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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 20, 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
DAVID DRUMELER, Deputy County Administrator
WILLIE ORTIZ, 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 Cedeño.

6 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Here.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
8 Commissioner Kopacz.

9 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

13 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Here.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

15 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here. Before we
18 start that I would like to say recently a flyer came
19 out that one of racist overtones. I think behalf of
20 the County Executive, his office and all our
21 Commissioners here, we'd like to do a resolution
22 condemning racism, obviously, in general, as we see
23 what's going on in the country, but to show support,
24 not political, but to show moral support of
25 friendship to our fellow Commissioner Jerry Walker.

1 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yeah, well, it
2 did make me look darker, though, I've got to tell
3 you. But yeah, no, more importantly, I mean, this
4 is, it's almost like the country is set back 20, 30
5 years right now, and anything dealing with race is
6 something that, you know, obviously is alarming,
7 something, you know, we fought for injustice for a
8 really long time, and we just got to denounce that
9 sort of stuff, but we can't be like that up in this
10 part, especially in the North, and be in New Jersey,
11 so we've definitely got to do that. So I appreciate
12 you doing that, though. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: So what? The Board
14 as a whole will be? Look, we can do that offline
15 right now, just governmental. Continue, Mr. Clerk.

16 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 1.
17 Resolution to honor and commend Dr. Manuel Sanchez,
18 Medical Director, Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital,
19 on his retirement from the County of Hudson on
20 February 1, 2025, after seven years of service.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: The Board as a
22 whole. Also, Commissioner Cifelli is on live, and
23 Bobby Basalice is on live.

24 THE CLERK: So recognized.
25 Resolution No. 2. Confirmation of appointments of

1 the members to the Board of Education of the Hudson
2 County Schools of Technology.

3 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Sponsored.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

5 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 3.

6 Resolution authorizing participation in the LEAP
7 Implementation Grant, Bergen County, as lead agency,
8 \$400,000.

9 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

10 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz-Rodriguez.

12 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 4.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a
14 question on 2.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Question. Go
16 ahead, Billy.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: How come it took
18 us three months to figure out to replace somebody?

19 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, I don't
20 know. I'll check in on that.

21 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: No one on
22 sequence yet, right? Oh, I know, I know.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Sorry? Who's that?
24 Basalice. Go ahead, Bobby. What did you say?

25 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I was asking,

1 again, I was hoping that we, if we did replace
2 another person on High Tech, it would be someone
3 from Secaucus. Not opposed to anybody else?

4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: So can we hold
5 off on this until Bobby and I can speak?

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Who's that? Is
7 that Al?

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Al, yeah.

9 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Okay. Sure,
10 that's fine.

11 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 4.
12 Resolution accepting grant funds from the State of
13 New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
14 for the FY2025 Clean Communities Grant and to
15 subcontract with Hudson County Improvement Authority
16 to administer the grant, \$24,809.44.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz and Lipski.

18 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 5.
19 Resolution authorizing the acceptance of additional
20 funds from the National Opiate Settlement Fund for
21 the purpose of mitigating the effects of opiate
22 epidemic on residents of Hudson County, \$30,630.82.

23 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Sponsor.

24 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

25 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 6.

1 Resolution amending Resolution No. 187-4 2025 to add
2 funds and amend the dates of the non-fair and open
3 contract with Election Systems Software LLC, for
4 election-related expenses June 1st, 2024 to December
5 31st, 2025, \$51,350.

6 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Sponsor.

7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Second.

8 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 7.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Lipski and
10 Rodriguez.

11 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 7.

12 Approve Purchasing Agents Awards, purchases made
13 under State contracts.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Sponsor.

15 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

16 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 8.

17 Purchases made under the Educational Services
18 Commission of New Jersey Pricing System, formally
19 known as "The Middlesex Regional Educational
20 Services Commission."

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That was Rodriguez
22 and Walker.

23 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 9.

24 Purchases made on the Bergen County Cooperative
25 Pricing System.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

2 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 10.

3 Purchases made under the Union County Cooperative
4 Pricing System.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

6 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 11.

7 Approve Purchase Purchasing Agents Awards.

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Sponsor.

9 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

10 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 12.

11 Resolution awarding Professional Services Contract
12 Fair and Open for Contract Monitor and Administrator
13 of Medical Services at the Hudson County
14 Correctional Center to Perselay Associates, Inc.,
15 May 25, 2025 to May 24, 2026, \$75,000.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Baselice and
17 Rodriguez.

18 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 13.

19 Resolution approving the award of Fair and Open
20 Competitive Contracts with various providers under
21 CY2025 Youth Services Commission, State/Community
22 Partnership and Family Court Funds, June 1, 2025 to
23 December 31, 2025 \$219,730.

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz-Walker.

25 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 14.

1 Resolution approving the award of a fair and open
2 competitive contract with Strong Ones LLC, under the
3 CY2025 Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
4 Grant. June 1st, 2025 to December 31st, 2025.
5 \$33,250.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Lipski-Rodriguez.

7 THE CLERK: Resolution approving Year
8 Two of fair and open competitive contract with
9 Monarch Housing Associates --

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Do you announce
11 the numbers when you announce each resolution?

12 THE CLERK: Yes. I have been.

13 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: We're going
14 very fast. Can you just pull back a little?

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Which number you
16 have a question on, Al?

