

Town of Ossining Board Work Session

May 4, 2021

Meeting Transcript

Video Recording of Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vuUVVki2s4>

Attendance: Supervisor Dana Levenberg, Councilmember Liz Feldman, Councilmember Jackie G. Shaw, Councilmember Gregory Meyer, Councilmember Northern Wilcher, Municipal Attorney Christie Addona, Budget Officer Victoria Cafarelli, Police Chief Kevin Sylvester, Town Clerk Sue Donnelly, WXY Studio representative Chris Rice , Town Planner Valerie MOnastra

1 Dana Levenberg: Ready, ready? Here we go.

2 Dana Levenberg: Good evening and welcome to the Town Board of the
3 Town of Ossining Regular Meeting for Tuesday, May 4, 2021. Please rise
4 and join me for the pledge of allegiance, and then please remain standing
5 for a moment of silence and memory of Albert Rivera, former Town Parks
6 Foreman.

7 All: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to
8 the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with
9 liberty and justice for all.

10 [Moment of Silence]

11 Dana Levenberg: Thank you. So we received some sad news this past
12 weekend when we learned that Albert Rivera passed away from COVID-19.
13 Albert worked for the town for over 30 years and retired as the Foreman of
14 our Parks Department in 2014. In retirement, he was able to spend time
15 with his family, including his several grandchildren, who we know he
16 treasured greatly. He was also a member of Cataract Hose Company No. 2
17 on Waller Street in the Village. He was a real sweetheart and we know he
18 knew so many of our staff and residents and everyone always had such
19 nice things to say about him. We are saddened by this great loss and we
20 send our condolences to his wife Terry and children Amanda, Danny, and
21 Ryan, his parents, his entire family, and all those town and village staff

22 members who had the pleasure of working alongside or nearby Albert for
23 so many years.

24 Today I joined Father Raymond Finch of Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
25 and Brock Gibian from Ecogy Energy, along with their teams for the official
26 groundbreaking of the Maryknoll Solar Canopy Project. For you - you Town
27 Board meeting regulars out there, you know this project has been in
28 process for some time now, as it made its way through the review process
29 before the Planning Board and the Town Board just shortly after we
30 adopted a solar energy code for the town. This is going to be the first large
31 scale solar development in Ossining and maybe the first of this type in
32 Westchester County as well. It's a canopy system over a parking lot. Which
33 means there will be no trees cut down and, in fact, some trees will be
34 planted throughout the rest of the campus to increase the benefit to our
35 environment even further. And the best part is that it is a Community Solar
36 Project meaning members of the Community can purchase a share of the
37 system and get 10% off their energy bills. This is a great way for renters or
38 homeowners who may not be able to install a solar system on their house,
39 but still wants to support solar energy in Ossining - and you know for the
40 Earth. Ecogy and Maryknoll hope that the shares are purchased by all
41 Ossining residents so it's really Community Solar. And there is still a month
42 left to apply during this exclusive opening for Ossining residents. Go to
43 <https://ecogy.powermarket.io/marketplace.html>. After this month, they will
44 be opening up the remaining shares to outside of Ossining. And remember
45 it's important to fully complete the process. After you have applied staff
46 from Sustainable Westchester may reach out to finalize details so be sure
47 to respond - to respond to that request, so you can be fully signed up. The
48 town and Maryknoll are so very proud to be the first in our area - Ossining
49 leads the way.

50 Our emergency service crews have done an amazing job throughout this
51 pandemic - I think we can all agree. And they just keep outdoing
52 themselves. The Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps, OVAC as
53 everybody knows it, is now administering Moderna vaccines to any New
54 York resident older, they need to. OVAC will even come to your home if
55 you're just nervous, or if your homebound. The registration link to schedule
56 an appointment is available on the back Facebook page and the town
57 website. If you're looking to learn more about the safety of the vaccine give

58 them a call at their non-emergency number 914-941-9196. And I'm sure
59 that walk you through the signup process there through that number as
60 well.

61 The Governor had a big announcement yesterday about changes to call
62 the guidance. During the month of May industries across the state will see
63 a loosening of restrictions related to capacity limits, food sales, and closing
64 - closing times. Most places will still be required to provide space for
65 customers to social distance. On May 19 capacity limits will be fully lifted
66 for retail stores restaurants, bars, gyms, fitness centers, recreational
67 venues, hair salons, offices, and more. Details for specific industries have
68 been shared on the New York state website our own village hall will also
69 open for longer, our starting June 1. We are still going to limit traffic within
70 the building for residents coming in person, and we will continue to screen
71 people for the foreseeable future as well. But the only way that we can
72 keep the good news coming is to make sure that everyone gets vaccinated.

73 Westchester County launched a new campaign today called "I Kicked
74 COVID to the Curb" aimed at educating young people about the importance
75 of getting vaccinated. A new PSA even features Ossining native Obi Toppin
76 and his fellow New York Knicks so as a special treat I think we have it cued
77 up, so we are going to play it for you now, since it is, you know, featuring
78 one of our own let's see what it looks like.

79 [SCREENSHARE BEGINS]

80 Video: What's going on guys?

81 Victoria Cafarelli: Can you hear it?

82 Video: I just got vaccinated. Just got the shot. You're not only helping
83 yourself but you're helping all of those people that are around you. The
84 more people that get vaccinated the faster we –

85 [SCREENSHARE CONTINUES WITHOUT SOUND]

86 Dana Levenberg: What happened? Lost the volume. Victoria. Victoria, we
87 can't hear it.

88 [SCREENSHARE ENDS]

89 Dana Levenberg: I don't know what happened, but we lost the volume
90 halfway.

91 Victoria Cafarelli: Oh maybe because I muted myself, sorry.

92 Dana Levenberg: Yeah that's why.

93 Victoria Cafarelli: Sorry well.

94 Dana Levenberg: You guys want to see it one more time? It's only 30
95 seconds. Should we try? One more time? Okay let's just do one more time,
96 because we really only heard half of it.

97 Victoria Cafarelli: Okay hold on.

98 Dana Levenberg: Okay. One more time.

99 [SCREENSHARE BEGINS]

100 Video: What's going on guys? I just got vaccinated. Just got the shot.
101 You're not only helping yourself but you're helping all of those people that
102 are around you. The more people that get vaccinated the faster we can get
103 back to normal times. We want to be part of the community, we want to
104 enjoy our families and our loved ones. We feel it's the responsible thing to
105 do. Everybody go get vaccinated, stay safe. It's the best line of defense
106 against the virus. Y'all go get your shot, Immanuel Quickley told you.

107 [SCREENSHARE ENDS]

108 Dana Levenberg: Awesome. Thank you so much for sharing that and the
109 good news is that you can get a copy of this or see you copy of this on the
110 Westchester County YouTube page and we will be sure to share on our
111 social media pages as well in the coming days. Westchester County also
112 shared this week that walk ins are now allowed it all county run sites, so no
113 excuses. Our Ossining Briarcliff Vaccine Angels are wrapping up their good
114 work, as all of this gets much easier with walk in - and - walk ins and
115 supplies available locally in multiple places. Huge shout out to Nancy
116 Carmichael for bringing the Greenburg COVID Angels model to our
117 attention. Help from that group getting set up to Joan Smith-Dengler for
118 agreeing to chair our volunteer group and Nancy Adelman for helping
119 coordinate with the local providers. Then we had an all-star cast of
120 volunteers, making phone calls to our seniors setting up homebound visits

121 from the county and, most recently, helping out OVAC and helping people
122 navigate the process even if they didn't have an email or easy access to a
123 computer. Mary Ann Baiyor, Susan Eisenstein, Jessica Hoyer, Linda
124 Levine, Mirla Morrison, Lynn Perton, and Diana Planells-Bloom were simply
125 extraordinary among the 38 volunteers who helped promote equitable
126 access to vaccinations. These volunteers, since mid-March, helped over
127 300 of our neighbors in Ossining and Briarcliff and sometimes even a little
128 beyond to get vaccine appointments now they're looking to finish up the
129 good work by May 31 but for right now they're also helping guide people or
130 book appointments at OVAC. We will be sure to have a special recognition
131 ceremony for this group in the not too distant future, hopefully in person.
132 They really did help Ossining get vaccinated.

133 This past weekend was Riverkeeper's Riversweep as well as I love my
134 parks date and we had an incredible show of volunteers cleaning up our
135 waterfront. The Sing Sing Kill, the Old Croton Aqueduct, and Ryder Park.
136 Thank you to Riverkeeper, Green Ossining, Suzie Ross, Elisa Chang,
137 Victoria Gearity, Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick, Daria Greg, Diana Alden,
138 Donna Sharrett, Patrick Viperman, who all took a leading role in in in
139 setting up these volunteers and also Councilwoman Feldman for
140 participating that Ryder and all the families, students and volunteers who
141 took time. On May Day to care for our environment, our beloved parks and
142 public spaces. That was really, really huge.

143 This Thursday may six the Ossining Community equity task force will hold
144 its main meeting at 2pm. All are welcome to join via zoom to discuss,
145 dismantle, and disrupt inequity in Ossining. Subcommittees will further
146 explore topics and create action steps as part of their work. If you're
147 interested in becoming part of our Community task force or just sharing an
148 idea email us at equity@townofossining.com.

