

HUDSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

RE:

REGULAR MEETING : TRANSCRIPT OF
OF THE :
HUDSON COUNTY BOARD OF : PROCEEDINGS
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS :
:

O P E N S E S S I O N

Hudson County
Administration Building,
Commissioners Chambers
567 Pavonia Avenue
Jersey City, New Jersey
Thursday, May 22, 2025
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

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

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

- EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQ., Board Counsel
- ALBERICO DEPIERRO, ESQ., Hudson County Counsel
- ABRAHAM ANTUN, County Administrator
- CAROL JEAN DOYLE, County Commissioner Clerk
- Reported by: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk, call
 2 the roll.
 3 THE CLERK: Good afternoon.
 4 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski. Commissioner
 5 Baselice.
 6 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Here.
 7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 8 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Here.
 9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
 10 Commissioner Kopacz.
 11 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.
 12 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.
 14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 15 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Here.
 16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 17 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.
 18 THE CLERK: And Chairman Romano.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.
 20 THE CLERK: Please stand to salute
 21 your flag.
 22 (Flag Salute.)
 23 THE CLERK: Adequate notice of this
 24 Meeting has been provided as follows:
 25 Posting notice of Resolution No. 8-1-2025

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1 on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board, First
 2 Floor, Administration Building Annex, Jersey City,
 3 New Jersey.
 4 Copies of the above mentioned resolution
 5 have been sent to the County Clerk and the editors
 6 of the Kearny Observer and the Star Ledger.
 7 May I have a motion to approve the
 8 minutes --
 9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: One second, please,
 10 Madam Clerk. The Presidents of the Sheriff's
 11 Officers' Union and the Sheriff's Supervisors' Union
 12 have representatives here. I've been asked, and
 13 I've confronted some other Commissioners, a
 14 statement was made to them recently at a meeting
 15 that only certain Commissioners support the
 16 Sheriff's Department.
 17 On behalf of all our Commissioners, we
 18 have never denied the officers any requests that
 19 have been made to this Board. Just for the record,
 20 so please ensure your membership and all the
 21 Commissioners always support the Sheriff's
 22 Department. Thank you.
 23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That doesn't
 24 mean you shouldn't come here and speak if you've got
 25 a problem, right?

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Definitely.
 2 THE CLERK: Please note that
 3 Commissioner Aponte is present.
 4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Continue
 5 now.
 6 THE CLERK: May I have a motion to
 7 approve the minutes of the Caucus Meeting of April
 8 22nd, 2025, and the regular meeting of April 24th,
 9 2025?
 10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez and
 11 Cedeño.
 12 THE CLERK: Commissioner
 13 Aponte-Lipski.
 14 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 16 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 18 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
 20 Commissioner Kopacz.
 21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
 22 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
 24 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 25 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

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1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 2 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 3 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
 5 THE CLERK: The next order of
 6 business is to turn it over to the administration.
 7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.
 8 MR. ANTUN: Chairman, thank you.
 9 Chairman, we have one item for the Board's
 10 consideration. It is a resolution amending a
 11 contract with French and Parrello so that they can
 12 design a bike lane on the 14th Street Viaduct. The
 13 design fee and the amendment is \$407,221.
 14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.
 15 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.
 16 THE CLERK: That would be No. 19.
 17 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.
 18 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Hold on on that. I
 20 think 14th Street Viaduct shared bicycle lane has
 21 fronts -- well, you know what? The Board as a
 22 whole. The Board as a whole because it affects
 23 three or four different entities.
 24 THE CLERK: Okay. Commissioner
 25 Aponte-Lipski.

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1 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 3 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 5 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
 7 Commissioner Kopacz.
 8 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
 9 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
 11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 12 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 14 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 15 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Number on
 17 that?
 18 THE CLERK: 19.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: 19. Thank you.
 20 Continue.
 21 MR. ANTUN: Mr. Chairman, that's the
 22 only item I have.
 23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Madam Clerk.
 24 THE CLERK: I have one that I'm going
 25 to bring off the floor. It's my Resolution 20.

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1 It's condemning racism and a permanent commitment to
 2 an inclusive environment for all people.
 3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.
 4 THE CLERK: That's No. 20.
 5 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.
 6 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 8 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 10 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
 12 Commissioner Kopacz.
 13 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
 14 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
 16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 17 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 19 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 20 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
 22 THE CLERK: Is Dr. Manuel Sanchez in
 23 the audience? Is he here?
 24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, he is.
 25 THE CLERK: All right. This is No.

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1 1. This is to honor and commend Dr. Sanchez. So,
 2 before I read that, do I have a sponsor?
 3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.
 4 THE CLERK: Okay. To honor and
 5 commend Dr. Manuel Sanchez, Medical Director of
 6 Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital, on his retirement
 7 from the County of Hudson on February 1, 2025, after
 8 seven years of service.
 9 Whereas, Dr. Manuel Sanchez has enjoyed a
 10 long and extensive 34-year career serving as a
 11 psychiatrist in behavioral healthcare settings
 12 throughout New Jersey and New York; and
 13 Whereas, after graduating from Universidad
 14 Medical School in Ecuador, completing his
 15 psychiatric residency at Lincoln Medical and Mental
 16 Health in New York, Dr. Sanchez began his career in
 17 Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center as an
 18 emergency room psychiatrist; and
 19 Whereas, Dr. Sanchez continued his career
 20 as a psychiatrist at Bergen County Hospital,
 21 Trinitas Hospital, Newark Beth Israel, St. Michael's
 22 Medical Center, UMDJ University, Behavioral
 23 Healthcare, Rutgers University Behavioral
 24 Healthcare; and
 25 Whereas, Dr. Manuel Sanchez began his

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1 career at Hudson County Government on September 18,
 2 2017, as a psychiatrist at Meadowview Psychiatric
 3 Hospital; and
 4 Whereas, Dr. Sanchez was promoted to
 5 Medical Director at MPH on May 1, 2019; and
 6 Whereas, Dr. Sanchez exhibited long
 7 clinical leadership by ensuring quality patient care
 8 and providing guidance and support for clinical
 9 staff; and
 10 Whereas, during his tenure in the County,
 11 Dr. Sanchez was a valuable asset in guiding the
 12 clinical care of MPH during the COVID-19 pandemic;
 13 and
 14 Whereas, Dr. Sanchez is honored for his
 15 life-saving action on November 6, 2023, when he
 16 heroically and inspiringly performed CPR on an
 17 employee when she went into cardiac arrest; and
 18 Whereas, the County Executive and his
 19 Board join with the entire Hudson County family in
 20 honoring and commending Dr. Manuel Sanchez on his
 21 retirement after seven years of devoted County
 22 service.
 23 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the
 24 Board of Commissioners of the County of Hudson that
 25 they join with County Executive Craig Guy in

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1 expressing deep gratitude and appreciation to Dr.
 2 Manuel Sanchez for his seven years of dedicated
 3 service to the County. They join with the County
 4 Executive in wishing Dr. Manuel Sanchez plenty of
 5 good times with his beloved family, and wishing Dr.
 6 Manuel Sanchez years of good cheer, good health, and
 7 the enjoyment of retirement.
 8 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.
 9 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 11 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 13 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.
 15 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
 16 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
 18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 21 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 22 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
 24 (Applause.)
 25 DR. SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you

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1 to the Board of Commissioners. This is an honor to
 2 receive this award. I really enjoy working at
 3 Hudson County at Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital
 4 where we provide service for the more needy. I'm
 5 still working for Hudson County as a per diem at the
 6 Hudson County Correctional Facility. I have been
 7 there for 21 years, and I'm still there. I really
 8 appreciate this honor I receive, and what I did, I
 9 did because I was trained to do so. Thank you very
 10 much. Thank you. I appreciate it.
 11 (Photo Opportunity.)
 12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Continue,
 13 Madam Clerk.
 14 THE CLERK: According to the policy
 15 set by the Board of County Commissioners, members of
 16 the public are asked to limit their comments to five
 17 minutes when discussing agenda items, and three
 18 minutes at the conclusion of a meeting of persons
 19 who submitted a written request to discuss matters
 20 of public interest.
 21 At this time, the public may address the
 22 Board on any item on the agenda only. Please keep
 23 your comments limited to five minutes. Are there
 24 any speakers on the agenda items only?
 25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a

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1 question. When are we changing to five minutes?
 2 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: In two weeks we're
 3 going to have something we're going to vote on.
 4 THE CLERK: There are no speakers on
 5 the agenda items. May I have a motion to approve
 6 all the items on the consent agenda?
 7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: One Second.
 8 Before we vote, I mean, I asked for a lot of
 9 information. I believe it was on Item number -- the
 10 one related to the services to be provided to youth
 11 that were not being provided.
 12 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, that was
 13 sent to you via e-mail this afternoon, but I don't
 14 know. Perhaps the Clerk put it on.
 15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I need a hard
 16 copy, right? I have an e-mail in front of me at all
 17 times. I assume we can get it to me at the meeting,
 18 and that way, if I have a question or additional
 19 information.
 20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I think I can read
 21 it to you.
 22 MR. ANTUN: No, no, we'll provide it.
 23 I just wanted to let you know that we did send that
 24 information out, but we didn't provide a hard copy.
 25 The Clerk was copied on this, so they'll make a copy

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1 for you.
 2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Good. The
 3 answer to that could even affect my vote on the
 4 item. I don't see anything. If you could get it to
 5 me now.
 6 THE CLERK: I'll get it to you.
 7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, I know he's
 8 browsing. What else.
 9 THE CLERK: I have one ordinance for
 10 introduction. It's a Bond Ordinance providing for
 11 Various 2025 Park Improvements by and in the County
 12 of Hudson, State of New Jersey; appropriating
 13 \$22,661,740 therefor, including State Grants
 14 received or expected to be received in the aggregate
 15 amount of \$3,099,000, and authorizing the issuance
 16 of \$18,631,180 bonds or notes to finance part of the
 17 cost thereof.
 18 Introduction. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.
 19 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 21 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 23 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 24 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.
 25 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

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1 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
 3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
 4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
 6 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 7 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
 9 THE CLERK: I have no ordinances to
 10 second the reading.
 11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk, take
 12 the roll call on the agenda.
 13 THE CLERK: That's on the agenda
 14 items only. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.
 15 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.
 16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.
 17 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.
 18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
 19 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
 20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.
 21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
 22 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea. I'll
 23 come back. Commissioner Rodriguez.
 24 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

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1 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
 2 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
 3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
 4 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
 5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I vote yes.
 6 THE CLERK: Yes. This concludes the
 7 items of business on today's agenda. Are there any
 8 comments from the Commissioners on the business
 9 report?
 10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So they're
 11 starting to deliver services by next Tuesday? I
 12 don't want to spend a lot of time on it today, but I
 13 have serious concerns as to what level of staff
 14 oversight for the firm that we contracted, and then
 15 obviously, I have to serious concerns over the level
 16 of staff oversight that is involved in administering
 17 the contract going forward with the vendors. I
 18 don't know whether you want to do it through the
 19 committee or whatever?
 20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yeah. Let me speak
 21 to them.
 22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's fine. We
 23 need to meet maybe before the next meeting with
 24 County staff as well as that vendor. Two issues
 25 that I have initially as it relates to this. I know

