw two listed.

10 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Well, in any  
11 event, the two would be broken down into whatever  
12 departments we have to go through. So as long as  
13 we're open to the public on those meetings, and the  
14 rest of the Board Members, or how many we can have,  
15 as long as they're open, that's fine. I just want  
16 to know when those dates are.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We'll get you the  
18 sheet. I will e-mail it over to you with the  
19 departments and the dates and the time.

20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right.  
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yeah, 1:30 on  
23 Wednesday and Thursday of May, 28th and 29th.

24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam

1 Clerk.

2 THE CLERK: I've already had the  
3 second to adjourn.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All those in favor?  
5 (Whereupon the proceeding is then  
6 concluded at 5:33 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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I, SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR, License No.  
30XI00234700, and Notary Public of the State of New  
Jersey, hereby certify that the proceedings herein  
are from the notes taken by me of an Regular Caucus  
Meeting of the Hudson County Board of County  
Commissioners, held on Thursday, May 08, 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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