17 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I don't have a
18 question. It's just the rapidity. Just can -- we
19 can we relax it because some of us may want to
20 interject questions or comments like pre-elder, like
21 Commissioner O'Dea and me, but go ahead.

22 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 15.
23 Resolution approving Year 2 of Fair and Open
24 Competitive Contract with Monarch Housing Associates
25 for the preparation of the continuum of care

1 application for the United States Department of
2 Housing and Urban Development and related planning
3 and reporting activities on behalf of the Division
4 of Housing and Community Development, July 1st, 2025
5 to June 30th, 2026, \$63,500.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That was Lipski and
7 Kopacz.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a
9 question going back on Item No. 14. So Item No. 14
10 awards -- purports to award a contract from June
11 through December 31st, which is seven months. The
12 memo says that Guazabara Insights expressed a desire
13 to terminate their contracts with Hudson County.
14 When was that termination effective?

15 DIRECTOR TOON: Darice Toon.
16 Commissioner, I'm not sure of the exact date that
17 they may have notified us, but Guazabara reached
18 out.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Gives a date on
20 the memo.

21 DIRECTOR TOON: Oh, no, no, no.
22 That's the date of the memo. But what I'm saying is
23 that they -- the contract period goes from January
24 to December technically, the award, the grant award.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I understand.

1 DIRECTOR TOON: Right, right.

2 Guazabara --

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: When did they
4 stop providing services?

5 DIRECTOR TOON: They stopped the end
6 of December, the end of December last year.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So -- so --

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: December?

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'm sorry.
10 Could I finish, Al?

11 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I'm sorry,
12 Bill. I'm sorry.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So they stopped
14 at the end of December. They notified you per a
15 memo from one of your staff people.

16 DIRECTOR TOON: They contacted us.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Notified you of
18 that on February 5th. They desired to terminate all
19 their contracts. So -- so two questions. One, why
20 didn't you know they weren't providing the service
21 from January 1 to December 5th? Two, has anyone
22 been providing the service from January 1 to today?
23 Which is, which is almost five months. And three,
24 if no one has, what's happened to the individuals
25 that are supposed to be served by the contract?

1 DIRECTOR TOON: Right. Well, first
2 of all, they did not -- they -- when they notified
3 us that they were not going to continue to provide
4 these services, they simply just ceased providing
5 services. They did not -- and typically it's --
6 when a new fiscal year, a new calendar year starts,
7 they may have new clients who come in. So the
8 services were not provided until we went through a
9 fair and open competitive process. So there were no
10 kids who were being served to our knowledge who had
11 to just stop getting the services because they're
12 constantly -- it's a new year.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But if I was
14 being served in December, service doesn't end at the
15 end of the year. I started being served in October.
16 They stopped services in December. What happened in
17 January, February, et cetera, to that person?

18 DIRECTOR TOON: There were no
19 services being provided during that time period.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, I mean,
21 look, in my mind, that's a very significant problem.
22 And the fact that with all due respect, we never
23 knew about that is very concerning to me. I mean,
24 five months without providing, you know, education
25 and work readiness program to juveniles involved in

1 the justice system that are on probation. I don't
2 know how many individuals does that affect?

3 DIRECTOR TOON: Yeah, unfortunately,
4 Commissioner, they did not give us ample
5 notification for us to go through a process that
6 we're required to go through in order to make sure
7 that there was no gap in services. Because
8 typically what happens is that if we know that
9 there's going to be an end to a contract, we would
10 ask the provider to continue to provide, to continue
11 offering the services until we can go through a fair
12 and open competitive process to avoid a gap in
13 services. That was not the case here. They simply
14 decided that they wanted to terminate all contracts.

15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I ask you
16 a question? So even if they didn't notify us, de
17 facto, we had to know, somebody had to tell us that
18 the services were no longer being provided, even
19 though we didn't get a letter from the provider,
20 right? How does that happen?

21 DIRECTOR TOON: Yeah, I mean, we were
22 certainly aware. I mean, we're in contact with the
23 providers.

24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: So if you're
25 aware of that, what did we do to supply the services

1 during that gap period?

2 DIRECTOR TOON: We did not have a
3 provider to offer the services during that period.

4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: But we didn't
5 do it. We, the County, we did not, correct?

6 DIRECTOR TOON: The County did not
7 have a provider to offer those services during that
8 period.

9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: That's not my
10 question.

11 DIRECTOR TOON: Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: My question is
13 not that we didn't have a provider. We did not do
14 anything to get a provider.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Correct.

16 DIRECTOR TOON: We did what we needed
17 to do to get a provider, and that was to go through
18 a fair -- we went through a fair and open
19 competitive process, Commissioner. And it takes
20 some time to go through that process.

21 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: What did we do
22 in the interim? Was there an emergency? Did we do
23 anything else? Or are these kids just left out
24 there?

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

1 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: For three
2 months without any services?

3 DIRECTOR TOON: The services were not
4 provided during that period.

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Thank you. Can
6 I ask you a question, please?

7 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Can I ask you
8 a question? What was their contract? When were
9 they supposed to be providing service? What was
10 their obligation to be contracted? From what period
11 to what time period?

12 DIRECTOR TOON: Their contracts are
13 on a calendar year.

14 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: So it's only
15 yearly?

16 DIRECTOR TOON: It's annual.

17 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: All of your
18 services are now yearly?