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1 that often after a contract is approved, there is a
 2 time lapse before they start because of your
 3 agreement that needs to be executed. You can't
 4 allow that to happen. We failed to provide these
 5 services to youth being held in the detention five
 6 months now, and that we were put on notice two days
 7 ago. As I noted then, it should have been noticed
 8 the minute you found about it.
 9 But I'm putting you on notice now, if you
 10 fail to have the vendor start to deliver services,
 11 tomorrow is Friday, Monday is a holiday, if they're
 12 not there starting to deliver services by next
 13 Tuesday, I'm putting the County on notice. You're
 14 liable for any effect or impact on a youth that
 15 either isn't re-entering the school or whatever
 16 other services are supposed to be provided.
 17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk,
 18 schedule that meeting.
 19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah. Also, I
 20 just, you know, we do have, we do have leadership
 21 from some of our unions, and if they are going to
 22 speak, I think we should extend them the courtesies
 23 to speak first, even if they didn't sign up to
 24 speak. They are integral to the operation of the
 25 County government. We're going into a budget review

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1 period. We're having public hearings, public
 2 hearings, committee hearings on the next week, and I
 3 would like to hear from them, and continue that
 4 inquiry.
 5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam
 6 Clerk.
 7 THE CLERK: Are there any comments
 8 from the Chief of Staff to the County Executive?
 9 MS. DAVIS: Hi, everybody. Briefly,
 10 I need to tell you that my heart is broken right
 11 now. There were two people killed yesterday in
 12 D.C., and they were killed because of hate and war.
 13 We're about to enter Memorial Day weekend, and there
 14 were a lot of people killed that we remember on
 15 Memorial Day weekend also.
 16 War is not fun. War is horrible, but
 17 words that we say matter, and I'd like to remind
 18 everyone in this room, everyone out there, that your
 19 words do matter. Your words can inspire hate or
 20 not, and I'd like to ask, especially in light of
 21 Yaron and Miriam being killed last night with
 22 friends of mine nearby, that everyone remember your
 23 words do count.
 24 May their memory be a blessing, the two
 25 people who were killed last night. May all of the

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1 soldiers who have perished in any war, anywhere, may
 2 their memories be a blessing. But please, please
 3 know, I have fear, I'm sure everyone else does too,
 4 but words hurt, and words can threaten, and words
 5 can kill. So as you're talking about your issues,
 6 whatever issue you may be talking about in this
 7 County government, and I get passion, passion's
 8 fine, passion's good, passion's okay until it
 9 crosses a line, and when that passion crosses a
 10 line, it inspires hate and killing. That's just
 11 something that I don't think this County stands for.
 12 So I'm asking everyone, especially with
 13 Memorial Day weekend, to please remember those whose
 14 memories are a blessing, please remember those who
 15 are not with us, including the two people who were
 16 killed last night in D.C., and anyone else you know
 17 who has perished in a war anywhere in the world
 18 right now. That's it, thank you.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.
 20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can I ask you a
 21 question since you're there? Have you got me an
 22 update on the courthouse park. I did ask the other
 23 day, the Deputy Women's Meeting Committee is going
 24 to support special resolution for it.
 25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, we're going to

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1 create the courthouse park. We're going to have a
 2 meeting with the deputy. Can you just let that
 3 community know that?
 4 MS. DAVIS: Yeah, yes. Including the
 5 Commissioners.
 6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah, well, I've
 7 asked the question on my own, yeah.
 8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay, Madam Clerk,
 9 please.
 10 THE CLERK: This is the time for
 11 anyone present to address the Board on any matter of
 12 public interest. Please remember to limit your
 13 comments to three minutes, and then we have 18
 14 speakers.
 15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. First.
 16 THE CLERK: The first one is Leroy
 17 Truth.
 18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Not here.
 19 THE CLERK: The next one is Raymond
 20 Mitchell.
 21 MR. MITCHELL: First off, is
 22 everybody's mic on? Because last week, I mean, two
 23 weeks ago, somebody interrupted me. I would like to
 24 know who was the person that intentionally
 25 interrupted me during last week's meeting. And this

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1 guy over here, the prosecutor, disgraceful guy.
 2 Didn't you tell him to speak to me after?
 3 MR. SALZAR: I spoke to you.
 4 MR. MITCHELL: He did not speak to
 5 me. We couldn't even hear him on the microphone.
 6 All right. Since we want to pray for -- where?
 7 D.C.? I lost my father in a pandemic here, March
 8 30th of 2020. What's going on? Hey. Nothing.
 9 I'm asking to shut down Hackensack
 10 Meridian and the North Bergen Harborage where my
 11 father was. I'm asking all of you on the County
 12 since you all are County public servants. So I'm
 13 asking you to protest with me in front of there a
 14 couple days. You tell me the day that you could all
 15 be available since we all want to play the
 16 protesting game.
 17 Because I've been here since March 30th of
 18 2020, dealing with this stuff. My family's been hurt
 19 and harmed as well. My brother's children and
 20 everything in Bergen County Courts and everything.
 21 Everybody's playing a game with Brian Stack, it
 22 seems like. How many people are teammates with
 23 Brian Stack right now out of all of you? I know
 24 Fannie is, but everybody else?
 25 And I got to come here and share this

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1 photo of my dad strangled here to disgrace. But I
 2 got to come every week and week and this guy,
 3 Prosecutor, runs off. Well, cover your mouth there.
 4 Talk, get up and talk. What do you know? Come on.
 5 What do you know? Don't laugh. What do you know?
 6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Mr. Mitchell, lower
 7 your voice.
 8 MR. MITCHELL: No, because I'm sick
 9 of that. I've got to keep coming here. It's
 10 bullshit every single day. I'm sick of it. Tired
 11 of it, Romano. And you know it better. How many
 12 weeks I've been here, everybody? Come on. Same
 13 shit. Where's the Prosecutor's office? Ester
 14 Suarez, what is she doing? Nothing. Nobody cares,
 15 but she wants to come and say Washington, D.C.
 16 Craig Guy's -- what are you to Craig Guy?
 17 Secretary? Wait, you said Craig Guy, right? Ma'am,
 18 I'm talking to you.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Mr. Mitchell, Chief
 20 of Staff.
 21 MR. MITCHELL: Well, Chief of Staff,
 22 Craig Guy, yeah. Always coming out with other
 23 people in other places, but here, on this soil, I
 24 don't get any service. It's a shame that I have to
 25 keep coming here, back to back, watching my back

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1 being set up.
 2 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I'm sorry for your
 3 loss.
 4 MR. MITCHELL: Well, it takes five
 5 weeks for Romano to say that? Nobody else says it,
 6 right? Nobody gives a shit. Come on.
 7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, definitely not.
 8 MR. MITCHELL: And how many people
 9 knew about this pandemic too? And how many people
 10 knew about the pandemic? So, are you guys going to
 11 protest with me?
 12 THE CLERK: The next speaker is
 13 Tatiana Reed. Is Tatiana Reed here? Next one is
 14 Kayla Garcia. Is Kayla here?
 15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next one.
 16 THE CLERK: Agnes Lucia.
 17 MR. MITCHELL: And this guy, he's off
 18 the case. I don't want him here. He should be
 19 arrested for accessory. Scumbag.
 20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No. Please, we
 21 don't tolerate that kind of language.
 22 MR. MITCHELL: I don't tolerate
 23 coming every fucking day and dealing with this
 24 bullshit. And people coming from other places
 25 worried about other shit? Come on.

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1 MS. LUCIA: Good afternoon, everyone.
 2 Thank you, Commissioners, for your time. My name is
 3 Agnes Lucia. I'm a worker at Hudson County Welfare.
 4 There are two reasons why I would like to talk to
 5 you today. First, we've been discussing the
 6 retention bonus and hazard pay. Till now, we still
 7 have not received it. So what we want to know is
 8 when are we going to receive this?
 9 The second thing is the salary increase.
 10 Right now, the union is in negotiations with
 11 management and it was mentioned on the proposed
 12 budget an increase of five percent, and in the last
 13 union meeting, they said we would be getting an
 14 offer of a market rate. I'm here to discuss what
 15 that market rate is. I think we have the handouts.
 16 The closest county to compare with Hudson
 17 County is Middlesex County. If you look through the
 18 first handout, you will see why. The rent is
 19 closest. A good indicator of cost of living is rent
 20 since other indicators like food, transportation,
 21 energy is almost the same. So in Middlesex County,
 22 it's only a dollar difference, if you see. Now, we
 23 look for the highest salary for a county welfare
 24 title in the same rank, which is highlighted. I'm
 25 sorry, I don't have handouts for everyone.

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1 You'll see that the title is HSS3
 2 Bilingual and the salary is \$62,726. That is on one
 3 of the handouts there. The same title in Middlesex
 4 County earns an average of \$77,605. That means a
 5 difference of 23 percent. Our market rate is
 6 \$77,605. Anything less than that is not the market
 7 rate. That's why I'm here today because I wanted to
 8 show you the difference between Hudson County and
 9 Middlesex County. So I hope you keep those
 10 handouts. And what we have in the proposed budget
 11 is five percent. Five percent is not enough. Thank
 12 you.
 13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I have a
 14 question. Are there steps?
 15 MS. LUCIA: We don't have steps. We
 16 don't have steps, so that's why we took the average.
 17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So no, I
 18 understand. So in Middlesex, did you know how many
 19 other counties off the top of your head have steps?
 20 MS. LUCIA: No, I don't, but I think
 21 it's a good idea to have steps.
 22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I would
 23 strongly suggest to the Administration as part of
 24 the negotiation that you do create steps for it.
 25 And the reason behind that is you're losing people.

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1 People are leaving here. Why are they leaving here?
 2 Because there are no steps. There's nothing to
 3 encourage you to stay six or seven years and see
 4 bumps. In this case, it looks like about a \$4,000
 5 bump a year in the title that was spoken about. And
 6 then, beyond that, every time a new contract comes
 7 up, I would assume, in most cases, that each of
 8 those steps will get bumped up by whatever it is,
 9 three, four, whatever the percentage is.
 10 The fact that we are desperately losing
 11 people, even have trouble with some titles,
 12 attracting people to take the job, I want to go on
 13 record publicly to say that I am encouraging the
 14 Administration as part of the negotiation to
 15 incorporate steps into the salaries that are covered
 16 under the Family Services Division. When you look
 17 at the other one, it doesn't matter. I could be
 18 here 10 years. I could be here two years. And it's
 19 the minimum's the minimum.
 20 And honestly, I've got a problem when they
 21 call something the minimum because then I don't know
 22 how people get more than the minimum. Is it based
 23 on who they know? Or is it based on how long
 24 they're here? Or is it based on independent or
 25 objective job evaluation? I don't know. So I think

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1 that I appreciate you today. And I think that I as
 2 one member, I let everyone else speak for
 3 themselves. I know we heard that everyone supports
 4 our law enforcement. We need that here, and that's
 5 a great thing. But I for one think that steps
 6 should be incorporated into the negotiations as part
 7 of the settlement benefit.

8 MS. LUCIA: Thank you. Thank you,
 9 Mr. O'Dea. Thank you, Mr. O'Dea.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Thank
 11 you. Next speaker.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I have a
 13 question.

14 THE CLERK: Elroy Lyons.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.

16 THE CLERK: Elroy Lyons.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I can ask a
 18 question.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.

20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Bill O'Dea and
 21 the speaker just talked about can we interject steps
 22 system into the contracts. But how do we do that?
 23 I mean, the speaker comes up here and with all due
 24 respect to her, she comes up here in the middle of
 25 the contract negotiation that's taking place now.

