

## **North Jersey NIGP Chapter #7**

*Chartered October 26, 1977*

**President:**

*Francis Decibus*

**Treasurer/Membership:**

*Jane Foti*

**Vice President:**

*Jim Jorgensen*

**Secretary:**

*Paula Ferreira*

### **Minutes**

#### **Regular Meeting September 9, 2009**

#### **Quality Inn Conference Center Somerset, NJ**

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 by President Francis Decibus. After the flag salute, self introductions were made.

Francis welcomed Joe Valenti, Division of Local Government Services Department of Community Affairs (Retired) and his wife Mary Ann Valenti

Treasurer's report given by Jane Foti. Our current balance is \$4236.39

June meeting minutes approved.

*Kathi Cupano, Rutgers Center for Government Services*

- Rutgers is in the process of planning next years Purchasing Conference.
- Purchasing courses are going well.
- Forty-three people are registered in Purchasing I. Interest is still there even in this economic climate. Some Financial Management courses have been cancelled. 129 people are registered in all purchasing courses. She believes that there is a strong commitment to have purchasing professionals.
- Kathi Cupano's office moved into a new unit. Fabulous environment. Thinking outside of the box. No longer in an academic institution.
- Kathi Cupano received an email request on behalf of the Chinese government procurement organization. A group of 20 members would like to come visit Rutgers. They want to get a better understanding of government purchasing in our country, specifically in NJ. Interested in RPPS and RPPO certification. They will be visiting on Friday, 9/11/09. Marlena Schmid, Township Administrator, Cranford, thinks the legislature needs to know about this.

Mary Lou Stanton would like everyone to fill out survey in regards to the Conference.

*John Dinadio to discuss recent legislature and Somerset County Business Partnership*

- Legislature is on recess since June. Governor has not signed QPA bill yet. No other legislative action.
- Regulations proposed by Affirmative Action. Submit comments by Oct 16<sup>th</sup>. Far reaching regulations.

Mary Lou Stanton, Purchasing Agent, Somerset County commented about resources with other governmental associations but not with private sector. They want this fast tracked through. November 16 is when it will be adopted and we all know where we will be then. Please take a look through the proposed changes. It will affect everyone. Small business, non profits will be affected. We do not contract with subcontractors. This would apply to all subcontractors, with every sub you can think of.

Prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, Joe Valenti was asked about proposed Affirmative Action rules. They now have included public agencies. They can call upon local governments to evaluate act. Subtle change with ½ percent of 1 percent set aside. Each of us in this room has an obligation. They do not have a large staff. They are using us as their extended army. You always want to see your enemy, because when you don't see them you are in trouble. Be careful after the election. The bills will get passed very quickly. The food service industry has another prevailing wage bill. Goods and services has not been a requirement but now there is a bill out there. Joes believes that groups like ours need to inundate them with comment, since they are a very small group.

John Dinadio is hosting a Public Forum on how to make NJ more affordable. Offer constituents real information. Collective bargaining, pension reform, healthcare reform. It's in the Courier News. It's free and you get breakfast. It will be at Raritan Valley Community College.

Francis Decibus would like an update on Green Purchasing courses.

Mary Lou Stanton responded.

Green purchasing courses will probably happen. There is a lot of battle and talk.

We would like to honor a man who has contributed so much to our lives. Mary Lou Stanton, Purchasing Agent, Somerset County to read tributes to retired Joe Valenti, Division of Local Governments Services, Dept of Community Affairs. We would like to give everyone an opportunity to speak about Joe. Mary Lou is now labeled Senior Purchasing Agent. There are only 2 active Purchasing Agents older than her. In 1972 when Mr. Valenti appeared on the scene, they realized they had a gem. First State Official to take an active role in purchasing. There will never be another Joe Valenti working for the State of NJ. We are grateful also to his wife, Mary Ann. He stayed up late at night reading everything. Never skipped anything. She worked for Joe. He was a cut and paste person. He was meticulous. She did enjoy working with Joe.

Mary Ann just retired from teaching. Mary Ann has become a secretary. On behalf of NIGP we are presenting both Joe and Mary Ann a fax machine.

Kathi Cupano spoke about Joe and presented Joe with a basket full of Rutgers memorabilia.

Kathi wanted Joe to work with her, on training etc. The state of NJ said no. He cannot work in any governmental area for 3 years. It is still up in the air. Joe would really love to do it.

Joe said that we helped him more than he helped us. He became a sponge. He said he could have left many times in 38 years.

### **Tributes to Joe Valenti:**

*Marlena Schmid, Township Administrator, Cranford.*

Unlike Joe she decided to pursue career in Municipal Management. She had an opportunity to work out of state for 10 years. She lived in a household with Municipal Manager. She was the Asst administrator of Borough of Princeton. Ripped her hair out. She also worked in Virginia and Florida; no Local Public Contracts Law there. She then decided to pursue Public Purchasing. Had the best mentor and teacher. She learned a lot from Joe, he nurtured her and she blossomed. They both had an experience over cocktail napkin at GPANJ meeting. Together they revamped the Public Purchasing III course. Joe, thank you for everything personally and professionally. Without you god only knows where we would be.