19 DIRECTOR TOON: That's correct.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: One at a time. We
21 can't hear. One at a time.

22 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Let me finish
23 my point, please. So they're obligated to go until
24 December 31st. They notified us. Whenever they
25 notified us, they notified us. However, there are

1 kids in the program that their services don't end
2 December 31st. So there's always planning in trying
3 to bring a new provider in. There are level of
4 service reports that you're required to do. We go
5 out and do site visits to make sure they're doing
6 the level of service that they're supposed to be
7 doing. Did they stop providing service prior to
8 them notifying you? Did they put anything in place?
9 Did they get paid? Because if they got paid, we
10 should go after some of that money because they
11 didn't fulfill the obligation of their contract.

12 It was on the same way when I was there.
13 They're obligated to provide that service until
14 December 31st. They're obligated to give you the
15 patient notice to provide a continuum of care beyond
16 December 31st. If they didn't do that, then they
17 shouldn't have been paid to at the end of the
18 contract.

19 DIRECTOR TOON: Commissioner, they
20 were paid through December 31st, and they offered
21 those services through December 31st.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I'm a little
23 confused on the timeline. The provider's contract
24 terminated on what day?

25 DIRECTOR TOON: December 31st, 2024.

1 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And that's
2 when they stopped providing services?

3 DIRECTOR TOON: That was the end of
4 their contract, yes.

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Now, was there
6 any obligation for them to provide services beyond
7 that date on an emergency basis?

8 DIRECTOR TOON: No.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Not true. Hold
10 on. That's not true. Al, hold on. On December
11 23rd, 2024, the Hudson County Board of Commissioners
12 approved year two of an award of a fair and open
13 contract with Guazabara Insights. So we approved
14 the contract on December 23rd, which obligated them
15 for a period beginning January 1 to December 31st.

16 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And they
17 walked away.

18 DIRECTOR TOON: And, Commissioner,
19 you are one-hundred percent correct. That is
20 precisely what happened. Guazabara decided to
21 abandon any of the contracts, not go forth with
22 executing a contract with the County to provide any
23 of the services. So you're right. We did do it
24 before.

25 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: So I'll ask

1 our counsel, don't we have a claim against them for
2 the legal theory of they agreed to accept the
3 proposal? We accepted it, I guess. They walked
4 away from that. They didn't accept it, and we had
5 to fill in the blanks. We had to pay money. Maybe
6 we didn't pay. But there's a level of damages that
7 somebody should pay us. I don't get it. What are
8 we doing about that?

9 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Can I please,
10 Chairman, can I interject? So with respect to, they
11 were supposed to then provide services into 2025.
12 So I'm going to assume that they didn't stop, that
13 they had kids in and would probably continue into
14 2025. I want to know what happened to them. The
15 Juvenile Justice Commission should have been
16 notified and they should not be able to, if they
17 reneged on taking care of kids, plain and simple,
18 the JJC should go after them if they're going to be
19 divorced from contracts.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Because our County
21 Council is going to answer. Go ahead.

22 MR. DEPIERRO: Commissioner, I agree
23 with, in theory, what you are saying. I'm going to
24 work with Director Toon to review the contract
25 because if there is a breach of contract claim, then

1 it should obviously be prosecuted. And even if it's
2 just for mitigation of damages and for the liability
3 that we may have against them for the time period
4 that has not been covered from the contractual term
5 that they were awarded. So we will definitely look
6 into this immediately with Director Toon. And if a
7 lawsuit has to be filed, then we will do so.

8 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Can we find
9 out what happened to the kids?

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I asked that
11 question. That was one of my first questions. How
12 many youth were being served then? We know that no
13 new youth was served. But how many youth was
14 served? And what happened? We were told that they
15 did not receive any services.

16 What is the most troubling is that when
17 you knew about this, nobody told them. Nobody spoke
18 at a meeting. Nobody sent us an e-mail. No one
19 notified us because I've got news for you. I
20 believe that had I known about it and maybe others
21 on this Board, we would have found somebody who
22 probably would have stepped in in the interim and
23 provided the service for free. Because that's how
24 important of a service it is.

25 But the failure to notify us of something

1 like this is quite frankly almost unforgivable. I
2 don't know how many are served by it. And I'm not
3 even sure exactly what the scope of services are.
4 Because I don't see that here. I don't see what the
5 exact scope of service is. I see a reference to
6 something which just says to support an education
7 and readiness program. I don't know what that
8 means. I don't know how detailed that is. I don't
9 know what that's provided.

10 But I bet you that had I known about it, I
11 would have found somebody who would have stepped in
12 and just done it until you brought someone in. And
13 then why it took that long to get out an RFP on it.
14 I mean, there's three problems. The first is
15 December 31, they stopped providing services. And
16 I'm not going to look to do a federal investigation
17 of it. But from December 31 to February 5th, no one
18 in your department knew what was going on? Nobody
19 knew that youth that had been being provided
20 services weren't being provided service anymore?

21 There's not a fail safe system that when a
22 new youth that go into probation that gets sent to
23 this program are sent to nowhere because there's
24 nowhere to send them. And the judge at the family
25 court or someone else doesn't call up and say, Hey,

1 I'm just letting you know, we sent them to Guazabara
2 and they're like, we're not doing that anymore. I
3 mean, I find that difficult. Then I find it
4 difficult that it took you to, well, I'll grant you
5 the time that it took to get your proposal back,
6 which was April 15th. But why it's now taken an
7 additional six weeks to get from receive and review
8 to approval based on the fact that no service was
9 being provided. That's troubling.