149 The Ossining PTA is hosting a 5K fun run to help raise money for all the
150 great work they do runners and walkers can complete the race on their own
151 and share their success online. Of course, I saw this just after running five
152 miles Monday morning so I'm trying to decide if that counts, or not
153 information about signups and donations are on the PTA Facebook. Chief,
154 what do you think? Did you run - and instagram pages and, yes, I did sign
155 up. Did - did you did you run, Chief?

156 Chief Sylvester: No, I'm on hiatus from running.

157 Dana Levenberg: Uh-oh. Not good. Okay, and have to just - just this one
158 little 5K, you can do it. And speaking of our schools I'm proud to recognize
159 it this week is teacher appreciation week. Though no school year is easy
160 these past two school years, I think we can all agree, have been
161 particularly challenging for our teachers who adapted to zoom classrooms
162 last year, with almost no notice and then converted their curriculum to help
163 students process all the craziness that we endured. And are now working
164 on in person teaching, once again, which they probably had to relearn. If
165 you have a teacher in your life, give them a special shout out this week, or
166 even a hug if everyone's vaccinated. They deserve a lot of praise.

167 Before I wrap up my announcements tonight I know everyone is aware that
168 the Sunday is Mother's Day. We have quite a few mothers on – on the
169 zoom here. If you're planning on visiting a local restaurant or ordering from
170 one which we hope you do be sure to give them a heads up sooner rather
171 than later. If you're nervous about eating with mom indoors consider
172 picking up your order and having a picnic and one of our parks, if the
173 weather holds out. There are some lovely outdoor spaces across town that
174 are perfect for families looking to reconnect after this past year of isolation.

175 That's it for me, do any of my colleagues have anything to add to
176 announcements?

177 [SILENCE]

178 Alright. So with that we are going to get into our work session agenda for
179 the evening. We have our Town Clerk with us this evening, Sue Donnelly,
180 to participate in the two important discussions. First, relating to dogs and
181 dog licensing. Even though it is New York State law, we know we have
182 quite a few delinquent puppies out there and our Clerk has a proposal to
183 help address the non-compliance and hopefully educate the public about
184 this requirement. Madam Clerk.

185 Sue Donnelly: So, good evening everybody. I just we started this off when
186 the when we first realized that we have between 350 and 500 dogs with
187 licenses in different stages of licensing here in Ossining. I'm going to be
188 honest with you, I believe this 350 dogs in my neighborhood but - but the
189 common - common thread to it is that people don't know that they're

190 required to have a dog license. We've seen an uptick in dog licensing lately
191 when you have a lot of the apartment buildings and co-ops and condos
192 requiring a dog license. And why is that? Because then they can guarantee
193 that the dog has a rabies shot. That is the primary and - primary reason
194 besides the fact that, if they get lost or something happens to them, we
195 have the information at the office for them. I had a very cute phone call not
196 too long ago, and a guy called up and he said 'I have your lost dog,' and I
197 said 'what' and he goes 'yeah, on his license it says your phone number,'
198 and I said 'that's because we're the Clerks and all the dogs have that
199 phone number on their collar.' So -

200 Dana Levenberg: They all – they're all your dogs!

201 Sue Donnelly: They're all my dogs. I have one and that's plenty. So, what
202 we wanted to do, we've been talking about it for a while, but the animal
203 control officer Mauro Santucci came and gave me a pamphlet from a
204 company that has been doing dog census. And what they do is they mail
205 out a card for every resident in the Town of Ossining and it asks you: do –
206 do you have a dog? Do you know that the law is this? Do you have a dog?
207 Is the dog licensed? And if it isn't it's going to tell him - it's going to have
208 one of those codes on it R – QR code or whatever, that I can never
209 remember - that would take you right to a dog registration thing. It's going
210 to be - ours will be a little bit different. Theirs was very basic card. We
211 asked the company to put one together that was bilingual we asked them to
212 put the codes on it, so that they can go to renew their dog immediately to
213 renew their dog license or they can register their dog and then it asks you if
214 you don't have a dog just to send the card back and tell us that you don't
215 have a dog so we're hoping to have much more compliance with this.
216 We've been talking to the gentleman who has done multiple municipalities
217 and we can get you a list of the different municipalities, if you need it. Doing
218 this dog census. And I think it's a good way of communicating with the
219 residents, the importance of licensing your dog. And that it is kind of - it is
220 not kind of it is required by law to do that. We have, as you know, sent out
221 the license renewals. So there are - in 2020 we had 350 dogs renew their
222 licenses and we had another 150 between 2019 and 2020 because some
223 people with the pandemic did not get to renew their licenses. Everything is
224 done online with that we have the renewal process online and you pay the
225 money, the price of the dog license and also it has, you have the ability to

226 register your dog, so what we're asking the Town Board today is to
227 consider if we could move forward on this. On this dog census, we have
228 already gone to Briarcliff Manor who, by the way, licenses their own dogs
229 and - and we have asked them if they wish to join us. They wish to join us
230 and add in the 9% of the people of that live in North Cas - New Castle –
231 New Castle and so when –

232 Dana Levenberg: Mount Pleasant?

233 Sue Donnelly: - when we went back to the gentleman – I'm sorry?

234 Dana Levenberg: Are we talking about Mount Pleasant?

235 Sue Donnelly: I mean Mount Pleasant. Sorry, I always pick those up. Mount
236 Pleasant, 9% that live in Mount Pleasant and because they want to make
237 sure that their whole community is covered, you know the whole Briarcliff
238 Manor - the whole Village is covered. They were very enthusiastic about it,
239 and again it's another new way and a good way to join forces together to
240 get compliance to our to our residents in Ossining. So –

241 Dana Levenberg: So -

242 Sue Donnelly: - I was wondering if anybody had any questions on that?

243 Dana Levenberg: I have a couple.

244 Sue Donnelly: Everybody on this screen pop it most likely is already
245 licensed - their dog is already licensed.

246 Dana Levenberg: I –

247 Sue Donnelly: So I –

248 Dana Levenberg: I –

249 Sue Donnelly: Go ahead.

250 Dana Levenberg: I have a question. I will - well I just - do we know what -
251 how is it going to work with Briarcliff. The surveys go back to Briarcliff –

252 Sue Donnelly: Yes.

253 Dana Levenberg: - or they come back you?

254 Sue Donnelly: No. The surveys will go back directly to Briarcliff.

255 Dana Levenberg: Okay.

256 Sue Donnelly: We already spoke gentlemen about that, and so they will
257 take care of their own - their own surveys and part of it, and just so you
258 know to in the renewal document we do ask everyone if they want to be
259 part of the dog Park, so we don't send out useless tags for the dog park so-

260 Dana Levenberg: Great.

261 Sue Donnelly: - and we also -

262 Dana Levenberg: And they've been –

263 Sue Donnelly & Dana Levenberg: [UNCLEAR]

264 Sue Donnelly: Sorry?

265 Dana Levenberg: And Briarcliff should have that too on theirs. Because
266 they are also, they're supposed -

267 Sue Donnelly: Yeah, they – they - right, we talked at length, that when we
268 had our phone call with them that there are people are - are certainly
269 eligible to get there and dog tag and the 9% of the people in that are
270 outside of the Town of Ossining. It's a \$25 fee for anyone outside of the
271 town of Ossining that wants to use the Dog Park. We have - we have a few
272 of them –

273 Dana Levenberg: That's great.

274 Sue Donnelly: We do have - we have 10 people that have we're just use
275 the dog park outside. Mostly Croton people, but yeah.

276 Dana Levenberg: So the question is just you mentioned this company had
277 had done this in another a couple of other municipalities and what was their
278 success rate? In other words, what was the difference between before and
279 after they sent out the surveys and in compliance?

280 Sue Donnelly: So the success rate is running about - it's 200% of what they
281 had registered. So if you figure we have 400 - between 350 - so I'm gonna
282 say 400 dogs registered. If we could get between 800 dogs and - and 1200
283 dogs register that's a good start, but the best part of it is to make people
284 aware that this is a law and that they are responsible to have their dogs

285 registered with the town with the Town of – Town of Ossining. And then
286 they'll be no more, 'I never knew.'

287 Dana Levenberg: And what's the cost - what's the cost of the program and
288 then, you know, the payback is over a number of years when we –

289 Sue Donnelly: Right. Yeah the payback would be a couple of would be a
290 number of years. You know that we have a \$1 dollar licensing fee for
291 anyone over 60 years old and it's - it's on the renewal form so many, many
292 people are taking advantage of that. So the cost would be around - what -
293 around \$5,000 with the - with the portion of it being paid for by Briarcliff
294 have. And I don't give you - I don't have exact numbers yet because we're
295 still trying to firm it up, because I want to talk to you guys first. [It] would be
296 about 1200 dollars that they would pay for their portion, seeing that their
297 population size is the same size as the unincorporated area, and then the
298 largest population, of course, being in the Village of Ossining, which is
299 covered by the Town of Ossining. But I think the return on investment will -
300 will outweigh the thing in a few years. It won't be overnight, it won't be this
301 year, but as people get more and more used to the easiness of registering
302 their dog and - and being in compliance.