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1 And I don't think it's fair to her or fair to us to
 2 negotiate that in public. She's represented by a
 3 union. The union is engaged with the County
 4 Administration, and they're in the middle of
 5 negotiations. I don't think it's fair to us to
 6 interject ourselves into that negotiation.
 7 Actually, I think it may be illegal for us to do
 8 that.

9 But how do we as a Board, I guess we just
 10 have to go back to the Administration and say, Hey,
 11 Look, when you're going forward with different
 12 contracts, should we have a step system or not? The
 13 fact that we're making comments about whether we
 14 should or not at this meeting, I think it's
 15 ineffective. I mean, if we're going have that
 16 discussion, we have to have it at a prior date.
 17 Right now, this young lady is speaking about the
 18 contract that's on the table now that's being
 19 negotiated. And as a Board, we can't discuss that.

20 That has to be between the collective
 21 bargaining agents for the union and the County. So
 22 I agree with Bill in that maybe a step system is the
 23 appropriate move going forward. But right now, this
 24 young lady doesn't want that. She wants to know
 25 what's going to happen now in her contract. And I

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1 just think that her union ought to be at the table
 2 discussing that with our people at the table. We
 3 can't get involved in that right now. This comes up
 4 all the time. Union members, and they're very
 5 sincere, they come up to us and they're petitioning
 6 us because they think that the negotiation's not
 7 going well or we're not bargaining good faith or
 8 whatever.

9 But that's not our province. Our province
 10 is, we're the Administration. We have a collective
 11 bargaining representative in the County, and she has
 12 a collective bargaining agent in her union. We, as
 13 a Board, I don't think it's appropriate or legal for
 14 us to get involved in negotiating the specifics of
 15 the pending negotiations. If I'm missing something,
 16 I'll let the County Counsel tell me, or I'll let
 17 Bill O'Dea tell me.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll let the
 19 counsel go for it.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, Madam Clerk, go
 21 ahead, continue. Continue with the explanation.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli,
 23 earlier in the meeting, I asked for both the caucus
 24 meeting for April --

25 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I agree. I

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1 came late to the meeting, but yes, aye.

2 THE CLERK: And also for the regular
 3 meeting and the consent agenda?

4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Next
 7 speaker?

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I just want to
 9 say, I'm not going to yield the floor.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No. Go ahead.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I just want to
 12 say that as an elected official, without getting
 13 into specifics of saying a contract should be X
 14 percent more, or a step should be X amount of
 15 dollars, I think at any point in time, up to and
 16 including while a contract is going through
 17 negotiation, I can publicly, privately express my
 18 thoughts or opinion on what I think would be good or
 19 bad within whatever that process is.

20 The Administration can not listen to what
 21 I have to say. They can keep listening to what I
 22 have to say. I think that's their right to do
 23 either, but I think that I come here with a lot of
 24 years of experience, and it's maybe not a bad idea
 25 to listen to it. When an individual speaks at a

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1 meeting and raises a -- what seems to me, a valid
2 point, as I've been listening for years, about the
3 challenges in that area, and other areas get it, and
4 they tell us other challenges. But in that
5 particular area of how we're losing people because
6 of not having a step system, I think I have an
7 obligation to point out that while you are
8 negotiating contracts, considering that should be
9 something that the Administration should have a
10 listen for. I believe I made a note of that.
11 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And can I?
12 Can I? Can I?
13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Al, let's not delay
14 this. Go ahead, Al.
15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Well, I'm not
16 going to be laboring you, but that's what we're here
17 for. Yeah, so I don't disagree with the substance
18 of what Bill has said. What I do disagree with is
19 labor law is -- it's a trade-off. One of the
20 trade-offs is the employer, whether it's the County
21 of Hudson or General Motors, the trade-off is we, as
22 an employer, recognize the union, and the union is
23 the negotiating party for the employees.
24 We, I believe, have an obligation to
25 respect that, and our negotiations cannot circumvent

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1 that. And when we, as a Board, discuss in public
2 employees' grievances or positions outside of their
3 union representatives, and we directly discuss that
4 with them, I don't know, but maybe that's a
5 violation of the labor laws. And I'm not saying,
6 Bill, I'm not saying that what the young lady said
7 is wrong. I'm not saying what you said is wrong
8 about whether or not a step system is a more
9 beneficial approach to contracts.
10 All I'm saying is, I don't know that we're
11 permitted as a Board to publicly interject ourselves
12 in that negotiation. That's why we have unions, and
13 that's why we have collective bargaining. And I
14 realize, we, as representatives of our constituents,
15 and some of them, many of them, are our employees.
16 I get it, but I don't know that this is the form we
17 need to negotiate. We shouldn't be negotiating in
18 public on this.
19 We've delegated that authority because of
20 the labor laws to the collective bargaining agent
21 for the union, this young lady, and that's her
22 union, and our representatives. So I'm not --
23 please, I'm not trying to throw a hand grenade into
24 your -- the wisdom that you have as far as whether
25 it's right or wrong. I'm only saying it's

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1 procedurally. I don't think it's a minefield. I
2 don't think we should be getting involved in that in
3 public, so that's all I'm saying.
4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: If at the end of
5 the day, I have to err on the side of overstepping
6 my bounds?
7 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: You will. I
8 get it, Bill. I get it.
9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: It's the same,
10 but I think it's right when it comes to people that
11 work for the County, whether they're public safety,
12 or family members.
13 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: That would be
14 the first step, I guess.
15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll err on the
16 side of overstepping my bounds.
17 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I understand.
18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I don't mind if
19 I get chewed as a result of it, and if the Sheriff's
20 officers will just have to take me away, like they
21 had to take the Mayor in Newark.
22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: No, don't take
23 your mask.
24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Just give me one
25 phone call.

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Alberico made a
2 note of it, move on, next speaker.
3 THE CLERK: Elroy Lyons. Elroy?
4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next speaker.
5 THE CLERK: Benny Lisojo.
6 MR. LISOJO: So I'm going to be
7 brief. We've made some traction in the last week or
8 so, so I'm happy to say that part. I told you that
9 the next meeting, we're bringing some of my guys,
10 some of my supervisor union there as well.
11 There is some civil issues, and I believe
12 now that they're going to be worked out. Some of
13 them already are taking a positive direction, and
14 what I want to say is that I bring this today. So
15 we did do some hiring over the last three years, 110
16 guys; 30 of them have left already from the 110, all
17 right? So all I can say to you is that I hope that
18 the new direction that we're heading is going to be
19 good for us, for the supervisor union, for our
20 union.
21 Like I said, right now, currently, I hope
22 and pray that maybe we can sit down and have a
23 conversation about our contract maybe possibly being
24 reopened because there's some things that need to be
25 fixed. A lot of departments are settling their

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1 contracts now, and we're falling way behind, like I
2 said. So how do you retain money, quality of life?
3 So like I said, at the end of the day, I want to say
4 thank you again to Commissioner Craig Guy -- I mean,
5 County Executive Craig Guy, to the Commissioners. I
6 want to say thank you to Ed Nestor and Sean Morrell
7 because as I said, I think we're going to be headed
8 in the right direction.
9 But again, there is some issues, and
10 again, like I said, I would like to possibly revisit
11 reopening our contract as we're falling behind, and
12 a lot of other corrections departments are going
13 like, and the years it takes us to get to step one,
14 the step to our max is high. So again, like I said,
15 I just want to say thank you for hearing me out.
16 There's one or two more of my members that want to
17 speak, and I encourage that so you can hear from
18 somebody else besides myself. And again, I just
19 said thank you, and I hope that this new thing
20 that's taking place is going to work out for us, and
21 that we're going to be in a better space. Thank you
22 again.
23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Thank
24 you. Next speaker, please.
25 THE CLERK: The next speaker is D.K.

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1 Moore. D.K. Moore.
2 MR. MURPHY: Good afternoon. My
3 name's LeVar Murphy.
4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Hold on. Who's
5 D.K. Moore?
6 THE CLERK: That's Mr. Moore.
7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Oh, okay. So
8 it's just a call a communication. Oh, a call to
9 order, okay.
10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, sir.
11 MR. MURPHY: So the copies I'm
12 handing y'all is basically the information I
13 provided to the Huston County Corrections Office
14 concerning my employment with them. So basically,
15 I'm speaking to y'all today because I'm still being
16 denied the opportunity to become a correctional
17 officer.
18 And the three things that's listed on
19 there is part of the reason why, but I want to know
20 why is this stopping me from getting it going. And
21 since then, since I handed them that information, I
22 haven't heard anything back from them regarding
23 anything, and that's pretty much it. I just want to
24 know why is this stopping me from being employed
25 when I clearly have nothing against me. I have no

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1 record on anything, and I'm still being denied until
2 this day. I want information on what's going on,
3 why I'm being denied, and what is the outcome of
4 this. What can we do to better this situation?
5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Could somebody
6 be helpful? Like, here's an individual who I don't
7 think will leave here when he's a correctional
8 officer. He won't be one of the 30 of 110, and he's
9 obviously passionate about it. And he came here
10 more than one time.
11 And if somebody says, someone in the State
12 said you couldn't do this, then let us -- you can
13 let me, and I think most of, not all my colleagues
14 know, and let us petition whoever that individual in
15 the State is. State Department of Corrections, it's
16 Governor Murphy, whoever it is, right? Like, give
17 us something that we can then take and say, this is
18 the reason why this gentleman's application isn't
19 being processed. This is why, and he went through
20 all these steps and then this sudden came up, that I
21 remember from the last time he was here.
22 Like, who has the power or authority? I
23 didn't call you back. Who has the power or
24 authority to get him, whether he has to start it
25 over from the process or if he can pick up where he

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1 left off? He may be successful or not successful,
2 but we need to know exactly who that is. Because
3 there's nothing I think that, and whatever it is, we
4 need to know. Because I don't know what it is. I
5 see what this is, and I don't know, if these are the
6 issues and stuff, and this was what was backed up in
7 here, like, tell us what we need to do, right?
8 I just -- we can't get people to be
9 correctional. We go out trying to recruit officers,
10 and we recruit 30 and wind up with 10. Here's
11 somebody coming here pleading to have an
12 opportunity, and he's from our City, right? And
13 he's somebody from our City, not someone from far
14 away looking to come here. He's like, and he'll
15 stay here. Tell us, who is it? What has to be
16 done? What has to be changed? You just can't sit
17 quietly and go, Thank you, next speaker. I mean,
18 this is not what we're here to do.
19 MR. MURPHY: One last thing, would
20 you or Mr. Walker be able to help me with this
21 situation?
22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, I want to
23 know what I have to do. I'm sure we both would. We
24 just need to know, what do we have to do? Is it, do
25 we have the County authority to do it? And tell us,

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1 yes. If not, who is it? Is it the State? Who is it
2 in the State? What has to be done? Nobody tells us
3 except something nebulous that says, if you do this
4 or you didn't write that, you can't do it. All
5 right, what's the rule that says that? And who made
6 that rule? And how does an ability, an individual
7 have to appeal that? And say, I didn't understand
8 that, or I misinterpreted that.
9 And because something happened when I was
10 16, I didn't realize. I go when I'm 18, but if I
11 were you, I would start the same thing. I always
12 learned when I'm 18, and I don't have it. That's
13 gone. That automatically goes away from me. Well,
14 but again, I would be in the same situation D.K. is,
15 because that's how I always learned it from as long
16 as I went. But whatever it is, show us in detail,
17 not just, and I'm not picking on you at any point,
18 but what we were told is something vague, like the
19 rule changed, and if you do this, then that's it,
20 you're done.
21 All right, show me what the rule is. Show
22 me who the person is that administers that rule.
23 Let us write a letter. Let us call. Let us -- I
24 mean, I know that folks from the union are
25 sympathetic to your cause. Like, let's just try.