10 Those proposals, there's only two of them.
11 You should have been geared up to have a review
12 committee ready on April 16th. They should have
13 reviewed them. They should have made a score on
14 them, and it should have been preferably at the
15 second meeting in April, but certainly no later than
16 the first meeting in May. So there's just a whole
17 bunch of failures within whatever the system is.

18 DIRECTOR TOON: Commissioner, if I
19 may, if I may. We were notified. We automatically
20 send out contracts, sub-grantee agreements to all of
21 our recipients upon awarding them, upon the
22 Commissioners giving us authorization to enter into
23 contract. We do that automatically. We give,
24 right, after that's done, we give the providers so
25 much time to get that information back to us. We're

1 not in communication with every provider to say,
2 what kids have been referred to you? Those
3 providers do that and they do it very well.

4 Now, the other thing is that the reason
5 why it took so long for the proposals to be reviewed
6 and to come back and for us to get a resolution
7 before the Board is because it takes a while for us
8 to get those proposals. But those proposals don't
9 come automatically to my department. Those
10 proposals have to be reviewed by the Law Department.
11 After the Law Department completes their review,
12 they get those proposals to us.

13 I can tell you that we acted swiftly in
14 terms of getting, reviewing those proposals. We had
15 our evaluation teams in place far in advance. As
16 soon as we get those proposals, we turned them
17 around very quickly. So if there was a delay, it was
18 a delay because it took us a while to get those
19 proposals in.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We got them on
21 April 15th.

22 DIRECTOR TOON: We didn't get them.
23 The County got them.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: The County
25 received them on April 15th. So if you're saying

1 the Law Department gets added to the list of people
2 that failed, all right, I'll add them to the list of
3 people within the government chain that failed. And
4 our County Counsel, that wasn't the County Counsel
5 then. So he's -- he's immune. He's immune from
6 liability.

7 How long does it take them to review them?

8 Did anyone tell them at the time that they would
9 receive, Hey, I'm letting you know, you're getting a
10 proposal April 15th. Nobody's been doing this for
11 the last four months and we desperately need to
12 serve.

13 DIRECTOR TOON: Commissioners,
14 they -- I mean, we work closely with the Law
15 Department, and they get a lot of proposals. I
16 cannot -- I don't know what they get, but I can tell
17 you that when the Law Department completes their
18 review and they get those proposals to my
19 department, there is no delay. We convene our -- we
20 convene our evaluation team immediately, you know,
21 and then we get our recommendations before the Board
22 immediately.

23 And before we get the recommendations to
24 the Board, we bring it to our board of commission --
25 I mean, our board of commissioners -- our youth

1 services commission board. They have to approve it.
2 So there is no delay on our end in terms of moving
3 with this.

4 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Can I make a
5 suggestion, please? So in the past, what we used to
6 do is you have to do level of service report on a
7 quarterly basis we used to do. In October,
8 Director, what you should do is have your team go
9 out and review the contract, see where their level
10 of service is, et cetera. At that point, we used to
11 find out if somebody wasn't doing, couldn't do, or
12 they were looking to like bail out of a program?

13 When December -- putting something out
14 December 22nd or finding out December 22nd isn't
15 enough time to start up January 1st. It takes at
16 least a month to do an RPF process. You put
17 together, and in this case, if you're going to do
18 the same service, no specs, it goes back out. Give
19 them three weeks, they come back in, you score them,
20 and then it goes through the process. And if
21 wherever it's falling down, we need to look at that
22 because ultimately we're servicing people, whether
23 they're kids, adults, whatever, we're servicing
24 people.

25 You go through the process and make sure

1 you get people in and out. There are sometimes
2 providers who come in for the first time and after
3 seven, eight months, they can't figure it out. They
4 start three months late because when they come in as
5 a new provider, they have to start getting people on
6 board. So you're always given the opportunity to be
7 a good program. Some make it, some don't. But at
8 the end of the day, it's our responsibility if we're
9 paying somebody to make sure they're doing what they
10 said they're doing in the contract.

11 DIRECTOR TOON: Commissioner, if I
12 may --

13 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I'm not
14 casting blame. I'm not casting blame. All I'm
15 saying is we should give people -- we should follow
16 a process that gives not only the provider, but the
17 people involved in the programs, as well as the
18 government agency the ability to do things in a
19 timely manner.

20 DIRECTOR TOON: Yeah, Commissioner,
21 if I may, Please --

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.

23 DIRECTOR TOON: Okay. If I may, we
24 go through -- we monitor all of our providers and we
25 monitor our providers. We have quarterly level of

1 service reports. Those reports come in. They're
2 evaluated by my team. We have a very good system in
3 place in terms of evaluating the providers,
4 monitoring our -- you know, monitoring our
5 providers. That's done regularly. We get the
6 reports and we know what the LOS, and we know who
7 the performers are and who are the ones who are not
8 performing.

9 Unfortunately, in this case, Guazabara
10 made a decision without consulting with us that they
11 were going to terminate all contracts with the
12 County. We did not get any -- we did not have any
13 pre -- we didn't have any pre-notification about the
14 fact that this was a decision that they were going
15 to make.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All right. Well,
17 time out.