303 Dana Levenberg: How many tickets Chief do you think you give for - for
304 people who haven't registered their dogs?

305 Chief Sylvester: So we haven't issued a lot of tickets for unregistered dogs.
306 One of the issues is that so there's - there's a couple of - this is layered.
307 First and foremost, historically, when we pick up a dog we take it to the
308 ASPCA which then incurs a charge to the municipality for the ASPCA
309 taking the dog. Thus our initiative to keep the dogs here and put them on
310 the internet, which both garner's allegedly some goodwill and also saves
311 the municipality money on calling for the animal control officer, as well as
312 the fee from the ASPCA. As with most other programs if you ask somebody
313 to come in and take their dog and tell them when they get here they're
314 getting ticketed, they're not showing up. So we don't usually write tickets if
315 we can get somebody to come in and pick up their dog that's been loose.
316 Second to that, you know, there's - there's - there's varying opinions
317 depending on where you stand and where you are at the particular time on
318 how enforcement should be doled out. So it's easy to sit here in a meeting
319 and say that we should just have strict enforcement for people for dog

320 licenses right up until people start getting the tickets and then complain that
321 cops are over policing. So in terms of numbers they're not very high, but I
322 can tell you that one we don't particularly go out and check dogs for
323 licenses on a regular basis. We don't walk up to people and ask for their
324 dog license that's not a regular practice. Because we're trying to save
325 money on the ASPCA fee, we sometimes don't write to ticket. For the dog
326 that gets out more than once we typically do write the homeowner if we've
327 brought the dog to police headquarters. If it's a one off and people make a
328 mistake, we allow officers to use their discretion and then we're trying to
329 balance the community after that. So, you know, our goal is to get people to
330 take the dogs back. Whenever they come get their dog we refer them to the
331 Clerk's Office and tell them they should go up there and get their dog
332 licensed. You know, we make sure that within our computer system we
333 make an entry to say that we've run into this family, so if it comes up again.
334 But I can't say that one of our primary objectives at this point has been
335 writing unlicensed dogs. What my recommendation would be is that going
336 forward if there's a census to be done, that we do some sort of information
337 campaign to say 'here's the amnesty period, we know you don't have your
338 dogs registered,' this is the period and then after that we intend to take
339 more strict enforcement. Even so, I gotta be honest on something that's a
340 violation, we're going to ask cops to use good good discretion and good
341 judgment on when it's appropriate to issue those tickets. Because there's a
342 variety of reasons people don't have dog issues. We run into people that
343 say that they can't afford it. We run into people that say that they didn't
344 know. We run into – you know there's all kinds of reasons that this doesn't
345 happen so that doesn't there's not a standard issue 'I just don't want to do
346 this,' or 'I don't want to pay my taxes' type - type thing so. We try to treat
347 each individual scenario as it comes to us.

348 Sue Donnelly: I just wanna I just want to clarify one point, we pay a
349 standard monthly fee to the ASPCA that will be reopening on North State
350 Road and even when they're up in Cortland. When a dog is taken to the
351 ASPCA the in order to get the dog out of jail - dog jail, they have to come to
352 the office and license the - if they're not licensed - license the dog and pay
353 a fee for the first for every day that the dog is there. So it's \$25 for the first
354 day and I think it's \$5 for every other day. That comes to the municipality so

355 that does not go to the SPC - we are already paying the SPCA, I just
356 wanted to clarify that – that [UNCLEAR] -

357 Chief Sylvester: Yeah, I don't know what - what I'm referring to is that we
358 have like a \$36,000 a year contract with them, that's based on the number
359 of animals that we bring there. And that's the reason that we're trying to
360 limit the number of animals that we bring there. The village pays \$36,000 a
361 year for ASPCA fees, I believe the Town has a separate contract with
362 them. And that's a lot of money for bringing dogs to the SPCA and I
363 understand there for variety of reasons, they need to be supported and all
364 that we're trying to sort of balance that out, so that we can keep our budget
365 down, and if that means giving people the dog back, encouraging them to
366 get signed up as opposed to ticketing them for it or trying to get -

367 Sue Donnelly: Yeah, in - a month, it is a multiple of reasons that you pay
368 that fee to the SPCA but yeah I get where you're coming from, but I think - I
369 like the amnesty period I don't mind that at all, but if we can get people
370 throughout - if we can make it our goal, since we have all dogs registering
371 now for June one. We - and we have many, many, many new people
372 moving into this community, every day we get calls from new folks that
373 have moved here. That we can say that you know for the 2022 we do more
374 of the or whatever January, we can all decide together it's - it's not have
375 when we want to start enforcing - it does, it would help your animal control
376 officer. It, you know and it helps everybody.

377 Dana Levenberg: Does anybody else have questions?

378 Jackie Shaw: Is this a mailing that we would do annually, is this a one off
379 mailing? What are you envisioning?

380 Sue Donnelly: It's you it's not every year mailing. And they do all the work
381 of it. They - they do all the addressing, they do everything. That - that
382 number is not them, giving us a list of every home they do everything for
383 you. Including the documentation of how we wanted it bilingual and - and
384 with the codes on it, and everything. So I see this not -

385 Dana Levenberg: So you're saying it's not every year. Not every year,
386 right?

387 Sue Donnelly: No it would not be every year. Would be a dog - dog census,
388 and then we could see how it goes after that because, again, the - making

389 people knowledgeable about what the responsibility ability is for their pet is
390 important, and maybe we could - you know we would just do more outreach
391 after that that you know says 'always remember your dog has to be
392 licensed.'

393 Dana Levenberg: Right. Right.

394 Sue Donnelly: But not every year, and so one - one time.

395 Dana Levenberg: Okay. Other questions?

396 Victoria Cafarelli: I just want to note, I did a very quick little calculation
397 based upon what Sue was saying, of how much percentage you get - the
398 you know the success rate so for looking at getting at least maybe 100%
399 more of what we currently have, I think the town keeps about \$10 to \$11
400 per dog license, some of the money does go to the State, so that alone
401 would be a payback of about \$4,000 in the first year if we were able to
402 accomplish that so.

403 Sue Donnelly: We actually keep everything but \$1 of a neuter dog and \$3
404 of a non-neutered dog. And the one that the biggest thing and - in - for
405 people that say they can't afford it it's a \$15 - it's \$15 for a new to dog and
406 it's \$23 for a non-unneutered a dog and for seniors over 60 it's \$1 so they
407 are coming in flooding us with their [UNCLEAR] -

408 Victoria Cafarelli: Everyone over 60 has got a dog all sudden.

409 Liz Feldman: Yeah well hopefully they're not saying they can't afford the
410 shots because that's a bigger issue.

411 Sue Donnelly: Yeah, it - exactly yeah, yeah.

412 Liz Feldman: And if they say that can we direct them to the ASPCA were
413 there?

414 Sue Donnelly: Yeah, I think I think they're just they're getting ready to move
415 back into their building, hopefully soon so I think that they're you know that
416 would be a great program to push when they're back in their building on
417 North State Road.

418 Dana Levenberg: Board is generally in favor of this? Can I see consensus
419 in that direction, yes? Yes. I don't - I'm sorry Councilwoman Feldman, I
420 couldn't tell [UNLCEAR] in a circle. Yes, no, maybe so?

421 Sue Donnelly: Did we lose in Northern [UNCLEAR]?

422 Dana Levenberg: We lost Northern yes, I actually just texted him. I don't
423 know what happened. We – I don't see him. I'm sorry and Councilman
424 Meyer, I can't see you. Okay we'll come back to that.

425 Sue Donnelly: Yeah, we could go back to that because we have another -

426 Dana Levenberg: Back to that question a little bit later so next on our
427 agenda is a discussion on the contract renewals for the Senior Taxi
428 Coupon Program. For a few years now there have been some
429 administrative challenges with this program which were only made more
430 clear during the pandemic. My office has been working with our Town
431 Clerk, Senior Program, and Ossining Police to develop some
432 recommended changes to this program to hopefully ease the administrative
433 challenges before we sign contracts for 2021. Madam Clerk I'm going to
434 turn it over to you to get our discussion started.