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1 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Mr. Chairman.
2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, Ed was
3 going to answer my question for a second.
4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right.
5 MR. NESTOR: All right. Commissioner
6 O'Dea, just to take things into perspective, I've
7 been involved a lot with recruiting and trying to
8 protect these individuals. However, as the Police
9 Training Commission, now with police license,
10 there's a whole extra level of oversight, and
11 there's things we can't do. They'll just take --
12 I'll give you an example.
13 I had a guy that was arrested 15 years
14 ago. He came to me. I mean, he was arrested
15 several times, but 15 years ago was the last one, so
16 I thought that was good enough, and he just seemed
17 to say, no, get out, and kind of wasted all of our
18 time and brought me to the end, where I had him
19 recruited and they took him out. That's on them.
20 We can't get a license. If you have no license, you
21 can't be employed in law enforcement in the state of
22 New Jersey. That's just the way it is.
23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But again,
24 you're giving me a glimmer of it. What I want to
25 need to know at the end of the day is who is that

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1 commission? Who's the person that runs the
2 commission? Are there multiple commissioners,
3 right? Or is it a commission? Who's that person?
4 Who are we able to write a letter to on his behalf
5 that says, Hey, we know him, we've met him, he spoke
6 at our meeting, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, and
7 then they come back and say, you have to change this
8 rule. Okay. How do I change the rule? Does the
9 legislature change the rule, or is it a regulatory
10 rule? Again, if it's a regulatory rule, fine, then
11 who do I go to? I can go to the Governor's counsel.
12 There's a whole avenue to go.
13 Right now, I don't know except to say, it
14 ain't us, it's them, there's nothing we can do about
15 it. That isn't an acceptable rule.
16 MR. NESTOR: I'm not saying it's not
17 what's needed. I'll look into it. What I'll tell
18 you I will do, I'll personally look into his whole
19 background and his whole situation, and then I'll
20 come with you with a detailed reason why he can or
21 cannot be made.
22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Okay. Can I
23 ask a question?
24 MR. NESTOR: Whether the PTC says yes
25 or no, I will give you my recommendation, then I

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1 will give you their answer, and then we can go from
2 there.
3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And if there --
4 this is a hurdle. Is there a way to overcome that
5 hurdle? That we, as a Board, us with a lawyer, I'm
6 going to wait for Ed. I'm going to defer to Ed.
7 And what can be done to try to rectify it. For his
8 situation, but there may be 10 other people just
9 like him.
10 MR. NESTOR: I just think the PTC and
11 this whole license came about because they want a
12 specific people involved.
13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: They can't get
14 people, and it's getting worse. All right. Let's
15 meet with them. Well, let's sit down and have a
16 meeting with them. Meet with them. Let's be
17 realistic about it. I was in a diner yesterday, and
18 someone who's a waitress there said, Yeah, my son's
19 going in the Army in January.
20 I said, Wait, he's been in Essex as a
21 correction officer.
22 Said, Yeah, no, he's going to go in the
23 Army. He went through everything. He went through
24 the academy. He's in Essex County. He's going to
25 go into the Army. I said, you know, God knows

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1 what's going on in D.C. and in the world. He may be
2 worse off wherever he gets sent than he is there.
3 And she said, he don't think so. So
4 seriously, like, there's a problem. And they need
5 to change.
6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Al, go ahead, Al.
7 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Just quietly,
8 I think this all revolves around one question, which
9 we hear very, very often these days, due process. I
10 think an applicant has a right to know why he's
11 being rejected. He's being rejected. If it's a
12 matter of expunging his records, we can help him
13 with that. That's easy now. That used to be a pain
14 in the behind. Now it's pretty easy. If that's his
15 problem, tell us. Somebody tell us what this young
16 man's problem is.
17 Because I agree with Bill. We have a
18 shortage of COs and other law enforcement officers,
19 and we shouldn't be standing in their way because of
20 technical issues. Just tell us what the issues are
21 and maybe we can work through them.
22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Exactly.
23 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Exactly,
24 right, Bill? I mean, and if it's a matter of a
25 simple expungement, Al, you call me, I'll take care

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1 of it. It's not that difficult. But give this
2 young man due process.
3 MR. NESTOR: We don't have a break,
4 either way.
5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right. No
6 problem.
7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Thank you.
8 Look, I appreciate you. We grew up in the same
9 neighborhood. I'm glad that Benny spoke up. If
10 they leave resolving their issues in your hands, I'm
11 happy. We'll get everything resolved. You're a JC
12 guy. You're the real deal, and when you tell me
13 something, I trust that you support what he's doing.
14 But I trust you're going to tell me this is what it
15 is. There's an easy out to it. There's a hard out
16 to it. We've got to get an act of Congress done.
17 Whatever it is, but at least we have a chance to
18 know what we need to do.
19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, Ed.
20 Thank you, Sir.
21 THE CLERK: The next speaker I have
22 listed is Courtney Walker.
23 MS. WALKER: Good evening, County
24 Commissioners. My name is Courtney Walker, and I'm
25 a resident of Jersey City. I'm here tonight to

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1 express serious concern about a mailing that was
2 sent out by our County Clerk just over a month ago.
3 In that mailing, I was told, quote, Your voter
4 record indicates that you were on the list to
5 receive vote by mail ballots for all elections since
6 2020, or earlier, and that you have not cast your
7 ballot in any of the four consecutive years
8 beginning with the 2020 general election. As a
9 result, you will be removed from the list to receive
10 vote by mail ballots automatically and will no
11 longer be sent mail-in ballots for future elections.
12 This statement is incorrect. I have voted
13 in every election year since moving to New Jersey in
14 2018, and I've voted by mail several times since
15 registering for vote by mail in 2020. After
16 contacting the County Clerk's office, I learned I
17 wasn't the only person affected. Their solution was
18 to send out a correction letter. However, that
19 correction letter was only sent to a portion of the
20 people who received the original mailing, and
21 confusingly, it was also sent to some people who
22 were never on the original list.
23 Through a couple of OPRA requests, I found
24 the following: Over 90,000 people received the
25 incorrect mailing. Only 25,000 people received the

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1 correction letter. Of those, only 11,000 actually
2 lived in Jersey City, which was the only city which
3 got the incorrect mailer. So I'm here tonight to
4 ask, what is the County doing to follow up with the
5 Clerk's office to make sure the situation has been
6 fully remediated and proper checks and controls are
7 in place so this never happens again?
8 At a time when our democracy is fragile
9 and public trust in government is already low, we
10 must do everything we can to ensure people receive
11 accurate information, especially when it comes to
12 voting. Hudson County already has the lowest voter
13 turnout in all of New Jersey for the past 20 years
14 in a row in state gubernatorial elections. That
15 makes this mailing even more troubling as it risks
16 further suppressing an already low voter
17 participation rate.
18 So I respectfully ask the Board, what has
19 been done to address the situation? How has it been
20 fully resolved? What steps are we taking to ensure
21 it doesn't happen again? And finally, what are we
22 doing proactively as a County to increase our voter
23 turnout? Thank you.
24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Very well said, and
25 we're going to get your answers. Anybody on from

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1 the Board of Elections, Alberico? And the Clerk, or
 2 the Clerk, our County Clerk's office, nobody? No
 3 one on from the Clerk's office? I don't see anybody
 4 on the phone. All right. Let's get somebody, get
 5 them on the phone, and then we'll get back to you,
 6 okay? So they can have a chance.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Did we get your
 8 contact information?

9 MS. WALKER: Yes. Yeah, yeah.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You just give
 11 someone your contact information.

12 MS. WALKER: Yeah, no, no, I will.
 13 Smart, yeah. Right? Yeah.

14 THE CLERK: The next speaker is
 15 Tawana Mayer.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She's not here.

17 THE CLERK: Yajaira Garcia.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Make a note,
 19 please, now that we hold future meetings, we'd like
 20 to have a representative from the Clerk's office and
 21 from the Board of Elections listening in on our
 22 meetings, between or in-house.

23 MR. DEPIERRO: Absolutely.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Everyone, the
 25 college has somebody here today. The School of

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1 Technology has somebody here today. It's a school,
 2 but I'd like everybody to have a person available,
 3 because we don't know what issue or question may
 4 come up at the public portion of the meeting.

5 MR. DEPIERRO: Yep.

6 MS. GARCIA: Good afternoon. My name
 7 is Yajaira Garcia, and I work over at the Welfare
 8 Building for the County, Hudson County. I am here
 9 today to request an update on an ongoing, on-and-off
 10 matter regarding our hazard pay. My coworkers and I
 11 have been protesting on County grounds for over a
 12 month now. We have attended numerous meetings on
 13 this issue, yet we still have no resolution. We
 14 continue to leave with no answers, only vague
 15 promises and no meaning in action.

16 We have heard nothing but words in the
 17 air, with no clear timeline for when we will receive
 18 our hazard pay that was wrongfully withheld from us,
 19 despite two other unions already receiving the same
 20 funds. As elected Commissioners, you are entrusted
 21 with a broad range of legislative, administrative,
 22 and financial responsibilities. You are tasked with
 23 evaluating and operating the County's annual budget.
 24 Given that level of oversight, it should not be
 25 difficult for this Board to provide a clear and

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1 transparent account on how these pandemic-related
 2 hazard funds were managed.

3 This Board has a duty to the citizens you
 4 represent. It is not your responsibility to oversee
 5 and follow up on public concerns, especially those
 6 involving federal funds designated specifically to
 7 essential workers. So I ask the Board today
 8 directly, where were these funds allocated? This is
 9 a question that's been asked for the past month or
 10 so. Was the allocation properly documented? If so,
 11 can the documentation be made available to us, the
 12 public? When will the individuals for whom these
 13 funds were intended for finally be received?

14 If any agreement regarding this issue have
 15 been made, what is the status of those agreements,
 16 and can you provide us with actual factual
 17 documentation today, given the longevity of this
 18 armistice matter? These funds were granted to
 19 support essential workers, those who continue to
 20 serve their community during the public health
 21 crisis. Yet, to this day, we have not received what
 22 was promised and rightfully ours.

23 We're not making unreasonable demands. We
 24 are simply asking for what we have earned. As
 25 Commissioners, you are responsible in ensuring that

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1 the County department and agencies operate both
 2 efficiently and fairly. This includes the ethical
 3 and timely distribution of federal relief funds. We
 4 ask that you fulfill the duties of your office and
 5 give this matter the serious attention it requires.
 6 Our voices will not be silenced, and our questions
 7 will not continue to go unanswered. We are simply
 8 demanding what is owed to us. We respectfully
 9 request this Board to provide us clear documentation
 10 responses and when we can expect to have these funds
 11 distributed to us, the workers.