18 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I ask a
19 question, please? Can I ask a question?

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Al Cifelli,
21 we're going to refer it to committee.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right. So
23 here's my question. So when you found out that they
24 weren't going to renew the contract and that was
25 your first notice, you were, it was like you were

1 blindsided by that, right?

2 DIRECTOR TOON: Correct,
3 Commissioner.

4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: When did you
5 notify Judge Mainor?

6 DIRECTOR TOON: The judge is part of
7 our commission. She co-chairs.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: My question is
9 when did you notify her that the contract was not
10 going to be renewed?

11 DIRECTOR TOON: I don't know the
12 specific date, Commissioner, but I can tell you
13 that.

14 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Did you notify
15 her?

16 DIRECTOR TOON: I'm sure she was
17 notified. We're in contact.

18 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Well, no, no,
19 I'm not saying you should. When did you notify her?

20 DIRECTOR TOON: I don't have that
21 date. I don't know that date. My staff would have
22 notified Judge Mainor. We work very closely with
23 Judge Mainor.

24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can you send
25 me on my e-mails, via e-mail, can you send me the

1 date that your staff notified Judge Mainor about
2 this? I know how adamant and vociferous she is
3 about this.

4 DIRECTOR TOON: Absolutely.

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I want you to
6 show me when she was notified about this.

7 DIRECTOR TOON: Okay. I will ask my
8 staff. I'm not the one who notifies Judge Mainor.

9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Okay. I'm not
10 asking you to tell me now.

11 DIRECTOR TOON: No, I get it,
12 Commissioner. I will ask my staff when she was
13 notified and hopefully they may note of that, but I
14 can tell you that Judge Mainor is certainly well
15 aware of all of our services. We have to let her
16 know because she refers kids to these programs.

17 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Exactly. So
18 that's why I want to know.

19 DIRECTOR TOON: Right, right.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I want all of
21 the quarterly reports of Guazabara Insights for last
22 year. You can redact whatever information you may
23 need to redact if there are individual's names
24 there. I want to see all that information.

25 I want to see a copy of the February 5th

1 letter because here it just says expressed the
2 desire to terminate all contracts as opposed to
3 notified you that they were terminating all
4 contracts. I want to know any and all information
5 that occurred between December 23rd, 2024 and
6 February 5th, 2025, where anyone in your office or
7 anyone in the Law Department or Purchasing had any
8 correspondence, e-mail or other contact with the
9 vendor asking them what's going on with renewing
10 your contract.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Get all that
12 to all the Commissioners. Jerry, you want to?

13 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Just real quick
14 to Director Toon. This entity here, it's somebody
15 that we cannot do business with, never again. To my
16 knowledge, this contract was voted on. It was a
17 two-year contract with the option of another year.
18 So I don't want to get in the weeds of the
19 timeframes, but I do know that it was other issues
20 that was pertaining to this entity that I could talk
21 to my colleagues afterwards, stuff that was going on
22 in the street, all kinds of stuff.

23 So it ain't just the timeframe to this.
24 It was different issues. I just want to put that on
25 the record.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Darice, please get
2 all your information that requested by Commissioner
3 Cifelli and the rest of the commissioners to all of
4 us. Alberico, the same thing, please.

5 Mr. Clerk, move on.

6 THE CLERK: 16. Resolution amending
7 Resolution No. 357-6-2024 to extend a Fair and Open
8 Competitive Contract with the W-T Group, LLC for
9 five-month period to conduct an Americans with
10 Disabilities Act Self Evaluation and Develop a
11 Transition Plan for Hudson County, August 1, 2024 to
12 January 31, 2026; no cost extension.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Sponsor.

14 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

15 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 17.
16 Resolution amending Resolution 246-4-2022
17 authorizing a three-and-a-half month extension
18 Qualifying Towing Companies to perform services
19 within the County of Hudson pursuant to Ordinance
20 Nos. 475-10-2011 and 234-4-2013 and 636-10-2021, May
21 1, 2025 to August 15, 2025.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Walker-Cedeño.
23 Question. Why is this happening? Lipski. I'm
24 sorry. It was Walker-Lipski. Mr. Administrator,
25 why is this happening?

1 MR. DRUMELER: The -- I believe we're
2 amending our or we're taking a look at amending our
3 ordinance to change some of the fees that we charge
4 with regard to the towing.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

6 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 18.
7 Resolution determining the form and other details of
8 the offering of \$6,665,000 General Obligation Bonds,
9 Series 2025 of the County of Hudson, State of New
10 Jersey, consisting of \$3,500,000 County
11 Vocational-Technical Schools Bonds, Series 2025; New
12 Jersey School Bond Reserve Act, 1980 New Jersey Laws
13 c. 72, as Amended; and \$3,155,000 County College
14 Bonds, Series 2025; County College Bond Act, 1971
15 New Jersey Laws c. 12, as Amended; and providing for
16 the sale of such bonds, and determining certain
17 matters with respect thereto.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.
19 And just one other comment there. Commissioners
20 O'Dea, Baselice and Cifelli, we have to form a
21 committee to ascertain where they are with that
22 situation.

23 THE CLERK: Chairman, I will use the
24 prior sponsors -- oh no, excuse me. I need
25 sponsors, your Honor. I mean, your Honor. Sorry

1 about that. Old habits die hard. I need sponsors.

