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# *Committee Meeting*

of

## JOINT STATE LEASING AND SPACE UTILIZATION COMMITTEE

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**LOCATION:** Committee Room 1  
State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey

**DATE:** June 30, 2023  
12:30 p.m.

### **MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Senator Nicholas P. Scutari, Chair  
Assemblyman Raj Mukherji  
Jeffrey DeCicco



### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Mark McCaslin  
*Office of Legislative Services*  
*Committee Aide*

Tamara Loatman-Clark, Esq.  
*Committee Counsel*

*Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by*  
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,  
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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SENATOR NICHOLAS P. SCUTARI (Chair): I

call the Space Leasing Committee to order.

Can I get a roll call?

MR. McCASLIN: Chairman Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Here.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Here.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Here.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator, you have three members in attendance; you have a quorum.

And, the notice of this meeting of the State Leasing and Space Utilization Committee was provided to the Secretary of State, *The Trentonian*, and the State House Press on June 28, 2023, as part of the Open Public Meetings Act.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

The first order of business is the approval of the minutes of May 18, 2023.

Can I get a motion?

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: So moved.

MR. DeCICCO: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll Call.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the affirmative, zero in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

OK, next order of business is notices of proposed leases.

Department of Treasury.

**C H R I S T O P H E R C H I A N E S E:** Good afternoon, I am Chris Chianese, I am the Director of Property and Management Construction.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present the leases today on the agenda.

I would also like to thank the staff at DPMC, the Division of Law, and OLS, who work on the Space Utilization Committee.

The first item is NPL 4743. This NPL is for 10 years with two five-year renewal options, located at 5 Commerce Drive in Cranford. That was advertised and awarded to the lowest bid from the Division of Taxation, Field Audit, and Office of Criminal Investigation. The NPL is for not to exceed square footage of 17,477. This lease will consolidate two offices that are located at 124 and 153 Halsey Street in Newark. This NPL features a reduction in space for the agency, as well as a decrease in square footage identified for an employee.

Thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

And, not on this lease, but as a general thought, I've spoken on this before -- I've also spoken with the Governor's Office and had an idea for a bill.

With respect to a space study for the State's continuing needs of operations as we've moved into a different scope, or phase, of work from home -- which seems to be continuing. Obviously we were extending leases for significant periods of time and significant amounts of money, and my personal experience has been to walk through some of these buildings and not find anybody there.

So, I never know what the urgency is for the extension of leases when they are very sparsely attended. And, that's not a swipe at anybody here, it's just the reality that we're in. And, I think that we need to consider, moving forward, what kind of space we actually need -- whether it's flex space or other.

So, I am going to find a way to direct, either this department or through legislation, a space study for our continuing needs as we move forward. If we're going to continue with three people only working in the offices three days a week, then obviously we're going to have to do something in terms of savings. Just leaving these spaces wide open for days on end doesn't seem to be sensible. The people of New Jersey don't want to rent empty buildings and then extend those leases for five, 10, 20 years, for them to be empty. It doesn't make any fiscal sense. And, I've always had the thought process.

We're going to enter in these extraordinarily long leases, and we really need this space. And, we are the State -- who has more money than we do -- we should be looking to buy when appropriate. I know that we've done

that on a few occasions with motor vehicles, because we're not going to be out of the business.

So, that's an opening kind of thought process on things here. I've spoken to Assemblyman Mukherji about this, I know he shares some of these things -- I won't speak for him -- but it's really concerning for me when I send staff, or I personally go through some of these buildings -- and, you guys know, I've been to a lot of them -- and I see nobody there. And, then I get these requests to extend these leases -- emergencies, we've got to extend these leases. And, then there's hardly -- not nobody, but very few people -- there. So, we've got to start thinking out of the box in terms of how we can reduce our footprint, because we just don't simply need to have that much space.

So, I'll stop belaboring the point. I'll entertain a motion for NPL 4743.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Motion.

MR. DeCICCO: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll call.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the affirmative, zero votes in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

Next is the Department of Law and Public Safety.

And, just, my final thought -- not to beat this dead horse to death -- but it's been simpler for me with regards to State policing, because they don't work from home; they are in their spaces and on duty all the time. They have not had any downtime.