12 Mr. Romano, it is very heartbreaking to me
 13 that I have worked with you side by side in many
 14 health fairs to see how quickly you dismiss me and
 15 my coworkers up here when we speak about this
 16 matter. I have sat here week after week and allowed
 17 you to quickly, next speaker, next speaker. Okay,
 18 they're not there, they can't speak. I was denied
 19 to speak in the last meeting I was here because I
 20 sent my request in at five o'clock. I was denied to
 21 speak that day. That was two weeks ago, but I sat
 22 here very quietly and I listened.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We change the rules
 24 as early as we can, number one. Number two, we're
 25 not dismissive. We were told by legal counsel there

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1 are certain things that we cannot answer. Alberico,
2 you might want to speak.

3 MR. DEPIERRO: So, Chairman, the
4 answer, and I understand the concern of the speaker,
5 I don't -- because I'm bound by also the rules of
6 professional conduct, I don't want to undermine the
7 representation, the legal representation of the
8 union because there's an attorney-client
9 relationship there that I cannot ethically abuse.

10 And therefore, the leadership and the
11 attorneys for the union do have the answers because
12 we are in the middle of litigation. And therefore,
13 those answers can also be provided by the
14 representation. We are in the middle of litigation.
15 There are dates coming up for the next steps in
16 this. So that's basically the answer, but they are
17 entitled to getting those answers from their
18 representation because I cannot violate that
19 attorney-client privilege.

20 MS. GARCIA: Good question. So now,
21 the representation is not providing me answers. The
22 County's not providing me answers. I come to you
23 guys to provide me answers. Nobody's providing me
24 answers. The answers are being -- they're being
25 asked. They're not being answered.

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I'd like to know
2 the number, later after this, I'd like to speak to
3 one of the leaders' numbers to find out. Could you
4 find out why they're not providing them with that
5 information? That would come from you?

6 MR. DEPIERRO: I can have a
7 conversation with counsel. I can instruct them what
8 to do, but they should be listening to their
9 clients, absolutely.

10 MS. GARCIA: And in conclusion, the
11 meeting from April 24th, that I was here, and Mr.
12 Kopacz had mentioned that day that the Board was
13 going to have an executive meeting with the County,
14 and that when I came back to this podium, you guys
15 will have an answer for me. What answer does the
16 Board have for me today, according to what Mr.
17 Kopacz said, April 24th?

18 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: So I wanted
19 first to get an update, and we did get an update.

20 MS. GARCIA: You didn't get an
21 update?

22 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: We did. And we
23 had a brief conversation. We just can't share that
24 information. I know that's a hard answer for you.
25 Believe me, it'd be a lot easier if I gave you the

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1 answer. You could sit in and hear what we said
2 behind closed doors, where we're allowed to, without
3 attorney's presence. We just can't share that
4 information.

5 MS. GARCIA: Okay. So everything
6 that I hear is confidential. What is -- where's the
7 transparency here for the public? What is it that
8 the Board can provide to us for that information?
9 Because every time I come here, it's always said,
10 this is private, this is private, this is, what
11 transparency is there for us?

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Like the counsel's
13 explaining, it's -- we're bound by legal.

14 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: So your union
15 president or attorney, whatever your representation,
16 has to give you that information. We can't give you
17 that information.

18 MS. GARCIA: And if they don't
19 provide it to us, where do I go next? If the union
20 and the County doesn't provide it, where do I go
21 next?

22 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I would go
23 above his head to the next union leadership. So,
24 you're AFSCME, right? So we have Phil Morowski,
25 I've worked with him on past big contracts and

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1 issues of my own, the guy is a gentlemen. The thing
2 is, Phil Morowski, I know he's still with past big
3 leadership. So if you're not getting the answers
4 from your leadership on your level, you've got to go
5 a step higher to get that.

6 MS. GARCIA: Okay. And then my final
7 question, Mr. O'Dea. In regards to the hazard pay,
8 the questions have been over and over and over. Has
9 the Board evaluated as to where the funds have been
10 allocated to? That should be public information.
11 Has the Board verified as to where that pandemic
12 money was allocated to so there was not given to us,
13 the workers? What do we do with this money?

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So, Mr.
15 Administrator, you can, should, and publicly be able
16 to disclose where every dollar of our money to date
17 has been allocated as well as whatever dollars
18 remain that may have yet to be allocated. That's
19 not a difficult document to put together, right?

20 MR. ANTUN: No, that's been disclosed
21 in the web site and that question that was raised by
22 the employee, that was directed to Director Fuller,
23 and she responded to the union leadership on those
24 questions. So, those questions have been put on
25 my --

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1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But again, for
 2 that question, for that question, Director Fuller
 3 can respond to the union leadership, but equally can
 4 respond directly to them because she did not come
 5 ask that question necessarily on behalf of the
 6 union. She came in here as an employee, member of
 7 the public and asked a question that is clearly the
 8 purview of public information. So have Director
 9 Fuller take her number, contact her directly. Hope
 10 she's here today. So contact her.

11 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I ask a
 12 question?

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Al, just give us
 14 two seconds. And get her whatever information and
 15 provide her that. The other issue is we didn't even
 16 close that issue. Ken is correct. We can't discuss
 17 in detail what we discussed. However, there was
 18 direction given from the Board almost unanimously.
 19 And it's your obligation, County Counsel, through
 20 whatever ongoing closed session may be necessary to
 21 update us on that because that you can and should
 22 do.

23 MR. DEPIERRO: You're absolutely
 24 right. And we haven't had an update since because
 25 the next date is coming up in a few weeks.

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1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: The next date
 2 for what?

3 MR. DEPIERRO: The next hearing
 4 reported. There's a panel scheduled with counsel
 5 for the union. We have our next appearance, which
 6 is actually our first actual appearance before the
 7 commission. So since we have had that meeting, we
 8 haven't had any updates because there hasn't been
 9 any action yet.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: What exact date
 11 is that?

12 MR. DEPIERRO: It is May 29th. We
 13 have our first --

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So it's next
 15 week.

16 MR. DEPIERRO: It's just a conference
 17 call. And it's the initial conference call on this
 18 matter that has been filed by the union. So it is
 19 an ongoing one in litigation. So there has been no
 20 update since we met.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay. But so
 22 you'll have a conference call next week. You were
 23 given direction from the Board. Will you -- like no
 24 one told us whether -- it's not your decision how
 25 you are taking that direction or not taking that

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1 direction as part of that process? And I think
 2 that's a fundamental question that I don't want to
 3 find out three months and three hearings later. Oh,
 4 I'm sorry, guys. We just ignored your direction
 5 because we're not obligated to take any direction
 6 from you. And here's where we are.

7 So I think Mr. Administrator, maybe this
 8 is better directed at you and County Counsel. Then,
 9 I'm not asking you to do it right now, but if you
 10 need to go into full session at the next meeting,
 11 next caucus is fine. You were given pretty clear
 12 direction. I was there. There's a transcript of
 13 it, though it's not public. And I want to know what
 14 you're doing with the direction I was given, okay?

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Al, you
 16 had a comment?

17 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Again, just
 18 one comment. And I don't want to be -- I don't want
 19 to abuse the speaker and the sincerity for questions
 20 with any bureaucratic, what's the legal expression?
 21 Redline instrument? I think we all know what that
 22 means.

23 But just to clarify something, because
 24 this gets stated over and over again, and I think it
 25 gives the public the wrong impression or

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1 misinformation. When we got the federal money,
 2 there were funds that -- there were categories of
 3 things that we could spend that money on. One of
 4 those categories was for, I guess to use the
 5 expression, hazard duty pay. However, that was not
 6 a mandate.

7 That was, so when the speaker says, or
 8 other, not just this speaker, but the impression
 9 that other speakers have given is that somehow we as
 10 a Board and we as a County have misappropriated
 11 their money or have somehow violated the federal law
 12 and haven't really spent, that is misinformation.

13 That's not correct. And my understanding is that we
 14 were giving certain buckets of money, if that's the
 15 word, "buckets," that's another nonsense word that
 16 they use now.

17 We were given buckets of money. Some of
 18 those monies could be spent for giving employees
 19 hazardous pay. We got that. And we have, and we
 20 have, and that's where we are with PERC right now.
 21 We have done that, and we are now in dispute with
 22 PERC, and that's a pending PERC matter. And that's
 23 why the union has their attorneys, we have our
 24 attorneys, and we as a Board can't get into those
 25 weeds right now. That's got to work out. But my

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1 comment is that the impression that the speaker
2 gives, and not just this speaker, but other speakers
3 have given, is that somehow we as a Board or we as a
4 County have committed something illegal. We've
5 misappropriated monies that were theirs.
6 That's not true. And that money was made
7 available to us, and we could allocate it for them,
8 and that's where we are right now. But please,
9 don't give the public the idea that Hudson County,
10 or this Board, got money that was specifically
11 earmarked for these folks, and we're not giving them
12 their money. That's incorrect.
13 MS. GARCIA: Okay. So these buckets
14 were given to certain individuals, but not all
15 individuals?
16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Excuse me, time's
17 up.
18 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: No, no, no,
19 no, no, no, no, no, no.
20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Time's up. Time's
21 up. Excuse me, Ms. Garcia. Ms. Garcia, please. Go
22 ahead, next speaker.
23 THE CLERK: Jerry Vanilla.
24 MS. GARCIA: Oh, Mr. Romano, you can
25 be the next speaker.

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We have to do this.
2 It's time.
3 MS. GARCIA: We can't have the time.
4 But if we're here till 10 o'clock at night, you
5 voted to sit there and listen to us till 10 o'clock
6 at night. It doesn't matter, you voted to. We
7 elected you to sit there to hear us out. Give us
8 that respect to hear us out.
9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I will stay. After
10 the meeting, I'll sit with you as long as you want.
11 MS. GARCIA: I mean, there's every
12 meeting, Mr. Romano. There's every meeting.
13 THE CLERK: Jerry Vanilla.
14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Prior to the
15 next speaker, I'm formally requesting, and I don't
16 need to have each of the employees' names, but I
17 want to know from not only -- I want this union, as
18 well as the other unions where there were agreements
19 done, the list of every employee that was not
20 granted the retention pay, because that's the
21 terminology -- excuse me, the retention pay as of
22 yet date, and the reasoning why. We never got it.
23 That's why I was asking you questions I was always
24 asked, why was, maybe it was information that other
25 people got.

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1 And I don't -- and I don't -- the detail
2 of it I want, and again, number of employees by
3 number, not by name, I don't want to violate
4 anything. If your contention is the last date from
5 X period to Y period, that Employee 17 works was
6 blank date, then give me that level of
7 specification. And I know with other unions, your
8 reasoning is going to be that employee is no longer
9 an employee of the County. But as we've had, right,
10 the other people that came to us.
11 And I know there's another category that's
12 going to be Employee 38, who was a -- and I'm using
13 1199, because this is, there's a situation that is
14 severe, and we need to get their money. Employee
15 38, who was with 1199J then, is now a management
16 employee, in management, or is now in a different
17 union, a supervisor. That's the level of detail
18 that I want, and quite frankly, you should be able
19 to turn that around in a day, because in order to
20 give out the retention pay to everybody else, you
21 had to make that determination for everybody you
22 didn't get.
23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We did request that
24 for the last month. We didn't get it. We did
25 request that.