2 Bond Ordinance providing for Various 2025
3 Park Improvements by and in the County of Hudson,
4 State of New Jersey; appropriating \$22,661,740
5 therefor (including State Grants received or
6 expected to be received in the aggregate amount of
7 \$3,099,000) and authorizing the issuance of
8 \$18,631,180 bonds or notes to finance part of the
9 cost thereof.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.

11 THE CLERK: I will now turn it over
12 to the Administration.

13 MR. DRUMELER: Commissioner, we have
14 nothing further.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Anything from the
16 Commissioners and comments?

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I just wanted
18 to -- I just wanted to ask that the executive branch
19 considered doing it first as opposed to having
20 putting forth a resolution to create a committee
21 related to the park on the site of the current 595
22 Newark Avenue. There seems to be a lot of issues
23 that are out there related to this. When the
24 building's available whether or not you're going to
25 park vehicles under it and why they need to park

1 vehicles under it among others.

2 And you know there were -- I was here at
3 the beginning of the process as well as Lipski, I
4 have but I mean it's her -- it was her area so. It
5 basically abutted my area. They redrew some of the
6 lines but -- but I just think it's important that we
7 have a committee that there'd be Commissioners on it
8 that there'd be community people on it that there'd
9 be County people on it. There should be two big
10 city people on it.

11 But we need this to meet and understand.
12 I've been reviewing I'm actually having people
13 review the issues related to how you can upgrade --
14 do the upgrades necessary to the Brennan Courthouse.
15 You know I don't have any definitive report yet, but
16 I think doing it the way it's being proposed is a
17 dollar purpose and not -- not a dollar
18 inconvenience -- maybe convenience purpose not a
19 health -- health requirement.

20 So I think that we need to have this
21 committee because I just have a lot of concern. And
22 look, we should be sure that the City when it's
23 transferred is able in a reasonable time to be able
24 to, one, get the building taken down; and two, be
25 able to get a park -- a park there. But I think the

1 committee should be there should look at if there
2 are issues. Those issues need to be discussed. I
3 just don't like it when we get hit from left field
4 like when out of left field at a meeting somebody
5 tells us, Oh, by the way, add two years to when
6 you're going to be able to take the building down
7 because we've got to move it to the building. I
8 mean that's kind of something that you want to know
9 about or might something you may want to know about
10 a long time ago.

11 And I just think the issue itself, it's
12 been out there for a number of years warrants some
13 kind of an ad hoc ongoing committee to be part of
14 the process. So I would ask that by executive order
15 the executive branch does it, but if not, obviously,
16 I think the Board by resolution can create a
17 committee.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: But I think before
19 the County Executive before you came in Bill, before
20 spoke about it correct, Dave? Put together --
21 Yraida also spoke yesterday to the County Executive,
22 and then they're just putting one together, correct?
23 Building commission.

24 MR. ANTUN: They're going to do that
25 just what you said Bill -- when we're in

1 conversation.

2 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: But I think we
3 ought -- I think we ought to have our own committee.
4 I think Bill's right.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, he's getting
6 a fact sheet together, Al. We're going to have a
7 fact sheet by Thursday, and then we can take it from
8 there.

9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Well, I
10 just -- I was just following up on what Bill said?
11 There's -- there's various constituencies with this.
12 There's obviously the local neighborhood that they
13 wanted -- they're getting a park, great. The
14 County, as the County needs to take 595 out, needs
15 demolishing. That is easier said than done. Abe I
16 think would agree with that financially. That's who
17 knows what that's going to cost?

18 And then there's also the residual -- and
19 I don't know why I remember this, but I thought
20 there was a component of this plan that there was
21 going to be some residual parking that was going to
22 be allotted to the County for County purposes
23 underneath there because the County right now has
24 parking underneath 595. Well, once 595 is down,
25 what's going to happen with those parking areas

1 because -- because -- because -- because -- I'm
2 almost finished.

3 Because the parking accommodations at the
4 new facility and the parking that's attendant to the
5 new facility is already on the drawing board. But
6 as anybody with two eyes can see, the area around
7 the parking, around all that area, there's going to
8 be no surface or street parking, and people that
9 come to that building, our new building when it's
10 opened, lawyers, clients, expert witnesses, whoever
11 comes there, where are they going to park? I mean I
12 think we're being short-sighted.

13 I think we need a more I hate to say the
14 word global resolution of this. So I think it's
15 important that there's an integration of people on
16 our Board and people in the city and people of the
17 administration that we know where all this is going
18 because you're going to have a nice ceremony, you're
19 opening up a new courthouse, and then where do you
20 go? Day after day, where you go? We need parking
21 anyway.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I think that I'm a
23 big staunch believer we keep the garage because
24 everybody's mentioning lawyers and other people, but
25 what about our Sheriff's officers?

1 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I don't
2 disagree. You have employees. I don't disagree
3 with that, but that's my point there's got to be a
4 bigger global discussion about this.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yeah. Because if
6 you remove the Sheriff's officers' cars and put them
7 in a garage, then the residents have more parking
8 down on their street areas. So I definitely go
9 to -- I hopefully my colleagues, we keep the garage
10 underneath the park.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But again, like
12 what -- what if any cost does that add to the
13 construction of the park? I don't know the answer
14 to that. What has to be done in order for that to
15 happen, and isn't the reality -- isn't the reality
16 that we did a study that on paper showed we needed X
17 spaces when we really need Y spaces, and anyone --
18 anyone who can see knows that, and isn't the reality
19 that there really needs to be built like other
20 places that have court systems somewhere, not too
21 remote, but somewhere off-site another parking deck
22 with some kind of shuttle service to and from the
23 courts?