My only thought with them is, why don't we buy them some places instead of continuing to rent places? But, everyone knows my thought on that, so.

MR. CHIANESE: Senator, NPLs 2, 3, 8, and 9 are all for Law and Public Safety. Would you like me to present them together?

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes, thanks.

MR. CHIANESE: NPL 4227. This NPL is for a 10-year lease extension located at 809 Franklin Street in Woodbine, that will become effective the first full month following the execution of the lease amendment. This NPL is for the State Police for 8,661 square feet. The advertisement was waived for this NPL, as this proposed lease is with the borough of Woodbine.

The State Police requested this space to provide general and community policing to the residents of Upper Township, Dennis Township, Woodbine Borough, and Corbin City. Eighty parking spots are part of the lease to accommodate staff, State-owned vehicles, and visitors.

SENATOR SCUTARI: You can keep going unless there's questions. I am very familiar with all the agenda today.

MR. CHIANESE: OK.

NPL 4442. This NPL is for Law and Public Safety's Division of Criminal Justice and State Police. This proposed lease will provide for an

extension of the current lease terms, as well as expand the existing space. It is for a total of 53,645 square feet, located at 810 and 830 Bear Tavern Road in Ewing. The advertisement was waived for this lease extension of 10 years, as it will provide for a cost savings. Law and Public Safety requested that we continue their lease in the existing location and add additional space to satisfy their growth. The proximity of the New Jersey State Police West Trenton headquarters, as well as the ease of access to Trenton and Interstates 95 and 295, make this location ideal. Secured rooms for equipment and meeting rooms for witness interviews are present and available to accommodate their needs.

Number 8 is NPL 4761. The advertisement was waived for this lease, for this proposed lease. This is the emergency relocation for an interim replacement facility for Law and Public Safety due to the extensive and ongoing construction at their location, as well as growth for Law and Public Safety in Newark. The emergency was declared by the agency and approved by the treasurer.

SENATOR SCUTARI: One question on that, just one.

So, my understanding is there's an emergency (indiscernible) there -- they already moved; they're in this other space. Correct?

MR. CHIANESE: That is correct.

SENATOR SCUTARI: What about the old space? Are we still paying for that?

MR. CHIANESE: We are paying for it, and Law and Public Safety will continue to operate. Their program grew, so Law and Public Safety will still occupy the space, but because of the construction that was

going on, the unit and the program that was there, it was too loud for that unit, and they moved over to 33 Washington.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Understood.

Thank you.

MR. CHIANESE: The proposed lease is for 10,687 square feet for a two-year term with three one-year renewal options for 33 Washington Street in Newark for the Office of the Attorney General.

Thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

Any questions on any of the public safety leases?

Can we do it en masse?

MR. CHIANESE: I'm sorry, there was one more.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Oh, go ahead. I thought we were done.

MR. CHIANESE: NPL 4719. This NPL is for Law and Public Safety's Office of Public Integrity and Accountability and Investigations branch. This is an expansion of the existing lease due to the growth of the New Jersey State Police Investigations branch units, co-located here as well as OPIA. This expansion of 240 Cedar Knolls Road in Cedar Hills will result in this office growing to a not-to-exceed 19,179 square feet. The lease term for the expansion space will run currently with the lease term expiring July 31, 2030.

This location provides for a secured area that is located within the building that currently houses OPIA and investigations. The amendment will provide for 28 parking spaces. The option of amending the lease to remain at this facility is preferred, since the expansion provides for space

adjacent to the existing space, and of which moving costs as well as some other costs.

Thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

Any questions on the Department of Law and Public Safety lease as described?

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: (indiscernible)

SENATOR SCUTARI: Great.

So, I'll move them all at once.

So, we're going to entertain a motion on NPLs 4227, 4442, 4761, 4719 -- is that it?

MR. CHIANESE: Yes.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Those four leases.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Move just to all in that (indiscernible).

MR. DeCICCO: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll call on the four leases.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the affirmative, zero in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

OK, the next leases are -- well, there's just one for the Department of Children and Families?

MR. CHIANESE: Yes.