435 Sue Donnelly: So the Clerk's Office has taken responsibility of the taxi cab
436 drivers with the great - great help of the Police Department, they have been
437 nothing but fabulous putting this - putting this whole program together. So
438 we are down to after the pandemic, because you can imagine if anybody
439 was close to closing down or anything taxicab company wide, I think, at
440 one point, we had over 30 companies and 125 drivers we're down to about
441 12 or 13 companies now. And most of those companies are two car or one
442 car shops, we have a couple of larger ones and the largest one of all being
443 Equa. So we're now at a point where we have everyone licensed, every
444 medallion. Thank you police department again and again and again. They
445 do all the background checks, so everybody has been background checked
446 every car has been inspected by both a reliable station and the police
447 department. And they are all now with their - they have their medallions in
448 their cars, so what we would like to suggest is that we allow all the
449 companies all the registered companies to be able to drive the seniors
450 around. In the past we've had both three or five companies that were
451 allowed to drive the seniors around, we ran into some issues last year
452 because we had to have some of the companies in to have a discussion on
453 how to - how to - what customer service to a senior is all about I don't want
454 to get into any more about that, but we had some issues. So and we also
455 found out that a lot of the drivers are picking up the seniors and then

456 handing the coupons - it's done by a coupon - and handing the coupon off
457 to one of the companies. So if we let all the companies drive the seniors
458 around it gives the seniors more competitive - competition, so they can
459 choose which driver - which company that they favor and it allows the
460 companies to be - to come in and do this if they choose to. Now a couple of
461 the problems with the system is that there have been times in the past that
462 a taxi coupon would want to be used from driving let's say from one of the
463 condo developments over out in the town to Phelps Hospital. The drivers
464 don't feel that they're getting a fair shake with that we have not raised the
465 taxi rates. We'll do something with talking to the Village about... I don't think
466 it's quite the time to do that right when you're coming out of a pandemic, it
467 would be better for the drivers, but not necessarily for the users. So what
468 we would like to suggest we do and we pulled a contract, we had a
469 contract. So at one point, the discussion had been that we would have a
470 different ticket for going to Phelps Hospital for a senior and we could have
471 a regular going about town coupon and then it could be a Phelps - let's say
472 they want to go to Shop Rite - coupon because that's again that's a pretty
473 big drive for a taxi driver. We would have meetings with each individual –
474 individual company and explain to them how it will be done again with
475 these with the police department, because they have great partners on this
476 whole taxi program and lay down the law as to what they - what they we
477 should expect from them in driving our most important people around the
478 senior citizens here in Ossining. And we also had discussed with the
479 Supervisors Office having a much more frequent - much more frequent,
480 nice English Sue – much more frequent when they come in and they turn in
481 their tickets. Like it could not be more than quarterly because right now,
482 you just get a bag of these tickets can. So it's a program that the town has
483 been involved in for many years of supplementing the senior citizens so
484 that they can have taxi coupons. But we need to, we need to regulate who
485 drives the senior citizens around and who does the senior nutrition program
486 authorized, but because we're down to so few taxi companies now. We feel
487 that we can do it and monitor it, so that there is no abuse of our seniors.

488 Victoria Cafarelli: And I just want to note, you know we've spoken to also to
489 obviously the Senior Nutrition Program about this and I think one of the
490 more recently they've been getting a lot of complaints from seniors
491 because they have to wait a long time to get a ride, because there are

492 limited to so few companies. So I think, by opening it up, you know we're
493 having seniors who are waiting 45 minutes to get picked up to go
494 someplace that they need to go. So by giving them more options that will
495 make it much easier [UNCLEAR]. Right.

496 Dana Levenberg: Yeah, no. I think it sounds it sounds good to have a little
497 more competition for them to treat our seniors better -

498 Sue Donnelly: Yep.

499 Dana Levenberg: - and get a little more, you know more options for our
500 seniors and especially if it's been whittled down so that we don't have you
501 know the glut companies as we used to, and I think that that sounds that
502 sounds good, is there, anybody who has any questions on the board
503 comments. Chief did you have anything you wanted to throw in there?

504 Chief Sylvester: No I'm good with it.

505 Dana Levenberg: Councilwoman Feldman?

506 Liz Feldman: So there's a separate ticket to go to Shop Rite -

507 Sue Donnelly: There will be.

508 Liz Feldman & Sue Donnelly: [UNCLEAR].

509 Sue Donnelly: Right.

510 Liz Feldman: [UNCLEAR] be able to purchase optionally?

511 Sue Donnelly: Yes, absolutely. Yep.

512 Dana Levenberg: So you could buy a few Shop Rite coupons, you buy a
513 few Phelps coupons and then -

514 Sue Donnelly: Then have your regular just - just to go to the doctor or - or
515 go around town yeah. Because it was it - we want to be really upfront with
516 the seniors and we want to be really upfront with the taxi drivers - taxi
517 companies, I learned by the drivers, so that there's no question when they
518 pick up somebody that they are going to do the right job. Yes, it would be
519 very detailed, you know, we would have many meetings with the seniors
520 we write - we write the, you know, give them a lot of information about it, so
521 that they know. And they could feel comfortable and between the police
522 and us walking - driving and walking around. I've never - I've never thought

523 I would learn more about taxis than I have in the last few months and I
524 watch every one of them for their little medallions and for all their
525 information. We chatted with each and every driver too when they came in,
526 to get their drivers licenses. We had that Saturday that we all worked to do
527 all the driver's license and anybody that comes in new too. Again it's a
528 requirement that our taxi drivers speak - speak both English and - and if
529 they and Spanish if - if the chosen language of theirs um because of the
530 fact that you never know who's going to get into your cab and who's going
531 to take a ride with you.

532 Liz Feldman: So you're saying that all of our taxi drivers are bilingual and
533 they now have a license displayed the way the New York City ones do?

534 Sue Donnelly: Yes, and if they don't we - we encourage anybody, that is,
535 they have the exact it's a - it's a packet that goes up in the front of their car
536 it has their picture on it, and if they don't have that and they're driving - I
537 have a couple of things say about that, but if they don't have that and
538 they're driving if you just report them to us, we can take care of it
539 immediately. The other thing is, we seem to have some people that think
540 they can drive around - and they're not Lyft or Uber – drive around and pick
541 up people that is not allowed. We have people that have paid good money
542 for those medallions good money for their driver's licenses - their taxi
543 driver's licenses - and when you ever see that we can't be everywhere, the
544 police can't be everywhere, all the time, so if anybody out there, or anybody
545 on this board sees anything like that then just get us, inform us and we'll
546 have it taken care of.

547 Dana Levenberg: [UNCLEAR] -

548 Sue Donnelly: Some of the windows

549 Dana Levenberg: - [UNCLEAR] the license plate number.

550 Sue Donnelly: The license plate number yeah. You don't - we don't ask you
551 to go up and - and do anything just give us the license plate number and
552 we'll take care of it.

553 Dana Levenberg: Okay.

554 Dana Levenberg & Sue Donnelly: [UNCLEAR].

555 Dana Levenberg: Are there other questions, comments, thought? Is there
556 anybody who thinks this is a bad idea?

557 Liz Feldman: Oh, I think it's about time that there's a little more regulation
558 and the medallions and the licensing seems to be a good thing, so that
559 there can be accountability. When one bad apple starts acting up and it
560 doesn't go against all of them. That way, the person or senior can have the
561 name and the car number and report it and maybe we'll get somewhere
562 with getting it under control. So that's great.

563 Dana Levenberg: Thank you. Alright, without further ado we shall go on to
564 our next item on our work session agenda and that is a police update from
565 Chief Sylvester. So thanks for sticking with us Chief and part of the
566 previous discussion we know dogs and taxis are not the only thing that you
567 deal with down at headquarters so glad to have you here this evening for a
568 departmental report. Take it away.

569 Chief Sylvester: [UNCLEAR] -

570 Sue Donnelly: Can I just – I just - I want to say a fond farewell. I'm going
571 to—

572 Dana Levenberg: Oh thank you so much.

573 Sue Donnelly: -take off now.

574 Dana Levenberg & Sue Donnelly: [UNCLEAR]

575 Sue Donnelly: I know [the] Chief is going to give a fantastic presentation so
576 have a good night everybody.

577 Dana Levenberg: You too, thank you.

578 Chief Sylvester: Alright, so I'm a lot going on in first quarter of 2021
579 obviously COVID has changed the way that we do business and has held
580 us back from doing a lot of the things that we love. But some different
581 things that we got into in January we started a brand new Facebook page -
582 yet another way to communicate with us. Policia de Ossining which is a
583 fully Spanish language version of our Facebook page, it is independent of
584 the regular Facebook page and posts completely different content. We've
585 done some research, we believe it to be the only of its kind anywhere, at
586 least in the United States. There may be countries doing two different

587 languages abroad, but in the United States and in most of the English
588 speaking countries we've not found another police department that does
589 Facebook pages completely in two languages, so very cool. As a result of
590 that Detective Jeff Chavez who managed that, along with a bunch of other
591 partners in the department, he has been nominated for the International
592 Association Chiefs of Police 40 under 40 Award this year. Judging
593 completed yesterday so hopefully we'll find out that he will be an honoree.
594 The public won't find out for a while, if he gets it, he will find out sometime
595 this summer. So we're looking forward, and I think he's an excellent
596 candidate and hopefully the - the other judges that got his package looks
597 very favorably upon him.