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1 MR. ANTUN: We did provide. We did
2 provide, but we just didn't give you that level of
3 detail, but we did provide the number of employees
4 by union that did not receive, we did provide that
5 information. But not to that level of detail.
6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There were no
7 reasons why.
8 MR. ANTUN: What was that?
9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There were no
10 reasons why they weren't, just the fact that this
11 number, 400, didn't get it.
12 MR. ANTUN: Again, the majority of
13 the reasons why there are exceptions is because they
14 did not work during the time frame that we stated.
15 MS. GARCIA: Oh, I see. That's a
16 lie. Please stop saying that.
17 MR. ANTUN: Hold on a second. Hold
18 on a second. I'm answering why they did not get it.
19 I'm not -- I'm only answering a question.
20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Right. That's a
21 good question. They didn't provide a calendar to
22 show them where the meals were. No, and that's why
23 I asked you a specific as to what was the last date
24 they worked, and in that, in the instance of this
25 union, I want to know the last date they worked from

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1 not March 20th, but from whatever, March 1st or
2 earlier on, from the date that they worked. I
3 could, there's a disagreement over the date.
4 MR. ANTUN: You want it focused in
5 the month of March. From March 1st to March 20th.
6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Right, well then
7 you're right. Right, you're right. You're correct.
8 No one disagrees that if a person didn't work from
9 February 20th on, they are entitled to it, because
10 March 1st is the date. Right, so yeah, that's
11 exactly what I'm asking.
12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Good. Next
13 speaker.
14 MR. MCDONOUGH: Good afternoon. My
15 name is Mark McDonough. I've worked in corrections
16 for 16 years. So far, I've worked at Hudson for four
17 years. Previously, I worked at Union County for 12,
18 and I can say that mandatory overtime has become a
19 daily reality at the jail. We're being forced to
20 stay past our shifts a little to no notice, and
21 while staffing is clearly an issue, it isn't a
22 solution. It's just creating more problems.
23 Before we had mandatory overtime, this
24 jail was staffed better than it is now. Also, guys
25 work in 16 hours without a break at times. I have

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1 an 11-year-old son with special needs and a
2 five-year-old daughter who was just diagnosed with
3 Type 1 Diabetes. She depends on me to manage her
4 insulin, attend three different medical
5 appointments, and respond to emergencies. Yet, I've
6 been told I cannot refuse mandatory, even if it
7 means missing my daughter's hospital visit or my
8 son's care.
9 What's even more frustrating is that being
10 forced to use my FMLA, not for flexibility, not for
11 a time to heal, but just to survive mandatory
12 overtime that is directly interfering with my
13 children's medical needs. That is not what FMLA is
14 designed for, and I want to be clear. I do my part.
15 I volunteer for scheduled overtime when I can. I
16 understand that staffing issues. I've always done
17 what's asked of me, but what's happening now is not
18 sustainable. It's not fair to the officers, and
19 it's not fair to our families.
20 We're human beings. We're parents. We're
21 caregivers, and we deserve policies that reflect
22 that. I'm not asking for a handout. I'm asking for
23 a system that recognizes that families come first
24 always. Also, I want to mention that President
25 Lisojo forgot that he handed in this survey last

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1 meeting. Now, it's 12 hours, and 73 percent of our
2 members are not happy with 12-hour shifts, and a
3 suggestion would be put everybody back on eight-hour
4 shifts during partial weekends, but then the jail
5 staff during the week, and on the weekends, we can
6 figure out how to staff at the end if it's not as
7 bad on the weekends. Pretty much all I have right
8 now.
9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Can I ask you a
10 question, sir? Yes. With regards to the hours, I
11 personally agree with you. I think 12 hours is a
12 lot. Did you contract any negotiating there?
13 MR. MCDONOUGH: Yes, we did. I
14 believe so.
15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Why is it 12? I
16 mean, have you talked to your union friends to find
17 out if they can wait?
18 MR. MCDONOUGH: I believe they're
19 trying right now.
20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I think that was
21 said earlier. Can you reopen?
22 MR. MCDONOUGH: Yeah.
23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's probably
24 one of the main reasons, because 12 is 16.
25 MR. MCDONOUGH: Yes.

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1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's reality.
2 Eight was 12; 12 is 16, and I think that some people
3 believe that 12 would be 12, but 12 has become 16.
4 MR. MCDONOUGH: Yes.
5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And in their
6 lives, much of it's a problem.
7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If 12 became 16, I
8 would never, if I was a union member, never would
9 have went for that. I suggest that you have a
10 discussion with Captain Nestor, who's the man off
11 the west, and he can lead you up to that. All
12 right? He can give you some ideas. Okay?
13 MR. MCDONOUGH: All right, thank you.
14 There we go. Very good.
15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You have to have
16 trust in the person you put down there. By the way,
17 I don't know how the Sheriff's office is doing
18 either. I would never support it. Go ahead.
19 THE CLERK: Next speaker, Jared
20 Bernier. Jared?
21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: He's not here.
22 THE CLERK: Esther Winterthur.
23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes?
24 MS. WINTERTHUR: I guess we're just
25 in time. Good evening. I have a comment and a

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p> <p>1 question. Firstly, let me start with my comment. I 2 would like the Commissioners to reconsider the time 3 of their meetings; 4:30 is very difficult for people 4 like myself who work to get here after work plus 5 commuting. Voted in by the public. I think we 6 should give the public a fair opportunity to be able 7 to come and participate in these meetings or at the 8 very least have the ability to do it by Zoom. 9 That being said, my question to the legal 10 is I'm curious to know what is going on with the 11 school that's supposed to be built in the Liberty 12 Science Center area in Jersey City. Is that going 13 forward? Is that on hold? Or has that been 14 canceled? 15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Dave? 16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Do we have 17 anybody from the Improvement Authority or the 18 Schools of Technology? Well, they're both part of 19 it. 20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Is no one on from 21 the School of Technology? 22 MR. ANTUN: There is. Alicia 23 Abraham, but I don't know if she knows anything. 24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, for the 25 record, yeah, but for the record, Alicia just</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p> <p>1 the form. 2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Esther, go 3 ahead. 4 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Oh, I'm sorry. 5 What she was asking for, was the construction being 6 done right now, currently? 7 MS. WINTERTHUR: Not so much if the 8 construction is being done, if the project is going 9 forward. The bottom line is I want to know if the 10 school is going up there or not. It's not because 11 of the school. It's because I'm more interested in 12 the project going on in Jersey City. So I'd like to 13 know, because that was supposed to be part of the 14 deal, that a school was going up. And the County 15 was supposed to build a school, but I haven't heard 16 anything more about that, and I was wondering if 17 that was still on the table. 18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, Ed. I've been 19 informed that County Clerk Maldonado is on the call 20 line right now. 21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay. Well, 22 hold on. 23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Esther, we're going 24 to get Alicia who's going to call in right now. Ed, 25 can you get Esther's info and give it to her? Okay,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p> <p>1 reported to the position. Alicia, can you please 2 just come on Board and we'll get the Ester's 3 information to you. Can you give us an update? Or 4 if you don't, can you get it as soon as possible to 5 the speaker? 6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'm sure Abe 7 Antun has information to provide. He's the County 8 Administrator. 9 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, I have not 10 been in touch with that situation in a long time. 11 So I don't have anything recent on that. They came 12 to us, I think over a year and a half, two years 13 ago, with a budget that was not sustainable. And I 14 don't know what happened after that. I don't know 15 the status of it. 16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Alicia, can you? 17 MS. ABRAHAM: Yes, I'm here. I don't 18 have any information either, but I can certainly 19 bring this back to Administration. 20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. And also to 21 give your information to the Clerk and for the 22 speaker to get your number, please, our office 23 number. 24 MS. WINTERTHUR: Sure. Thank you. 25 MR. FLORIO: Chairman, yes, I have</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p> <p>1 Esther? 2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes. So just so 3 everyone understands, an underlying reason behind 4 everything that has occurred on that site, which 5 includes the transfer of the property from the City 6 of Jersey City to Liberty Science Center, was based 7 upon the agreement that a STEM school would be built 8 there, a STEM high school would be built there. If, 9 in fact, the school was not going to be built there, 10 it means one would argue the entire agreement is 11 called into question. And if there was never an 12 intention to build a school there, then the 13 potential of fraud on someone's part is called into 14 question. 15 So if the fact that that school is not 16 moving forward, add that to the list of items that 17 you only tell us when someone else lets us know, 18 that list is seemingly piling up. Because no one's 19 ever told us in those two years, I don't know what's 20 going on, if that school's going to happen or not. 21 The last thing I remember is voting on something, 22 because I voted on it, Mr. Administrator, with the 23 note that Jersey City wasn't going to pay \$2 million 24 a year. And you said, I understand that. So when 25 was that voted on?</p>

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1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Alicia, could you
 2 please provide as soon as possible what was issued
 3 in the update?
 4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We had a vote on
 5 an item. Yeah, I recall that. That item
 6 referenced --
 7 MS. ABRAHAM: And I'll add my phone
 8 number in the chat as well.
 9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That item
 10 referenced that the City of Jersey City was on the
 11 hook. And you and I talked recently about \$2
 12 million.
 13 MR. ANTUN: Yeah, I remember all
 14 that. It was my last statement.
 15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: When did we vote
 16 on that particular item or agreement?
 17 MR. ANTUN: I'd say it was several
 18 years ago.
 19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So since then,
 20 no one has ever come to us and said, By the way, the
 21 numbers don't -- we don't think this works. We
 22 don't like -- those conversations have never
 23 occurred. And I think sooner or more recent than
 24 the item we voted on, there's been other items voted
 25 on, on the municipal side related to it, so I mean.

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1 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, as I said,
 2 I have not been in the loop after that, after that
 3 meeting. I have not been involved in those
 4 discussions. And I think I said this to you. We had
 5 a meeting with Jersey City several -- couple years
 6 ago, with Liberty Science Center. And they came to
 7 us with a number that was not sustainable. And what
 8 was said to them is, you need to go and get more
 9 money. And that was the last participation that I
 10 had, and I believe I conveyed that to you.
 11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That was then.
 12 Nobody came to us and said, they haven't got more
 13 money. I talked to Nick.
 14 MR. ANTUN: Well, I haven't had any
 15 further discussions.
 16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We need Nick to be
 17 on the next caucus yet because Nick is our point
 18 person.
 19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I ask a
 20 question?
 21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay, Jerry
 22 first, Al.
 23 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Just to the
 24 Administrator, I just want to know, to be honest,
 25 there's something that's built there right now. And

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1 it's the luxury condominium. It's not the school,
 2 but I think the school should have come first before
 3 the luxury condos. I don't know the structure of
 4 the deal, but I see that these big luxury condos are
 5 being built right now. So my question is, what's
 6 the schedule? Like, does the school first, or does
 7 the new condo? Like, how does that, how is that
 8 structured?
 9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Again, Abe, can get
 10 us a copy of the agreement that all the
 11 Commissioners.
 12 MR. ANTUN: Again, it was an
 13 agreement that was entered into several years ago.
 14 I don't think it makes any reference to -- I think
 15 the Commissioner O'Dea said exactly that. It was
 16 supposed to be subdivided, and what's happening in
 17 those other subdivisions, it's nothing to do with
 18 the school.
 19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Alicia, please, as
 20 soon as you're done. Go ahead, Al. Go ahead, Al.
 21 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Real quickly,
 22 and the answer probably won't come now, but when Abe
 23 looks at it. Maybe I'm -- my memory is failing
 24 about, did the County own part of this property,
 25 have title to this property?