NPL 4668. This NPL is for one 10-year extension on behalf of Children and Families, as well as additional parking for this fully integrated training facility to handle the mandatory 40-hour-per-year training requirement for approximately 3,500 employees. This NPL provides Children and Families training for their staff, and the Department of Law and Public Safety, and with the potential of adding other governmental training programs.

This proposed lease is located at 30 Van Dyke Avenue in New Brunswick, and is for not to exceed 107,312 square footage. The State will receive many benefits, including it is a low-cost lease. The State has the option to purchase the building. The landlord established being a capital reserve fund in the amount of \$1,354,000, to be used towards improvements. Landlord agrees to perform identified fit-ups, including lighting upgrades and carpet replacement in several areas. DCF will realize capital cost avoidance that will have been needed to modify and upgrade existing sites for training if the lease was not extended. This site will be available for other State agencies for their training programs or meetings as well.

Thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

Any questions on the Lease Number 4668, Department of Children and Families? (no response)

Seeing none, can I have a motion?

MR. DeCICCO: So moved.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll call.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the affirmative, zero in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Next lease is 4445, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Motor Vehicles in Manahawkin.

MR. CHIANESE: This proposed lease is retroactive to January 1, 2022, and ending December 31, 2023.

This proposed lease is located at 712 East Bay Avenue in Manahawkin, for not to exceed 3,200 square feet. We advertised this lease, and we identified three potential sites that were interested in submitting a proposal, but all were rejected since they each lacked the ability to provide for MVC's needs. MVC determined that this location would then only serve as a vehicle center and would only handle titles and registrations, and would no longer need the initial requested expansion.

SENATOR SCUTARI: There's a lot of land down there; I know exactly where this is located.

Has there even been any thought to giving -- I mean, unless we're going to get out of the South Jersey business of Motor Vehicles -- is there any thought about giving them their own physical location in the future?

MR. CHIANESE: That would probably be a conversation we'd have with Motor Vehicles. We have not yet had one; we have had motor vehicles construct in other areas of New Jersey, but not down in--

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes, the Rahway-- Well, the Woodbridge-Rahway one is ours; we own that.

MR. CHIANESE: Yes.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Well, if you could ask.

MR. CHIANESE: Yes; thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thanks.

Any questions on the Motor Vehicle? (no response)

Seeing none, can I have a motion on NPL 4445?

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Motion.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Moved by Assemblyman Mukherji.

Can I have a second?

MR. DeCICCO: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll call.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the affirmative, zero in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

And, the last lease for today's consideration: 4734, the Department of Labor in Newton.

MR. CHIANESE: There's actually two left -- labor, and there's a various departments.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Oh, I'm sorry. Why don't you do them together.

MR. CHIANESE: Do them together.

OK, 4734. This NPL was advertised, and we are recommending an award for the Department of Labor located at 30 Moran Street in Newton. This NPL is for a 10-year lease with two five-year renewal options for 7,905 square feet. This space will provide for administrative support for the Division of Income, Security, and Workforce Development to continue to have a presence in Sussex County. The proposed lease includes 43 parking spaces for employees and visitors at no additional cost. The full cost of the renovation will be paid by the landlord, and labor will be provided with a turnkey facility.

For NPL 4420, this NPL is for the Departments of Labor, Community Affairs, Human Services, and Law and Public Safety, located at Juniper Plaza, 3499 Route 9 in Freehold. This NPL is a 10-year lease with cost savings retroactive to October 1, 2022, for 44,450 square feet. The lessor will provide painting and carpeting; replace the data room air conditioning unit; replace bathroom exhaust fans; and restripe the parking lot.

Thank you.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you.

Any questions on NPL 4734 and 4420? (no response)

Seeing none, I'll entertain a motion on both those NPLs together  
-- 4734, 4420.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Motion.

MR. DeCICCO: Second.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Roll call on the two proposed leases.

MR. McCASLIN: Senator Scutari.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Assemblyman Mukherji.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUKHERJI: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. DeCicco.

MR. DeCICCO: Yes.

MR. McCASLIN: Mr. Chairman, you have three votes in the  
affirmative, zero in the negative.

The motion carries.

SENATOR SCUTARI: Thank you, that concludes the leases for  
today.

I'll make a motion to adjourn.

All in favor?

ALL: Aye.

SENATOR SCUTARI: We're adjourned.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**