*Kevin Galland, Clerk, Administrator, Paterson*

Wants to express thank you. Thank you for being part of us. Thank you for returning phone calls. Thank you for being a leader. I have never met an individual that is able to satisfy everyone. No man has had the integrity the authority that is placed upon him. You were always guaranteed a return phone call that evening. He was always there for us. How do you replace Joe Valenti after 30 yrs in the Purchasing world?

*Gerri Popkin.*

Her first exposure to Joe was when she was a Councilwoman. She was absorbing his knowledge before she knew she needed it. She thought, oh my I have a lot to learn. Joe was always an encouraging voice on the phone when Monmouth County was being investigated. Joe was always there. This summer Monmouth County honored Joe, his wife and daughter. Proclaimed that day Joe Valenti day. Why not form Joe Valenti LLC and form a consulting firm?

*Jim Jorgensen, Specification Writer, Township of Wayne.*

Mary Ann God bless you. Some impressions he got from Joe. There are few guys that didn't show up. Most of these guys do exist and happy he is retiring so they won't be named anymore. Has been a strong influence. First conference he attended with Elsie Dolan he saw Joe standing across a very large puddle. Joe saw Elsie Dolan and waved

and began walking towards them, not around the puddle, but over it. Like many others have said, when there is a need he has been there. We need to have a virtual Joe on the internet. We need to have a video recording of Joe. What would Joe say...lets go look. I can't say enough about Joe while being on the Conference Committee with him. He was the genius behind getting things done. Thanks many times. You are always with us.

Marylou Stanton wanted to point out that Maryann Saunders is another old timer. She never heard Joe swear until this past year. We will continue to be in touch with Joe when we get his fax number. Honorary membership for Joe Valenti to attend any meeting he desires.

### *Joe Valenti*

Thank you for all the kind words. Marlana came from a Manager family. Werner Schmid really knew how to manage. Kathi and Marylou thank you very much. It's been a long trip. Would like to publicly thank Mary Ann of 38 plus years. They were right. My first five or six years. Many night meetings. Mary was home with first born and then 23 months later their son was born. Now that we are both retired and before we get a divorce he wanted to thank her for putting up with him. Hopefully they will have a long prosperous life together.

Basically I wasn't a stranger to procurement process. Served in Southeast Asia. I carried a rifle. Didn't think he was going to make it for 12 mos. They needed someone to type. So he raised his hand. His duties were supplies. He was responsible for everything from spoons and forks and M16 guns. Then he was hired by the State of NJ in the Planning Department. Tried to get a job in Monmouth County. He then filled in for his boss at a Purchasing Association meeting. He was sent up there and was quiet. They wanted to start training courses. Mary Lou Stanton was the only woman involved in procurement at that time. Law wasn't in acted until 1971.

Governor Miner in Hackestown woke up and said why do we have to have different laws for counties and municipalities? It took 8 years to change the law. One law on the books so there is isn't any confusion. In 1976 major improvements were made. Schools wanted out. They do things different than we do. In those earlier years though there was a time for reflection. They left the law alone for six or seven years. There are too many bills being introduced today. Labor intensive bills. Today we have lobbyist groups that lobby for those trades. Easy to reintroduce bills today not that way years ago. Lobbyist groups remind the legislature. They are a constant reminder.

The State is losing the continuity that it had. No people coming up. In another year or two the division will lose a lot of people. It has to happen on our level here. And it should happen on this level. Don't give up the ship. You have integrity and ability to do your job.

It's been a wonderful joy ride. He just couldn't stay in the Ivory Tower. He needed to get out there. He couldn't be a Purchasing Agent. We have taught him well. We always talk about the logistics. We all have bosses. We have to put up with that. He has always admired us for that. We gave him a lot of love and smiles. Thank you for allowing him to come back.

Francis wishes Joe all the best. Thank you everyone for the tributes to Joe.

No old business.

Francis would like to congratulate Gerri Popkin for receiving an award with the NIGP.

Gerri Popkin attended forum in St Louis. Only 10 people from NJ attended. Lowest turn out. Went to luncheon because Francis Decibus was not able to attend. Don't lose sight of NIGP. NJ is one of the oldest chapters.

**Nominations for officers 2010-2012.**

Nominating committee has nominated:

<b>President</b>	<i>Jim Jorgensen.</i>
<b>Vice President</b>	<i>Cindy Lee Weber</i>
<b>Membership/Treasurer</b>	<i>Jane Foti</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	<i>Paula Ferreira</i>

Executive board members Mary Lou Stanton and Francis Decibus.

An email came to Joe's attention. It will basically effect Board's of Education. Court case involving Board of Ed for Hacketstown. They used a National Coop vendor. Hacketstown never went out for bid. Hacketstown said they didn't have to because the vendor said they were in a National Coop. Judge put a stop to the order.

Dominick Novella.

Finished doctorate program. Purchasing Agent for county of Bergen. For the last 4 or 5 years in doctorate program. When choosing a dissertation topic he chose looking at Public Procurement in NJ. His committee in Baltimore recently approved his dissertation. His argument in his thesis is how NJ laws and regulations hamper the private sector to work with the public sector. So here is what he needs from us. He is putting a survey online to sample the private sector community and pose questions to them about what they face when they bid on our projects. He wants to also poll the Purchasing Agents from around the state of NJ. The polls will be similar but not exact replicas. He will be inviting the membership to take the survey.

With no more business the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm. Networking and lunch were enjoyed by all.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula S. Ferreira  
Secretary