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1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No, no, no. The
 2 city had to -- the City transferred title to
 3 Liberty.
 4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Okay. All
 5 right. So why are we involved? Only because of the
 6 funding?
 7 MR. ANTUN: We committed to do a
 8 school based on certain conditions.
 9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right.
 10 All right. All right.
 11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, one
 12 condition which we all admitted is illegal. And
 13 that condition was that in exchange for \$2 million a
 14 year, the City of Jersey City would get X number of
 15 seats. And we clearly stated that legally you
 16 cannot do that, that the funding sources from the
 17 State government for building the school will never
 18 allow it, which is why the City of Jersey City will
 19 never pay \$2 million a year for the bond.
 20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: No, I don't
 21 think that's enforceable.
 22 MR. ANTUN: Yeah, but Commissioner,
 23 if you recall, that wasn't one of the conditions,
 24 because that was something that was agreed to, which
 25 you already pointed out is not enforceable. One of

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1 the conditions was that we had to get at least
 2 59-percent or more of the State aid paid by the
 3 State. That was really one of the principal
 4 conditions. There may have been something else
 5 there that, but that's the one that I recall being
 6 the most difficult. The \$2 million was not a
 7 condition.

8 MS. ABRAHAM: So Alicia, please give
 9 the information updates to all the Commissioners as
 10 soon as possible, and also we have Esther's phone
 11 number, correct?

12 THE CLERK: We have her number.
 13 We'll have to contact you. Okay. We'll do that.

14 MS. WINTERTHUR: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can you just get
 16 us a copy of, and maybe you already have it,
 17 whatever agreements exist between the City of Jersey
 18 City when they transferred property to Liberty
 19 Science?

20 MR. ANTUN: I don't have that. What
 21 I have is the agreement that we approved.

22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can our attorney
 23 just --

24 MR. ANTUN: Sure, we can make a
 25 request.

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1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Our attorney
 2 followed over with, once again, that particular
 3 property.

4 MR. ANTUN: You know, Commissioner,
 5 let us try to get it. I don't know if we have to go
 6 that far, but let's try to get it.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There was a
 8 separate issue raised that you and I talked about,
 9 and Don Kenney and I spoke about, and you didn't get
 10 back to me, which Esther raised in a forum like
 11 that, where, allegedly, though that property is, I
 12 don't know, 60-percent completed of construction,
 13 the land under which it is still is non-taxed, and
 14 there are no taxes being set against the land.

15 And Don was going away with his wife for a
 16 few days, and he was going to come back and do the
 17 follow-up and get some more of my folks to buy it
 18 for us to leave. I expect that.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner, your
 20 next speaker is Kalala Daly. Kalala Daly.

21 MS. WINTERTHUR: Commissioner O'Dea,
 22 can I say something? I just want to say something
 23 to the attorney. When you look it up, make sure you
 24 check with the JCRA. That's where the agreement is.
 25 I never read the executed agreement. I saw the

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1 agreement about the execution. There are a couple
 2 of things in there that you should know, which I'm
 3 sure you'll find when you go there. That if this
 4 school is not built, which is part of the agreement,
 5 Jersey City has the right to take back that property
 6 that that school was supposed to be built. If we
 7 gave away that property, we should not have done
 8 that. That's number one.

9 Number two, when you dig deep, and you
 10 have to ask the City Clerk, because it's on the old
 11 portal, when you dig deep, you will find that even
 12 though they presented it, the City presented it as
 13 if this was going to a non-for-profit. The
 14 non-for-profit Liberty Science Center owns this LLC
 15 called SciTech City, and you take it one step
 16 deeper, and there's another LLC, it's a for-profit
 17 organization, owned by the Friedman's, okay, and
 18 some other organizations. And so their names, the
 19 names of their company, Alpine Residential, is what
 20 is on the deed of that property, which I checked
 21 with the Hudson County web site, and at the very
 22 least, they should be paying property taxes on that
 23 property. So you need to look into that very
 24 deeply.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Thank you. Is

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1 that the final proposal, or is this the proposal on
 2 which the high-rise is going to be built? Is
 3 Alpine's name on it?

4 MS. WINTERTHUR: You know, I have to
 5 tell you that it's, the agreement, the paperwork,
 6 and the lots, and all that, it's very complicated
 7 for me. They made it -- that's why we got the deed
 8 us, so you have to look very deeply for it.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, go ahead.
 10 Next speaker.

11 THE CLERK: Carla Daily.

12 MS. WINTERTHUR: Thank you,
 13 everybody.

14 MS. DAILY: Good evening,
 15 Commissioners. How are you tonight? I've sat back
 16 tonight and listened to what's going on as far as
 17 working for Hudson County, and what we're doing as
 18 far as negotiations, and what they're doing with the
 19 union and management. My fellow co-workers have
 20 come up, and they were asking you about the status
 21 of our hazard pay, salaries, and things to that
 22 nature.

23 We understand from now listening that you
 24 can't provide that, but what we're coming to you for
 25 is to help from the back lag of what's happening

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1 behind not receiving salaries, and hazard pay, and
 2 our overtime. We are servicing people, providing
 3 them with the help we need due to this. Due to the
 4 loss of the overtime, due to not receiving the
 5 retention slash hazard pay, we fell in a slump, a
 6 majority of workers are, and the thing is, our
 7 salaries don't provide us with the help to get
 8 relief. We can't get relief because we're over
 9 income, but you can't be over income when your check
 10 is plagued with loans, and debts, and bills, and
 11 families, and things to that nature.
 12 Behind losing the overtime, people have
 13 fell behind in their rent, mortgages, car insurance,
 14 all things to that nature. So now, we're not coming
 15 to you to go in between union and management. We're
 16 coming to you now because the workers are in need of
 17 help. These workers are actually citizens. So
 18 we're not coming to you to say, we want you to tell
 19 us what's going on. We're asking you, what can you
 20 do to help us at this point? Because they've been
 21 negotiating this for a year now. We can't take
 22 another year or, oh, we've got to go back to the
 23 table.
 24 We need food on our table. So we can't
 25 say, oh, they didn't come to terms with what we

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1 wanted, and this, that, and the other. That's not
 2 what we're asking for. What we're asking for is a
 3 remedy to help the situation until all parties can
 4 come to a conclusion that can help everybody. We
 5 shouldn't have to come and say we need equality in
 6 the workplace when sister counties are receiving it.
 7 Last time I looked, all counties received the same
 8 thing. So why is there a problem with allotting us
 9 with the pay to live in this County?
 10 This County is expensive to live in.
 11 Taxes are out the wazoo. So all we're asking is pay
 12 us our fair share so that we can live here. We're
 13 not asking for anything else. It shouldn't be a
 14 problem to say, Okay, here, take this. We're not
 15 asking for outrageous amounts. We're asking for
 16 money to live with. So when we're coming to you, we
 17 understand negotiations and all that stuff, but at
 18 the end of the day, you understand that we have to
 19 live too. We have families. I'm a single mother.
 20 I'm doing all of this by myself, but at the end of
 21 the day, we're coming to you because maybe you have
 22 a resolution that can help the County a whole.
 23 I'm not just talking about the workers and
 24 the supervisors, but everybody. We're the largest
 25 union in this County. We watch everybody in

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1 neighboring counties and our buildings receive
 2 hazard pay. We don't receive anything while we
 3 accept.
 4 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Buckle up. We
 5 didn't get the buckle up, right? Yeah, we didn't
 6 get the buckle up. Nothing speaks better than what
 7 I'm in for, but I witnessed everyone on this floor
 8 fight for you and for your union. Everyone has
 9 their own style here. My style is we have a
 10 committee system. We do our work in the committee,
 11 behind closed doors, the executive session, we
 12 should get the result that we want, a fair contract
 13 for you and your union. I wish we had those
 14 conversations on video. I wish we had it taped, so
 15 you would see how hard we are.
 16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: It is taped. It
 17 is taped.
 18 MS. DAILY: Well, I'm not speaking
 19 about negotiations. I'm not speaking about that.
 20 What I'm speaking about now is immediate help to us.
 21 We're not -- we can't do anything with the union.
 22 We can't do anything with management, but what I'm
 23 saying now is, right now, we need help. We can't go
 24 and say, Oh, we're going to negotiate, and then go,
 25 oh, we've got to go back again. That's another six

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1 months. That's another six months of struggle.
 2 This is what we don't want.
 3 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: We want this
 4 contract settled as fairly as you do now.
 5 MS. DAILY: It's not as bad as we do.
 6 You don't know how bad we're doing. You don't know
 7 how bad we're doing.
 8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.
 9 That's right. That's right.
 10 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Look, Jerry --
 11 we are all fighting for you. Again, I can speak for
 12 every one of my colleagues. I've seen them get, you
 13 know, sometimes, caught sometimes, you know, out of
 14 their usual demeanor, and again, we all want this
 15 settled as fairly as you do, and we all are working
 16 for you. Again, we're behind closed doors. I wish
 17 it wasn't. Again, there is a record of it, but you
 18 know, I have witnessed that, and I wish I could tell
 19 you more. That's the most difficult part of this
 20 whole situation for us. We're up here, we can't say
 21 anything. We're behind closed doors, we stand
 22 fighting, and we are fighting.
 23 MS. DAILY: But we're back here, and
 24 we're asking you for help. You're saying you're up
 25 here, you can't say anything, but we're coming to

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1 you collectively to ask for help.
2 COMMISSIONER WALKER: No, no, I think
3 what this is, is affordable housing. Affordable
4 housing is not affordable housing. Yes, yes.
5 Affordable housing is based on \$68,000. Right. And
6 I'm quite sure none of you guys make \$68,000.
7 MS. DAILY: No.
8 COMMISSIONER WALKER: So I think
9 that's what you're talking about right now, is
10 having a little bit of a wage, and I do understand
11 that, and like my colleague said, we definitely
12 fight for you guys behind closed doors. We want to
13 do the same thing with her, too, you know, so. I
14 understand that, but what we're saying is.
15 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I want to
16 reiterate what happened in that back room, and we'll
17 be proud to say that this is a day that hasn't
18 happened yet, and I think we can, a lot of the
19 people in the last several months have come up and
20 talked the process, and I don't have a problem with
21 elected officials, but they think it's us. So, if we
22 can have a process, and when people come in, what
23 the process is, because there is the union
24 negotiations, and I think we can and can't do, and
25 can and can't say publicly. At the end of the day,

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1 we're, Commissioner Walker, Commissioners all sat
2 back there, and we want this to go, we can't, I'm
3 the last one coming to the floor, the real estate
4 Commissioner, but I would love to speak real quick.
5 And I have to be honest with you, I worked
6 for the County for 20 years. I understand where
7 you're at, I started when I started, \$21,000 a year.
8 So at the end of the day, my goal is to make sure we
9 try to make this a fair process, and at the end,
10 maybe there's --
11 MS. DAILY: Thank you. I would like
12 to say --
13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: All I'm going to
14 say at the end of this is this, you know how much I
15 share your frustration, but if you don't keep coming
16 back here, over and over, and keep reminding us,
17 over and over, it ain't going to happen. Everything
18 that my colleagues have said, everything that
19 they've inferred that was said in that room, is
20 true. But if you don't keep coming back, it ain't
21 going to happen, because other folks are going to
22 forget it. I'm here, but we've got to be reminded,
23 you just asked, what is it, there's a date on here,
24 and then, what's, are you taking our direction?
25 Silence, quick it, right?