598 In March, we did compliance checks for over the winter, we spent a lot of
599 time with snow - a lot of snow this year which really became our focus and
600 becomes hard to do a lot of the other fun stuff we do. In March we did
601 compliance checks of retail establishment selling alcoholic beverages in the
602 town and village. There are, I believe 17 or 18 that were open on the night
603 that we did this. Three of them failed, all of them in the Village, one being
604 the BP station on North Highland Avenue, the Sunaco at 197 South
605 Highland Avenue, and the CVS all of them were issued appropriate
606 appearance tickets and referred to the alcoholic beverage control – alcohol
607 - to the New York State Liquor Authority rather, under the Alcohol Beverage
608 Control Law. Let's see what else we got going on here... A couple of weeks
609 ago we got a notice from New York State Department of Homeland
610 Security and emergency services that our SWAT team has been
611 accredited. So we have a - it's a group of officers that are regular on patrol
612 augment out when get special training, they are filtered in throughout all of
613 our squads and, in addition to their accredited status they were granted
614 \$75,000 for equipment which should be helpful in getting lots of protective
615 gear for that team, historically, they were used for things like high risk
616 search warrants we haven't done one of those in a number of years. At this
617 point, they exist for purposes of high risk rescue and things of that sort of in
618 the occasion that we've had some barricaded subjects. Typically, we don't.
619 In the last couple of years, we really haven't had to call out the team, but
620 those officers individually being on patrol become the leaders of their squad
621 and when we've run into things individually they've been able to defuse
622 situations with –

623 Unclear: My -

624 Chief Sylvester: - and equipment. Is that- did somebody say something?
625 Victoria was that you? In any event, a being on patrol they're able to, you
626 know, lend their - their additional training in experience and equipment. And
627 they've diffused a number of situations that could have been much, much
628 worse. Uh let's see what else... We are currently working with the
629 International Association Chiefs of Police. The professional standards,
630 ethics, and image committee. I'm on that a number of officers here are
631 working with me on this, this week we attended the Policy Council mid-year
632 where we've presented on a branding and image campaign that's going to
633 be going out through the ICP nationwide branding - branding an image
634 campaign for policing, which will include tools for measuring community
635 sentiment with police departments that will go beyond surveys and such,
636 that don't usually carry much value because they're sort of limited. We've
637 got some really cool stuff that'll be coming out with that later on.

638 Last week, also presented for the Department of Justice on their
639 international training - International Criminal Investigations Training
640 Program. We presented, I did with chiefs from California Colorado Illinois
641 on leadership and communications and we're also participating right now in
642 a study through the police executive research forum, together with the
643 National Institute of Justice on Crisis Communications.

644 And one last thing if you may have seen last month we put out a recruiting
645 video filmed by Sergeant Donahue, written by me, filmed - filmed and
646 edited by him on behalf of the Westchester County Association of Chiefs of
647 Police to recruit for the upcoming police exam. The sign up for that was
648 very, very short. We have no control over that that's a Westchester County
649 decision, but that test is coming up in two weeks. So for those that may not
650 have had an opportunity to see that video. We created a campaign
651 specifically targeting underrepresented segments of our population, so
652 targeting black or African American, women, LGBTQ, and Hispanic and
653 Latinx members of our community to take this test and the campaign is
654 really focusing not so much on promoting people to take this because it's a
655 great job but focusing on all of the reasons that people might be reluctant to
656 come into a business that's - that's under quite a bit of scrutiny, right now.
657 So we won't know the results of that campaign for probably six months until

658 the grades come back. Together with that we also partnered with the
659 Guardians, which is the Black and African American law enforcement
660 Association, the Westchester Hispanic Law Enforcement Association, and
661 the New York Women in Law Enforcement to provide scholarships for a
662 test prep program. Of the 100 scholarships, I believe seven of them went to
663 residents of Ossining - whether town or village. So, so good stuff there
664 helping people to get involved to take this test to try and change things.
665 And the reason that, when we so a lot of things we do we've got a great
666 following through all of our social media nonsense, but the reality is - is that
667 we tried to put this out as a county-wide message, because the reality is
668 that I can recruit for Ossining and I can do things in my small corner of this
669 county. But if we don't change the way we recruit county-wide, statewide,
670 nationwide we don't actually change anything. So you know it's nice to say
671 that we do something well right here, but we also have to acknowledge that
672 our small piece is not going to change. We can change things for a few
673 people right here, and right now, but if we want to make a meaningful
674 change, we have to look a little bit more broad - so we didn't. We didn't
675 necessarily put the Ossining stamp on that project but definitely know that
676 behind the scenes our staff was - was leading the way on much of that and
677 it's um some stuff we're really proud of. So that's the Police Department
678 first quarter 2021.

679 Dana Levenberg: How many how many videos were part of that campaign -
680 your video campaign?

681 Chief Sylvester: We did one of these zero dollar budget that we filmed in
682 four days.

683 Dana Levenberg: And how - how long is it?

684 Chief Sylvester: Three minutes, and it was seen 50,000 times.

685 Dana Levenberg: Did everybody – did everybody see it?

686 Chief Sylvester: It was on our Facebook page - it was on Facebook, it was
687 on Twitter.

688 Dana Levenberg: Can we see it – can we see it now?

689 Chief Sylvester: I'm -

690 Victoria Cafarelli: [UNCLEAR] video cued up.

691 Chief Sylvester: If you guys give me a few minutes I can go dig it out
692 somewhere, but you gotta - you gotta hold on here - let me see if I can find
693 it um...

694 Liz Feldman: I saw it a few times, it was very well done.

695 Dana Levenberg: too I just thought it would be fun well since I'm in - I'm in
696 a video sharing mode this evening.

697 Chief Sylvester: Hang on - let me see if I can find it.

698 Dana Levenberg: Well, you...

699 Chief Sylvester: See how fast, I can type here. Oh holy cow, way to put me
700 on the spot on this one.

701 Dana Levenberg: Doing good if you don't want to [UNCLEAR] -

702 Chief Sylvester: No, I've got it hold on one second for me here. Victoria you
703 gonna let me share?

704 Victoria Cafarelli: Yes, you should be able to.

705 Chief Sylvester: Alright, give me one second here... safari... police... this
706 one...Here you go.

707 [SCREENSHARE BEGINS]

708 Dana Levenberg: All right, thank you.

709 Video: My community and the police didn't always have the best
710 relationship. Usually, when we saw the police, it was for something
711 negative. A lot of people I know are afraid of the I don't want people to think
712 I've turned my back on them. I could do this, but why. It was hard enough
713 to get respect in the job in already in. As a queer person I don't want to
714 have to hide, who I am. It hasn't always been great but a lot has changed.
715 Our community needs us. It's still a challenge but we're making it happen.
716 By being authentic with ourselves we can be honest with others. I want to
717 change the narrative. When people from our community to see me I want
718 them to see themselves. I want my family to be proud of me. I want to work
719 somewhere that I'll be accepted. You'll be a hero to kids. Someone people
720 can identify with and someone they can relate to. I'm ready; to take a
721 chance; to make it happen; to make a difference; to change the world; to be

722 someone people can trust; someone who understands them. We've done
723 some good but we're not there yet. We need someone to carry the torch.
724 You can't do it alone, but it begins with one. It begins with me. And me. And
725 me. It begins with one.

726 Dana Levenberg: Very nice.

727 [SCrEENSHARE ENDS]

728 Chief Sylvester: So that was - the reason we were only able to do one of
729 those number one Westchester County only gave us a couple of weeks
730 notice that this test was coming up, and then you have 30 days to sign
731 people up. So lead time to write that, plan it, with no one here that's a
732 moviemaker; we watched YouTube videos to find out how to do things - it's
733 the Ossining way, we asked for no money and we make it happen so that
734 entire thing was filmed with an iPhone and a \$50 app. That, I think the cop
735 bought out of his pocket so haha you know it's - it's definitely it's a labor of
736 love. It's something we believe in the - the - the important thing, so this is a
737 very personal to me - we created a framework for that, but all of the
738 dialogue from that – from that the things that the cop says, the first one
739 from Greenburgh who says 'my relationship with the police wasn't always
740 good.' Those are his words we went and said tell me about growing up as a
741 black man in Westchester County, what was it like and he told us this story
742 about what it was like growing up in - I think he grew up in Greenburgh and
743 he was talking about how you know of cops came, it was always just
744 because of the complaint wasn't anything positive. And when we talk to
745 other people they talk about being an LGBTQ community and they say
746 things like 'I don't know anybody else in Westchester in law enforcement
747 that's like me' and 'I don't have anyone to talk to but when I go on calls
748 there's people that are looking for someone that can that can identify with.'
749 You know, we talked to the young man from Eastchester and he talks
750 about working in a - it's a very affluent community they don't have a very
751 large Hispanic or Latinx community there. And the importance of him being
752 there and being able to identify and seeing people in restaurants and when
753 he walks by and they're not really his way he described it to us was. They
754 look at him and they smile but they're not really sure if they should smile or
755 not, because maybe he's changed. And you know there's a lot of
756 reluctance on the part of a lot of people to get into this business and you

757 know these are not folks that necessarily volunteered for this, these are
758 people whose Chiefs looked at them and said that's the person who's here
759 they've got the story they're the real authentic want to be a part of this so.
760 We gave them a concept for the video, and then we interviewed them and
761 said tell me your story, and this is what they told us. So we've been trying
762 to coax them into I think we may host some of them on a clubhouse chat,
763 which is a new app it's a whole other thing we're going to get into. And let
764 them tell their story in a little bit more detail there's some national level
765 organizations - fraternal organizations - for people of color in different
766 segments that are looking to meet them and want to talk with them, so I
767 know that someone from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation is looking to
768 head up a conversation with some of these cops and we're looking to do
769 that, hopefully soon. So I'm –