24 Maybe. But every time you solve a problem
25 it creates a temporary other problem. Maybe it's

1 the parcel of the -- of the County Plaza lot closest
2 to Montgomery Street and maybe someone thinking
3 outside the box can put a parking deck with
4 residential affordable housing above it. I know how
5 strongly, you know, myself, but I know County Exec
6 Craig Guy is on the developing of affordable
7 housing. Wouldn't that be a great thing to do? A
8 deck up to Montgomery, and then a mid-rise or
9 high-rise. They gave 18 stories right across the
10 street from it recently I saw in the newspaper, so
11 if they could go 18 stories, why couldn't we do 18
12 stories all of affordable housing?

13 Then we solve problems. We create
14 affordable housing, and we create a parking, but no
15 one seems to be thinking outside the box. Just like
16 Al said, open the courthouse and let the chips fall
17 where they may.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yraida, go ahead.
19 Al, just Yraida, go ahead. Then you.

20 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Yeah,
21 just to the Commissioner O'Dea's point. Yeah, we
22 were talking yesterday with County Executive, and we
23 were bringing up that park in which is the
24 courthouse park because one of the very active in
25 the park, Laura, most you know, reached out to me,

1 and they're going to have a meeting next week, and
2 that there is a lot of components to it. So it's
3 not just the County, it's the city also, and
4 according to my knowledge the city is supposed to
5 demolish the building, I don't know how accurate
6 that is, but that's in the last time we have meeting
7 that's the way you know it seems to be. And there
8 is a maintenance component to it. We want to
9 maintain the parking -- I mean the park.

10 And also the parking under that building,
11 yes, they want to keep it for, you know, to use it.
12 I think the County is the one that is, you know,
13 trying to keep the parking under that area because
14 as we all know there's no parking around this area,
15 and but I -- as I spoke with the County Executive
16 yesterday. He said he's going to meet with Chairman
17 Romano and myself, and he's going to provide some
18 information that, you know, we need to go through.
19 But it's both the City and the County that we need
20 to, you know, sit down with, and then file down the,
21 you know, points and where we go from there.

22 Because it's been quite a while, three to
23 four years, you know, talking about the parking, but
24 I don't know the point is now the new courthouse,
25 that is something that they need to take care of

1 that before we move into the new courthouse. So
2 it's one thing first and the next, you know. So
3 it's -- I don't know where we go from here, but
4 hopefully, we get a park, and hopefully, we fix
5 whatever needs to be fixed in the new courthouse.
6 Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I think and I
8 don't want to beat a dead horse here, but I think
9 Bill's right. I think that there needs to be a more
10 cohesive and cooperative committee between our Board
11 or among our Board, the city and the community as to
12 where we're going with this because parking I think
13 is key. The construction of the building itself
14 subtracts from street parking. The demolition of
15 595, the administration building with the parking
16 underneath it and the surface parking between that
17 and Brennan, that's an issue now for County
18 employees the Prosecutor's office whatever. That's
19 a problem.

20 Bill said think outside the box, maybe
21 think about, there may be some open space
22 opportunities at County Plaza, he's right. But if
23 I'm not mistaken, Bill, you also came up with a
24 great idea. I mean, I don't know if it's
25 economically feasible but by coming from my side of

1 the County in the Kearny warehouse building.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That would be a
3 private --

4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I want to go
5 around there, and that might be a short-term
6 solution like Bergen County has had for years or
7 maybe a long-term solution if we can acquire it and
8 build something there. But we just can't build this
9 beautiful edifice, if you want to call it beautiful
10 edifice, but this edifice. We build it, but nobody
11 can get there. It's -- it's --

12 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Can I
13 interject one second? I have a little background in
14 parking. So in this day and age, they can actually
15 do a lot of different things. New York has the High
16 Line, some municipalities have parking authorities
17 on top of their decks. They have fields on top of
18 their schools. Could it be engineered where you
19 have a deck with a park on top? The question, I'm
20 just posing the question. At that point --

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a
22 question -- Bob, that's the same question the
23 assignment judge had when I met him. I told him,
24 Show us examples of that, and let's see how much it
25 costs.

1 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Look, there
2 and listen there's going to be a cost, but when we
3 when you talk about Jersey City and the County
4 that's short-sighted. You have to talk about the
5 State, so probably one of the first of its kind
6 probably and also Green Acres Open Space Trust Fund.
7 It's a bunch of funding that's going to go into this
8 because it's going to be a big project.

9 Now, years ago when the jail got knocked
10 down, there was supposed to become a deck, never
11 became a deck. Parking is a problem and with all of
12 the building that's going around, and listen, a lot
13 of people are there because they're commuter hubs,
14 and they don't have cars. But people are going to
15 come to a park, and they need to be able to park to
16 go into the park, and getting rid of all the
17 parking, I've worked with Jersey City many times
18 because of all the Sheriff's officers and other
19 people that park around the buildings, the County
20 buildings, my suggestion is that we have somebody
21 look at it get a committee together.