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1 Well, no, let's go to closed session, and
2 we'll talk to you about it. We need our work. So,
3 the only way you keep this on the top of an agenda
4 is coming. Just letting you know, same way you keep
5 standing outside. Change doesn't always happen
6 quickly, and people rely on people getting
7 frustrated and giving up. As long as I've been in
8 public service, I've watched and seen people try to
9 do that. Don't let that happen to you.
10 You are making an impact. I know it
11 doesn't seem it, because it's been two or three
12 months, but I'm telling you, if you've got to
13 switch, in the next meeting, it's 10 other people.
14 Keep reminding us the importance of this issue, and
15 the urgency of this issue, because here's another
16 reality. Your job's going to get tougher. You see
17 what's going on in Congress? You see what's being
18 done with dollars? You see what's going to happen
19 when decisions are going to have to be made as to
20 whether people at certain income levels aren't going
21 to be able to get TANF anymore, they're not going to
22 be eligible, or they're going to get a percentage of
23 their food stamps reduced, and you're the front
24 line. And they'll cut to some of us, and we'll try
25 to fight for them.

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1 Your job's not going to get easy, based on
2 what's going on in Washington, and we should be more
3 understanding and sympathetic to resolving their
4 situation sooner rather than later, because once
5 those bills get finalized and signed in Washington,
6 and the dollars we get, get cut, we'll learn about
7 that next week, and not just the dollars from the
8 administrative side, but the dollars to the clients
9 we serve are reduced, but they're being punished for
10 something that they didn't do it, your job's going
11 to get harder. As a law, we deserve to get our jobs
12 to be harder, because we're elected.
13 MS. DAILY: Right. Can I just point
14 one thing? Can I just point one thing? Why not?
15 Commissioner Cifelli, he stated something about --
16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Do me a favor,
17 please let the other speaker speak, and then we'll
18 come back.
19 THE CLERK: Rashida Jackson. Rashida
20 Jackson here. Rashida? The other speaker is Ada
21 Wideman. Ada? No, you're not Ada. The last one.
22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If any
23 Commissioners want to meet afterwards, I know I'm
24 going to be here to meet with those that want to do
25 a further appointment. Anything afterwards is all

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1 fine.
2 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: The last
3 speaker wants to ask a question and then she's
4 directed to me.
5 MR. FLORIO: Also, Chairman, pardon
6 me, Commissioner Cifelli. I'm reminding you that
7 Clerk Maldonado is on the line. He would address
8 the issue that was raised.
9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Clerk Maldonado,
10 the floor is yours. Are you muted, Clerk Maldonado?
11
12 MR. MALDONADO: Can you hear me?
13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Go ahead,
14 Junior.
15 MR. MALDONADO: Hey, good afternoon,
16 commissioners. How are we doing today? Can you
17 hear me?
18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Yes.
19 MR. MALDONADO: Okay. Yes, I was
20 asked to jump on.
21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, Junior, from
22 now on also, this should be a representative from
23 your office, please. One of our constituents had a
24 very good question. She's going to talk to you.
25 MR. FLORIO: Perhaps we can have Ms.

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1 Walker come back to the podium and raise your issue
2 directly with the County Clerk.
3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.
4 MS. WALKER: Hi, Junior. If you're
5 familiar with my e-mails and OPRA requests right
6 now, I wanted to bring to the Board the issue of the
7 incorrect mailer which was sent out, which I know
8 you're very familiar with.
9 The mailer was sent out to 90,000
10 individuals limited to Jersey City. There's a
11 correction mailer sent out to just about 25,000
12 individuals across Hudson County. Only 11,000 of
13 those individuals live in Jersey City, so the
14 correction of people's voting records only impacted
15 11,000 individuals from that original 90,000 list.
16 I know I've had a lot of questions. How was that
17 list come up with in terms of the 90,000 people who
18 were selected?
19 I know you provided me a lot of
20 information about the mailing situation of how our
21 mail partner takes that list apart, compiles it and
22 stuff, but I still don't fully understand what we're
23 doing as a County to make sure that this never
24 happens again, to make sure that we didn't have any
25 negative voter suppression effects from this mailing

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1 because mailings from the County are the most
2 impactful in voter turnout. This is done through
3 studies. County mailings, official government
4 mailings are the most impactful, so I just want to
5 make sure that, especially in a super important
6 election year for New Jersey, we're not taking this
7 issue lightly.
8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Junior, did
9 you get that?
10 MR. MALDONADO: Yeah. No, I got it
11 too. The answer is we did a mailing that went out
12 to Jersey City active voters from the statewide
13 voter registration system that then was given to the
14 mailing house, and it was sent out to households.
15 Unfortunately, the language in the letter was
16 confusing, as the speaker said, and we stopped it.
17 What we found was that the majority, the
18 vast majority of the folks that were having
19 confusion were the vote-by-mail voters because by
20 State stature, we had to notify anyone who had not
21 voted in the last four years that they were going to
22 be removed from the list. Having sent that letter,
23 it became a little bit confusing to all the
24 vote-by-mail voters. So what we did was we sent a
25 correction letter targeting the vote-by-mail voters

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1 because they're the ones that had the most questions
2 on the issue for us.
3 I will say we got probably 30, 40 calls in
4 the office with questions about it. We answered
5 every question. We responded to every e-mail. We
6 thought that we had the matter under control. Yes,
7 the speaker's correct. It should not have happened,
8 but it did happen. We caught it at an early time,
9 so we were able to correct it, and I think we
10 corrected it because we haven't gotten any calls or
11 any e-mails after the initial first week or so.
12 MS. WALKER: All right. I appreciate
13 that insight. I guess from a perspective of
14 somebody who wouldn't -- I've made mistakes at jobs
15 before, and there's a process involved in it where
16 you have to make a correction, yes, but then you
17 also evaluate your processes, and you make sure that
18 this never happens again. So I'm curious what the
19 County's stance is on kind of an incident kind of
20 process, if you will, of making sure that a
21 situation like this doesn't happen in the future.
22 MR. MALDONADO: Well, we set up
23 protocols in the office where there are more
24 individual eyes looking at everything that goes out.
25 We also have the County Executive's office

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 communication team that's going to evaluate what we 2 send out to make sure that they have eyes and make 3 recommendations and edits as necessary. So we think 4 that we have put protocols in place that allow for 5 that not to happen again. 6 MS. WALKER: Okay. That's great to 7 hear. Thank you, I appreciate that. And then in 8 regards to the issue of low voter turnout and 9 engagement in our County, I know we've talked about 10 that briefly previously, but I am still curious how 11 your office, in light of this mailing, might view 12 that role that the County plays in engaging voters 13 in elections and making sure that, you know, we're 14 providing a level playing field for Hudson County on 15 the state of New Jersey and making our voices heard 16 in an equal way. 17 MR. MALDONADO: Well, look, my office 18 is responsible for vote-by-mail. It's for the 19 handling of the process. Voter engagement is not 20 something that we participate in, though if the 21 Board of Commissioners and the County want to add 22 money to our budget, we'd be more than glad to be 23 able to do things that are going to try to get the 24 voter turnout numbers higher. 25 But at this juncture, the budget that we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 interject about Camden County. Camden is the 2 highest vote-by-mail county in the state of New 3 Jersey. They probably do 50, 60,000, and the reason 4 is because all the mayors and elected officials in 5 that County have bought into the system, and thus, 6 they have additional monies that are allocated to 7 the County Clerk's budget to be able to do so. 8 So unfortunately, we don't have that 9 additional monies, but I'm glad to sit down with the 10 commission and talk about what we can do to move 11 forward on that. 12 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Junior. Yes. 13 Just to follow up on the conversation you were 14 having. It's frustrating, not as frustrating, but 15 I'm starting to get very frustrated with this 16 process. We've been asking over and over again. So 17 can you make sure we have someone at the next 18 meeting? 19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. Yes. 20 MR. MALDONADO: Is this where we got 21 my money? 22 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: No, no, no, no. 23 you don't see that County Executive. I explained to 24 my colleagues and the Administration who was 25 involved in the process, before I became a central</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 have is specifically geared towards, you know, 2 vote-by-mail, provisional emergency ballots, and 3 machine ballots, so we're limited in what we could 4 do in terms of voting engagement. We depend on the 5 parties, the Democratic and Republican parties and 6 the candidates running to be able to produce in the 7 engagement area, and we'll be there to assist in any 8 way we can as long as we have the monies to be able 9 to do so. Excuse me. 10 MS. WALKER: Yeah, I just want to 11 point out, Camden County and other counties across 12 New Jersey, we get different communications in 13 Hudson County versus the rest of New Jersey. The 14 Camden County sent a mailer to newly registered 15 voters that basically have the vote-by-mail 16 application filled out for them if they wanted to 17 mail that back to the office to registered 18 vote-by-mail. 19 So I think what you're saying, there's a 20 limited budget, et cetera, but I think as Hudson 21 County, we really have to take this seriously and 22 see what are we doing as a County to make sure we're 23 enabling people to vote in elections going forward. 24 So that's what I had to say. Thank you. 25 MR. MALDONADO: Thank you. If I can</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 office member at the Bayonne Public Schools, the 2 teachers and union members would go sometimes five 3 years without a contract. Since I've been there, 4 we've never had a contract be overdue, now setting 5 contracts a year early. It can be done. I was told 6 two weeks ago that this would be taken care of, and 7 it's not. 8 The second thing is, every Board of 9 Education that I know has a representative on the 10 negotiating team. I don't know why we are not on 11 the negotiating team. So at least we have a say in 12 the process. It's a year late. Two weeks ago I was 13 told it was going to be handled. So please have 14 Sean Dias at the next meeting, and he'd give us an 15 update so we have some information so we can get 16 this thing worked out. 17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I got it. Your 18 idea's great. I've got a better idea. So when that 19 is resolved, Sean Dias sits in the audience at every 20 meeting and listens just as we listen to the issues 21 raised by the people in this County. Then it's time 22 to get moving. That's it. I'm going to take a good 23 recommendation and bring it up. 24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And I'll make 25 it even a better one. Let's have, at the risk of</p>

1 maybe being an unfair labor practice, let's invite
 2 the union board of union to sit next to Sean at our
 3 meeting. They can hear any members' complaints.
 4 The union is here.
 5 THE CLERK: Yes, Chairman --
 6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The union is here.
 7 THE CLERK: There is no further
 8 business to come before the Board.
 9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: No, excuse me,
 10 but there was a question.
 11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: For the record
 12 the union is here. For the record, the union is
 13 here.
 14 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Right, okay.
 15 But that's great. But there was a question that one
 16 of the speakers had to me specifically, and I want
 17 to entertain that question.
 18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We'll get one for
 19 Al.
 20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: No. There's a
 21 question right there, here, right now, I'm here.
 22 MR. FLORIO: There's a motion to
 23 adjourn and a second. All in favor. All right.
 24 Meeting is adjourned.
 25 (Whereupon the proceeding is then
 concluded at 6:30 p.m.)

CERTIFICATION

1
 2
 3
 4 I, SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR, License No.
 5 30XI00234700, and Notary Public of the State of New
 6 Jersey, hereby certify that the proceedings herein
 7 are from the notes taken by me of an Regular Caucus
 8 Meeting of the Hudson County Board of County
 9 Commissioners, held on Thursday, May 22, 2025; and
 10 that this is a correct transcript of the same.
 11
 12
 13

Shari Cathey
 SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR
 A NOTARY PUBLIC of the
 State of New Jersey
 I.D. No. 2283786
 Commission Expires 2/4/27

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