770 Dana Levenberg: How many -

771 Chief Sylvester: - proud of that and - I'm sorry?

772 Dana Levenberg: How many hits did you say it got? How many viewings?

773 Chief Sylvester: Across all the platforms - across all platforms, we counted
774 50,000.

775 Dana Levenberg: It's great. And do we know how many - how many people
776 actually registered take the test?

777 Chief Sylvester: No, we - that's a Westchester County thing, so we won't
778 have any knowledge, the only thing that will actually get. And truthfully, we
779 may never know the answer to how well this worked out other than not in in
780 real time data. We may anecdotally be able to say that we hosted
781 interviews and here's what the folks look like when they came in. But the, to
782 my knowledge, New York State and Westchester County don't collect
783 demographic data. So I don't believe that we'll ever truly be able to know
784 exactly what the change is from year to year, we can certainly look at who
785 we hire and how those numbers come out but in terms of the available
786 candidates. Typically, we don't have those numbers. You know, our goal is
787 to strive for opportunities for as many people as possible to encourage
788 people. The reality is, when you look at cops and people say 'what makes a
789 good cop' - and this is one of my favorite conversations – it's not a criminal
790 justice degree - coming from a professor of criminal justice - it's not a law

791 degree - coming from a lawyer - it's, it's everything. It's people with life
792 experience that can identify with another human being and when you hear
793 the stories and these people that's really what we're speaking to is that I
794 don't need. This degree or that degree I don't care if you have a degree in
795 history or degree in geology. I need somebody who comes here with some
796 education, because education is super important. But pair that with some
797 life experience that - that helps you to be able to relate, with people and to
798 be able to this is - this is a people business it's - it's not a - it's not a data
799 business it's not black and white it's thousand shades of gray. And that's -
800 that's really what we need so, you know, we're hopeful that that whoever it
801 is that falls into that space sees this. And we'll track as best as we can,
802 afterwards, but I just don't know there's a mechanism for that right now.

803 Dana Levenberg: Do you any of my colleagues have any questions?

804 Liz Feldman: I just wanted to shout out to the Chief for making - making it
805 known through all the different platforms. Excuse my voice - that the test
806 was coming that the test was available. It really was such a short window
807 and I'm betting that Ossining as a whole, had a better exposure to the idea
808 than many other Community so I wanted to thank you, Chief.

809 Chief Sylvester: Thank you, so the one thing we do know is the total
810 number of people that will take the test or the total number that will fall
811 within our municipality and last time we doubled the number of people that
812 took the test, but based on the interviews that we held, we didn't change
813 the demographics, so we know where we had success and failure last time.
814 And we tried to target that in particular on this one, so we know that we're
815 good at reaching people we just didn't necessarily reach um and you know
816 people have varying opinions on - on over targeting for one thing or
817 another, I don't think that's really the issue here, I think that there's - there's
818 people of all different demographics, that would really. be really fantastic at
819 this job, and I think the issue is not that they. Number one, people do not
820 know about this test that is widely acknowledged across Westchester
821 County that unless you know a cop, it is very hard to know when the test is
822 and that's why we try to use our platform. You know this, this idea that we
823 have something of a community following. It's a strength right, it's a gift that
824 we have, that people know where we are and we'll hear from us. We try to
825 use that to get a message out that's not otherwise shared. I have this job

826 because a detective handed me an application one day and said 'go be a
827 cop.' We're trying to be that for - for hundreds if not thousands of other
828 people, and it may work, it may not. But that's the goal, the goal is to make
829 that same opportunity I had from a police officer to having an application
830 we're trying to pass that on to everybody if - if they're open and willing for it.

831 Dana Levenberg: Yeah I think you did a great job too. Just out of curiosity
832 on a separate subject I know that we didn't have any some complaints
833 about dogs off leashes and I want to know if you had any new feedback on
834 that.

835 Chief Sylvester: So we didn't - I hadn't checked in with them on what they
836 found when they went there, but I know that we had some conversations
837 with the neighbor around Ryder Park. With some concerns about dogs off
838 leash. You know, one of the conversations, one of the things I sort of
839 alluding to before, is that you know violation - so within the criminal
840 procedure law, you have violations, misdemeanors, felonies; dogs off leash
841 being a violation - they have to be observed. And people know that if we
842 don't see it happen, we can't write the ticket. So sometimes these things
843 are not necessarily something that get accomplished through tickets, there
844 are accomplished by influence, right? Being present, letting people - the
845 idea that we're coming back around again just because you saw us doesn't
846 mean you get a few hours of free time now. So we're having conversations
847 in the park with everybody that's there to encourage people. Um you know
848 look everybody's been locked in their house for a long time, and people are
849 sort of spreading their wings at this point and freeing their leashes I guess.
850 It's something that needs to be worked on, so I don't know how many dogs,
851 if any, we found without a leash, but I know that the animal control officer
852 during the day has been through Ryder Park frequently. I know the cops
853 are there at night. I'm there from baseball from time to time, so I see them
854 coming through. I'm assuring that they're there. I've had some
855 conversations in a number of different parks, with people myself personally.
856 You know just to remind them that, even if your dog is super well trained
857 and you think that's okay, aside from the fact that there's a law, it's really
858 just common courtesy, that your neighbors that some people are not as
859 comfortable with dogs and when a person is uncomfortable the dog can ten
860 - typically sense that and you know, it makes for uncomfortable situation so
861 even - even aside from the law just be nice to your neighbors. That's really

862 the conversation we're having people don't want to comply, we certainly
863 have the ability to write tickets we're trying to be community influencers first
864 but um you know we've always got the tickets in our back pocket so.

865 Dana Levenberg: Great and we just got up some new 'keep your dog on a
866 leash' sign up at Ryder. So hopefully that will remind as well. All right
867 wonderful. If there are no further questions - are there any further
868 questions? And I say no there are not... with that I thank you very much
869 and we're going to move on to our next Work Session agenda item. Have a
870 great night.

871 So to wrap up our meeting tonight we have a presentation from our
872 comprehensive plan team from WXY Studios. And I think that's just Chris
873 Rice, as part of the team tonight, and also our Town Planner Valerie
874 Monastra is here. She's played an instrumental role in this project - as the
875 Board is aware. The process of developing a new Comprehensive Plan has
876 been in full swing for a couple of months with to public engagement
877 sessions and surveys under our belt and goals drafted. And lots of input
878 from our – our Comprehensive Planning Committee. So Chris is the project
879 manager for Ossining at WXY and he's here with us tonight to deliver a
880 presentation with an update on our progress thus far. Thank you so much
881 for joining us Chris. What's your one word, are you going to start out
882 [UNCLEAR]?

883 Chris Rice: Yeah, put me on the spot.

884 Dana Levenberg: [UNCLEAR]

885 Chris Rice: Glad to be here. Thanks everyone, yes, my name is Chris Rice
886 I'm a director of planning at WXY Studio. And here to give you an update
887 on the progress for the Comp Plan. So I'm going to share my screen here
888 to talk you through a presentation.

889 [SCREENSHARE BEGINGS]

890 Alright, and you should feel free to jump in with questions as I move
891 through this. So tonight, I really want to just talk you through the Comp Plan
892 process overall and sort of where we are and the overall timeline, give you
893 an update on the Steering Committee and the work that they have been up
894 to over the last several months, update you on the Community engagement

895 and sort of what work done today, and then share the draft goals and get
896 any feedback that you have, and talk about next steps.

897 So, to get started, I just want to talk through the Comp Plan process as a
898 whole, we like to think about it as sort of four larger phases. The first one
899 being learn, where we really dive into existing conditions and start to pull
900 out major themes. Create, that's where we really start to draft goals
901 objectives and the Comp Plan as a whole. And then finalize, where we
902 collect feedback and refine the Comp Plan based on everything we've
903 heard from the community and sort of end with this action agenda sort of
904 looking towards implementation, which is the fourth and final phase, but
905 sort of happens once the Comp Plan is complete. And you'll see there's
906 public engagement throughout each phase. We're here in sort of the create
907 phase we're sort of at the end of that, sort of moving into the finalized
908 phase that's - that's where we are in the process right now.

909 As a part of the Comp Plan process, we - the town put together a steering
910 committee, we have been meeting basically monthly since August of 2020.
911 On the screen I've sort of outline the sort of major themes for each of those
912 meetings back in August we had a kickoff meeting, where we really introd -
913 the steering committee had an opportunity to introduce - introduce
914 themselves the project team why pace we introduced ourselves, we sort of
915 talk through what a Comp Plan process entails and had some initial
916 discussion on sort of insights that they wanted to share and topics they
917 hope to cover and through the process. From there we moved into a very
918 extensive and existing conditions analysis. We broke that into two parts,
919 the first - so the first part, we looked at demographic information -
920 information related to transportation, culture, community, education. And in
921 that second phase we move looked at land use and zoning information, the
922 environment, and economy and all about analysis is available on the
923 project website, which I will share at the end of this presentation. Then, in
924 October, we had a public workshop which I'll talk about more in more detail
925 in the next slide. In January we moved into a housing analysis, where we
926 looked at both historical housing development and also potential
927 development opportunities, based on the town's current zoning. In
928 February we moved into a strengths and weaknesses mapping exercise
929 with the Steering Committee, which became the activity that we used for
930 public workshop number two.