22 I'm not sure where it's going and how fast
23 it's going to be moving with the Brennan Courthouse,
24 but if we're talking about some time, now's the time
25 for us to all work together to try and do something

1 that's really, really going to do work for the whole
2 area. Okay. That's my two cents.

3 COMMISSIONER WALKER: I've got two
4 cents. Give me five cents.

5 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: But anyway,
6 Jerry, you got a nickel. Come on.

7 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Nah, look.
8 What Commissioner O'Dea said in reference to
9 building a parking lot and building affordable
10 housing on top of it, I just want to kind of change
11 the narrative on affordable housing and the
12 conversations we should be having moving forward.
13 Because affordable housing is not affordable
14 anymore, guys. It's based on \$60,000.

15 And we've got to start talking about, now,
16 if you're making \$50,000 in my community, that's a
17 pretty decent job but that's low the amount of
18 income now. They can't even -- they can't even
19 apply for the affordable units because they don't
20 make enough, and it is a shame. So we've got to
21 kind of change the narrative of this, not just
22 affordable, lower the amount of income. And it
23 sounds a little bit -- we might want to find another
24 word for it because, you know, at one point, \$50,000
25 was a good job in my community. But now, I don't

1 you know, yeah.

2 But so we definitely have got to do some
3 more parking because I could tell you once a week if
4 I'm not home by a certain time, I'm going get a \$55
5 ticket, and I'm sick of paying them, okay? I pay
6 taxes, and hopefully, Bill, you could -- if you get
7 down into that -- that seat there, you could kind of
8 like address this because it's -- it's
9 overdeveloped.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You could help
11 us get there. Open the door. It won't take long to
12 get in.

13 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Where do I
14 send my donation to the campaign?

15 COMMISSIONER WALKER: But no, in all
16 seriousness, we do have to talk about the levels of
17 affordability, guys, because a one-bedroom is still
18 \$1,800. I mean this is -- this is outrageous. My
19 wife's saying more, more than that.

20 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I guess
21 Section 8 gives you 1,805 for a one-bedroom
22 apartment.

23 COMMISSIONER WALKER: That's crazy.

24 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: That's what
25 Section 8 gives you.

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: The question is
2 without a Section 8 you develop a 30, 40, 50-percent
3 use, 50-percent that's a standard AMI unit now,
4 what's the rent you can charge? The rent is
5 probably \$1,500. Probably the rent you're
6 allowed -- you're allowed to charge. If you take
7 \$68,000, divide it roughly by three with 30-percent,
8 so say it's \$20,000 divide that by 12, you're more
9 than 15. You're about \$1,600 a month.

10 That's unreasonable. That's -- a lot of
11 people can't afford that. A person making 50,000
12 should be able to afford to pay \$1,600.

13 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yeah, that's my
14 point.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: For an
16 affordable unit.

17 COMMISSIONER WALKER: That's my
18 point.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Thank you.
20 Mr. Clerk.

21 THE CLERK: I have nothing further.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Motion to close?

23 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All in favor. All
25 in favor.

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THE CLERK: We are adjourned.
(Whereupon the proceeding is then
concluded at 5:27 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 20, 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

1	2/4/27 46:16	3,500,000 30:10	5:27 45:3
1 3:16,20 7:22 10:21,22 16:15 29:11,21	20 1:9 3:4 46:9 20,000 44:8 2024 6:4 15:25 16:11 28:5 29:11	30 3:4 44:2,7 30,630.82. 5:22 30th 9:5 30xi00234700 46:5	5th 10:18,21 19:17 27:25 28:6
1,500 44:5 1,600 44:9,12 1,800 43:18 1,805 43:21 10 7:2 11 7:6 12 7:10 30:15 44:8 13 7:18 14 7:25 9:9,9 15 8:22 29:21 44:9	2025 1:9 3:20 6:1,5 7:15,22 7:23 8:4,4 9:4 17:11,14 28:6 29:21,21 30:9 30:11,14 31:2 46:9	31 7:23 19:15 19:17 29:12 31st 6:5 8:4 9:11 14:24 15:2,14,16,20 15:21,25 16:15	6 6 5:25 6,665,000 30:8 60,000 42:14 63,500 9:5 636-10-2021 29:20 68,000 44:7
15th 20:6 21:21 21:25 22:10 16 29:6 16th 20:12 17 29:15 18 30:6 37:9,11 37:11 18,631,180 31:8 187-4 6:1 1971 30:14 1980 30:12 1st 6:4 8:4 9:4 23:15	2026 7:15 9:5 29:12 219,730 7:23 22,661,740 31:4 2283786 46:15 22nd 23:14,14 234-4-2013 29:20 23rd 16:11,14 28:5 24 7:15 24,809.44. 5:16 246-4-2022 29:16 25 7:15	33,250 8:5 357-6-2024 29:7 4 4 4:12 5:11 40 44:2 400,000 4:8 475-10-2011 29:20 4:30 1:10 5 5 5:18 50 44:2,3 50,000 42:16,24 44:11 51,350 6:5 55 43:4 567 1:8 595 31:21 34:14,24,24 39:15	7 7 6:8,11 72 30:13 75,000 7:15 8 8 6:16 43:21,25 44:2 9 9 6:23 9078 46:13 a abandon 16:21 abe 34:15 ability 24:18 able 17:16 32:23,23,25 33:6 41:15 44:12 above 37:4
2	3 4:5 3,099,000 31:7 3,155,000 30:13		
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