931 In March, we spent that meeting going through an exercise to refine the
932 draft goals which will present later on, as well. We had our second public
933 workshop on April 8. And just last week we had another workshop with this
934 Jane committee to start to refine and pull out objectives and strategies
935 which are really the recommendations and the heart of the Comp Plan.

936 To summarize the community engagement, it's been robust and there's
937 ongoing, as I said, we had our first public workshop on November 19 where
938 we had 100 participants. There was a community survey that followed that
939 public workshop where we received 350 survey responses. Our community
940 engagement partners Pace held thematic focus groups within
941 environmental committees and business owners in the Town, and we have
942 shared the summary from those meetings with the Steering Committee. We
943 had our second public workshop on April - April 8 which drop - brought in
944 70 participants. We also have to-go packets for those folks who are not
945 able to attend that meeting. Those are available at public libraries
946 throughout the town. And that's in progress and there's also a Community
947 survey specifically to solicit feedback on the draft goals that's also in
948 progress and we'll have a third and final public workshop in the summer in
949 the next few months. So I'll pause there. Any questions about steering
950 committee meetings or the Community engagement thus far?

951 Dana Levenberg: Just to add that we really we only have well we have a
952 one library in Ossining and one in Briarcliff, but we have little free libraries
953 So, our free little have also housed our community survey and Victoria
954 Cafarelli going around looking to see if anybody's responded to them we've
955 had a few. So it's another way for people to - to engage in the survey, I
956 think, are we done collecting them, yet? I can't remember this, is the draft
957 goals feedback.

958 Victoria Cafarelli: I think we we'll have it open through the end of this week,
959 so you can either do it online on the website and email it to the - the project
960 team, or like Chris shared and those various locations will be doing my
961 rounds on Friday picking all those up so have some time still.

962 Chris Rice: Excellent. Now I'd like to just share the sort of graphical so you
963 have a sense of where things are headed, these were developed with
964 Community input. I'm just going to read through them connectivity and
965 mobility, develop an interconnected network of complete streets, such as

966 implementing accessible sidewalks, protected bike lanes and improve
967 street crossings to ensure a safe and equal - equitable mobility for users of
968 all ages and abilities, whether by - by car on foot or by bike.

969 For open space and natural resources we have promote access to regional
970 to and regional connections between open spaces, protect and promote
971 stewardship of environmental assets such as parks, trees, streams, and
972 wetlands. Improve access to natural resources for recreation and public
973 health benefits and encourage the creation of new urban spaces.

974 For housing development in preservation, we have maintained existing
975 neighborhood character, such as look feel and scale and ensuring new
976 development aligns with the existing neighborhood context by balancing
977 the expansion of housing types and affordable housing opportunities with
978 the preservation of open space and mitigation of environmental
979 infrastructure impacts incurred and mix of uses and the business districts,
980 to stimulate the local economy.

981 For sustainable infrastructure, we have strengthen and modernize the built
982 environment by encouraging the use of renewable energy and green
983 building practices, expanding broadband Internet access and promoting
984 best practices for maintaining the communities build assets.

985 For community and culture we have protect historic resources, support arts
986 and cultural institutions, as well as nonprofit and community based
987 organizations, and expand opportunities for recreation, education,
988 entertainment, cultural, engagement ,and tourism slash eco-tourism for
989 those of all ages and abilities.

990 And lastly, economy: support existing businesses and attract new
991 businesses that meet local needs and the town's financial needs
992 encouraged and appropriate mix abuses and commercial corridors and
993 activate public spaces in order to support the overall commercial and social
994 environment. Including improvement and parks inclusion of street furniture,
995 such as benches and lighting tree - tree planting and the creation of
996 sidewalks.

997 So these are meant to be broad and capture a lot of ideas, the next phase
998 of the Comp Plan is drilling down to the objectives and strategies which
999 gets much more specific in terms of the ideas that they're recommending

1000 and sort of that's where we are in the process. Any questions or comments
1001 around any of the content and the - and the goals, feedback, ideas that you
1002 feel are missing or you have further questions on?

1003 Dana Levenberg: Should we stop sharing for a second just so we could
1004 see...

1005 Chris Rice: Yeah.

1006 Dana Levenberg: ...everybody.

1007 [SCREENSHARE STOPS]

1008 Dana Levenberg: Just to see if we have any questions from the Board, any
1009 feedback. Anybody have anything that they wanted to add or any questions
1010 about the process for far?

1011 Valerie Monastra: I will say, I will say there's been quite an iteration on
1012 these goals, so I think you know, to a large extent they take those goals
1013 specifically took into consideration steering committees, you know
1014 thoughts, as well as public comment and so there's been a lot of back and
1015 forth, and so we are still that's the reason why we're also taking public
1016 comment continuously on the draft goals, because we might also and then
1017 those again, but this is where they are at this point in time.

1018 Liz Feldman: So, with the survey that's out there, this is still a work in
1019 progress and those results will get incorporated into what the wants and
1020 goals of the whole community are?

1021 Valerie Monastra: Yes.

1022 Chris Rice: That is correct.

1023 Liz Feldman: So it's very important that everybody fill out their survey or not
1024 complaint.

1025 Valerie Monastra: [UNCLEAR]

1026 Dana Levenberg: Always a good suggestion.

1027 Chris Rice: We welcome lots of feedback, so yes.

1028 UNCLEAR: [UNCLEAR]

1029 Dana Levenberg: Okay, so that's it for questions for that? Are we going
1030 through anything else? Next steps?

1031 Chris Rice: Just one - one last yep one - one last slide on next steps. To
1032 your point Dana and Valerie we're going to be using the feedback from the
1033 public workshops, the community survey. All the feedback that we've
1034 collected to date, to sort of build out the full list of draft - draft objectives
1035 and strategies that is our next step and where we are right now. Once we
1036 finalize that we'll be putting together the final the final Comp Plans or have
1037 a full draft history, all the other pieces of a Comp Plan that's something
1038 context as well. And then we'll begin to sort of prepping plan for public
1039 workshop number three so that is - those are our next steps.

1040 Dana Levenberg: All right. And...

1041 Chris Rice: Great.

1042 Dana Levenberg: Valerie to you pass you wanted to add, or you want to
1043 stop sharing again and oh there's that's the website for our plan - for Comp
1044 Plan, specifically, and you can also sign up get email updates. Right
1045 Victoria, who do they - do they email you or is it can you do it right on the
1046 website? I don't remember the best way.

1047 Victoria Cafarelli: You can sign up on the website, and you can sign up on
1048 this website, the project website, you can also sign up on our website. Or,
1049 yes, certainly if you just can't figure out how to do it, we do have a project
1050 email address to which is SustainableOssining@TownofOssining.com and I
1051 can certainly add them to the distribution list. We have - we have about 100
1052 people who are on that dedicated distribution list, we do also share out
1053 information with our larger distribution list but definitely a lot of good
1054 involvement and feedback from the community, which is really great.

1055 Chris Rice: And lastly, I just want to share –

1056 Dana Levenberg: And –

1057 Chris Rice: Oh go ahead, Dana, sorry.

1058 Dana Levenberg: I was just gonna say, and the committee itself is sort of
1059 tasked with sharing back out with their own groups, you know, everybody
1060 was came into the process and was appointed by this Board because they
1061 represented a part of the Community that felt, you know, it felt like was

1062 important as a voice, you know, so there - there, there was themselves but
1063 they're also representing different voices of the community. To bring to
1064 bear on the Comp Plan so as much as they come in with their ideas we
1065 also are hoping that people share back out the - the groups that they feel
1066 that they most closely aligned with. That's all. Go ahead, Chris.

1067 Chris Rice: Great you know, I just wanted to plug that if you're interested in
1068 taking a deeper look at any of the presentations or the summaries from the
1069 public workshops. Different recordings from the public workshop they're all
1070 available on the project website so feel free to take a look and dig around.
1071 That's it.

1072 [SCREENSHARE ENDS]

1073 Dana Levenberg: And I will just say that you know as much as people were
1074 very hesitant about having meetings via zoom and you know there's no
1075 doubt that they're different. But, in some ways it makes it easier, it makes it,
1076 you know they're there can be breakout groups, there can be you know
1077 special tools that are used to you know gain specific input from the
1078 community, and I think that you know we've seen a lot of participation, I
1079 don't know that we would have gotten 100 people in a room for that first
1080 public workshop. So you know, again, even though dropped off a little bit
1081 with the last one, we got those 350 survey responses and hoping to get
1082 more for the draft goals as well.

1083 Liz Feldman: Do you feel it's a pretty wide and representative demographic
1084 of our community that has been responding?

1085 Dana Levenberg: That's a good question. I don't know that we have any
1086 kind of just disaggregated data that on that, but we could certainly - I think
1087 we have may have some addresses and stuff like that - I don't - Chris, what
1088 do you have.

1089 Chris Rice: Information wise on that, yeah they're absolutely, if you take a
1090 look at the - the summary from the community survey that did we did collect
1091 some basic demographic information. It's fairly aligned with the overall town
1092 population I think it's skewed a little bit older that was sort of the only sort of
1093 sort of mismatch in terms of who are you hearing from, but overall it's just
1094 it's generally representative.

1095 Valerie Monastra: And I think one of the things that we're doing in trying to
1096 focus on, with the focus groups are identifying you know groups that might
1097 be under represented in like, for example, businesses. You know the
1098 environmental committees, we wanted to make sure we reached out to
1099 them, as you know that might be under - under representative in our public
1100 you know outreach and so that's why we're focusing on the focus groups,
1101 and I believe Pace they'll have like one or two focus groups that they are
1102 planning to undertake and some of them we've been talking about whether
1103 it's going to be focus - focus groups or whether it's actual individual reach
1104 outs to certain businesses or certain property owners to get some
1105 additional feedback from them directly.

1106 Dana Levenberg: And we also are hoping to get some input from staff. And
1107 when we get a little bit deeper into the strategies, I think that's where we
1108 think we might get some help from you know just some input from staff
1109 about you know there's things are so completely pie in the sky or things
1110 that are you know, should be thought about you know anything that's not in
1111 there anything you know that might not make sense that any you know that
1112 we can get feedback from some of our professionals.

1113 Valerie Monastra: Right, I mean, I can tell you I've already started
1114 broaching that topic to the Planning Board. To get their feedback and I'm
1115 hoping to have some sort of session with the Planning Board shortly to
1116 begin that kind of conversation and identify things that we weren't going to
1117 consider, including in the comprehensive planning strategies. And I did also
1118 shared directly out with our Land Use Boards and Recreation Advisory
1119 Boards and our environmental committees these the surveys, though, we
1120 are, you know as Valerie mentioned having some direct outreach to those
1121 groups so. Yeah hopefully, it will be a really good product and.

1122 Dana Levenberg: You know, we should also add as Board of Assessment
1123 for you, you haven't done that already which I just thought.

1124 Liz Feldman: And if we're skewing older have we thought about how to
1125 reach out to our younger demographic? Or there really is no way?

1126 Victoria Cafarelli: I mean, so we have been posting, sharing everything also
1127 out on our social media pages. But uh you know, I think that we can you
1128 know, certainly always do better, and you know it's perhaps a little under
1129 represented to in the in the steering committee so you know, we can

1130 certainly continue to share that out. And we did actually have some
1131 attendance at the first meeting from some high school students, which was
1132 interesting, there was a high school teacher who had shared with his class
1133 to attend to sort of learn more, and so I know I was in a group with a with
1134 somebody who was in high school and it was interesting to - to hear from
1135 that you know our high school population too, which was really exciting So
1136 hopefully we can continue that through the process.

1137 Liz Feldman: Now I had one in the first group as well.

1138 Dana Levenberg: Yeah I have a young person and one of my groups - it
1139 wasn't high school, but you know somebody who graduated from high
1140 school and then came back to live here after graduating college and not -
1141 not really you know definitely the younger demographic I would say. Okay,
1142 any other questions or any - any suggestions or anything that any of the
1143 other board members have or...

1144 Valerie Monastra: Or, I would recommend that the Board continues to
1145 remain engaged because, ultimately, at the end this becomes your
1146 document for adoption. So we'll continue reaching out to you, keeping you
1147 fully informed of the process. And, and we look forward to you know
1148 wrapping up this process in the next few months.

1149 UNCLEAR: Great.

1150 Liz Feldman: Have we see a lot of changes in the direction that the steering
1151 committee wants to go because of COVID?

1152 Dana Levenberg: Um, you mean just in general?

1153 Liz Feldman: Like where the process is on where we're going to be 10
1154 years from now than when you started and we weren't in the pandemic.

1155 Dana Levenberg: Well, I mean we started in the pandemic, so I would say
1156 that they -

1157 Liz Feldman: Yeah but we didn't realize was going to be that long.

1158 Valerie Monastra: Right, I think I think in terms of overall land use, I think
1159 there's a lot of sustainability elements that were already been identified as
1160 part of this overall comprehensive plan. That actually you know really
1161 aligned with what we saw over COVID. For example, like pedestrian

1162 access, and you know, creating that better pedestrian experience, you
1163 know, outdoor dining. You know, other modes of transportation, so those
1164 types of things have actually you know risen to the surface and are being
1165 incorporated and long even, you know, other issues like green energy and -
1166 and like I mean again, you know, not necessarily completely related to
1167 COVID, but the fact of the matter, that everyone is has been in their homes
1168 for so long and we're all starting to look at, you know, how, how can we,
1169 you know all of a sudden, our heat bills, you know or heater on or he is on
1170 all winter long every day, you know. So those types of things I think people
1171 are also starting to look at how can they become a little bit greener. Or you
1172 know more energy efficient, so all these types of elements are actually
1173 being wrapped into the overall Comprehensive Plan. I mean in terms of,
1174 you know, for example, things like where people risen with – rose questions
1175 with like density and that type of thing. I think through our larger part this
1176 really this particular plan is more or less focused on sustainability and the
1177 land uses that you currently have right now are not high density land uses
1178 so that's not something that even needs to be looked at, but I think in terms
1179 of overall housing. And just housing in general about how like the overall
1180 development programs, a lot of a - lot of builders are actually looking at you
1181 know allowing or creating buildings for like instead of Interior quarters,
1182 maybe some exterior quarters or different elements that you know people
1183 were concerned with during like whoa bid in but not necessarily having to
1184 decrease overall density within projects. It's more of a change of slight
1185 change in the building form.

1186 Liz Feldman: Thank you.

1187 Dana Levenberg: Yeah and I was gonna say they definitely think that you
1188 know the conversation right at the beginning and even at first - in the first
1189 public engagement session. Definitely, that the topic came up a lot about
1190 the impact of the pandemic and you know, again, people working from
1191 home or and how that you know influences everything, and you know
1192 people's desire to get outside and appreciation of the outside, certainly.
1193 You know all – all - all - all different related topics.

1194 Valerie Monastra: Right.

1195 Dana Levenberg: [UNCLEAR] pandemic.

1196 Valerie Monastra: Right.

1197 Victoria Cafarelli: We were also able to utilize a lot of our own data from like
1198 our assessor's office, so that we were getting some more real time
1199 information about home sales and things like that, so we didn't necessarily
1200 have to rely so much on some of the data that might not reflect what's
1201 actually going on as a result of the pandemic, so I think that was helpful to
1202 have to use some of our own information.

1203 Valerie Monastra: Right and - and to your point in, you know, the parks.
1204 That was something else that the committee, you know, since so many so
1205 many committee members actually had time to go in to their backyard and
1206 really start seeing what Ryder Park has to offer what some of these other
1207 parks or trail ways have to offer. So there's been a lot of really good ideas
1208 brought to the table on that as well, so to a large extent, I think the
1209 pandemic has actually you know pushed everybody to really rediscover
1210 their own communities, and I think that has really helped with feedback that
1211 we've gotten throughout this Comprehensive Plan process.

1212 UNCLEAR: Good.

1213 Dana Levenberg: What I just - just one quick example that's not actually
1214 exactly related to the Comp Plan, but, and I think I don't remember if you
1215 guys knew this or not, but one of the newer members that we appointed to
1216 the Rec Advisory Board, basically, you know, was a commuter until the
1217 pandemic and then during the pandemic really, you know, spend a lot more
1218 time in Ossining because she was working remotely and was taking care of
1219 you know, helping out with her grandson who I think lived with her and then
1220 kind of discovered 'oh there's all these parks' that she'd never known
1221 about. And you know that's what got her interested in even wanting to
1222 participate in the Rec Advisory Board. So I think we really are seeing
1223 exactly what Valerie was saying it was just you know, a new discovery of
1224 what is available on our community what's you know, whatever the public
1225 spaces and how can we take advantage of them, and you know how do we
1226 want to make sure that that we can use them to their fullest and preserve
1227 them in a way that is useful to all of us going forward.

1228 Liz Feldman: I'm very glad to hear that we're reaching out to our current
1229 businesses to see how we can help them and what might be beneficial to
1230 them going forward so...

1231 Dana Levenberg: Absolutely.

1232 Liz Feldman: Kudos.

1233 Dana Levenberg: And yes, and thank you so much to Chris and WXY and
1234 to Valerie for all of the work, and all of your great guidance and also to - to
1235 Tiffany and Jessica at Pace for the public engagement and it's been quite a
1236 team. And the Steering Committee has been fantastic and Jackie Shaw
1237 also serves as a liaison to the Steering Committee and she's been great as
1238 well, and also she's our one Unincorporated Board Member so she has that
1239 you know perspective living in Unincorporated Town, all of us have the
1240 perspective of representing the Unincorporated Town. So I think unless
1241 there are any other questions or comments, I think that kind of wraps up
1242 our Work Session for this evening. Anything else? Okay. Thank you again
1243 so much Chris. Thank you - thank you Valerie. And if I could have a motion
1244 to adjourn to executive session for advice of counsel and personnel.

1245 Jackie Shaw: So moved.

1246 Dana Levenberg: All those in favor?

1247 All: Aye.

1248 Dana Levenberg: Anybody opposed?

1249 Thank you so much for joining us tonight. Please join us next week for our
1250 Town Board legislative session on Tuesday, May 11 at 7:30pm via zoom.
1251 Happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers here and out there in the beautiful
1252 world enjoy. Cat – cat mothers – dog mothers too, we'll take them all.