

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS

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October 6, 2016

Start: 1:00 p.m.

Recess: 2:30 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm
14th Fl

B E F O R E: HELEN K. ROSENTHAL
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Peter A. Koo
Ruben Wills
Costa G. Constantinides
Chaim M. Deutsch
Corey D. Johnson
I. Daneek Miller

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Michael Owh, Director & Chief Procurement Officer
Mayor's Office of Contract Services, MOCS

Dan Simon
Mayor's Office of Contract Services, MOCS

Jeannie Russo.
Mayor's Office of Contract Services, MOCS

Tracy Robinson
Senior Policy Analyst
Human Services Council

[sound check, pause] [gavel]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [off mic] Yes that's right. Good afternoon. I'm Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Chair of the Council's Contract Committee. Each year the city enters into contracts with thousands of providers who play a vital role providing essential health and human services to New York residents. In Fiscal Year '16, city human service procurements increased by over 100% compared with the year '15 to total \$4.7 billion. Despite their invaluable work, human service contractors face numerous challenges when contracting with the city. In April, the committee discussed ways in which the city can improve its payment amounts and procurement mechanisms for human service providers. These include reducing the frequency of late payments, providing physician reimbursement, and eliminating costly and duplicative audits. While there is clearly much more than can be done to improve city procurement with human service providers, one of the most important tools the city has at its disposal is the HHS Accelerator. This system was designed to improve the procurement process for human service

providers with in contracts by providing them a streamlined approach to pre-qualifying, proceeding in responding to RFPs, managing their budgets, and receiving payments from agencies, and eliminating burdensome documentation submissions by allowing documents to be uploaded and stored on the system for easy access. Since Accelerator was launched in 2013, over 2,500 providers had prequalified to receive and respond to RFPs. Accelerate Financial is currently managing 684 contracts valued at \$1.1 billion, and the Administration has committed ensure that future human service RFPs will be released, Real Accelerator. The Human Services Council found in the 2015 survey that providers have a high level of satisfaction to list Accelerator, and we have heard this reinforced at our hearings a few months ago. This is important progress, but the city must ensure that the system is used by all providers who may benefit from prequalification and all city agencies that may benefit from having access to a pool of prequalified service providers in the more efficient way of conducting their procurements and contracting. More city agencies for example are utilizing the Accelerator's procurement road map to release RFPs

when they're using the financials module to manage payments. I look forward to hearing from the Administration about their plans to expand Accelerator and how they view the role of Accelerator in their overall vision of innovating and improving city procurements. As we look forward to hearing from providers about their experience with Accelerator and how the city can make the system more user friendly to best enable them to contract for and provide services to New Yorkers. I'd like to first acknowledge that Council Member Chaim Deutsch has joined us today and we'll wait to see who else comes in. I would also like to thank the committee staff Eric Bernstein, Committee Counsel, Casey Addison, Policy Analyst, and Brendon West and John Russell from the Finance Division. And before we hear from MOCS, I want will have the committee counsel administer the oath. Thank you.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Can you raise your right hand, please? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before the committee today, and to respond honestly to council member questions?

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Just if you could just announce your name and you have Michael Owh, Dan Simon and Jeannie Russo. Just announce yourself as you start your testimony. Thank you. [pause]

MICHAEL OWH: Good afternoon, Chair Rosenthal and members of the City Council Committee on Contracts. My name Michael Owh, and I am the Director of Mayor's Office of Contract Services. I'm the City Chief Procurement Officer. I am joined by Dan Simon, First Deputy Director of MOCS and Jeanine Russo Renny (sic) who oversees many aspects of operations such as Health and Human Services Authority. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the progress we have made strengthening the procurement system for human service providers through the implementation of HHS Accelerator. The Accelerator system was launched in 2013 to simplify and expedite the contract process for client and community based service providers. Through a deliberate and collaborative multi-year strategic plan with agencies and providers, we removed redundant paper based requirement, re-engineered processes and standardized contract offerings. These reforms have reduced the administrative burden and

allowed the city and providers to focus on providing essential services to New Yorkers. The Accelerator team oversees competitions for Health for Human Services funding opportunity, and provide the platform for financial transactions. In Fiscal Year 2016, Accelerator merged with MOCS. The merger provides the opportunity to combine processes and incorporate best practices throughout both offices. Accelerator is dedicated to reducing the administrative burden and improving the business relationship between providers and city agencies through a series of activities. Collaborating with city agencies to standardize and simplify requests for proposal; a prequalification process where providers share their basic organizational profile and submit critical background documents once every three years. Electronic issuance of RFPs and submission of proposals, electronic submission of budgets and invoices. A consolidated view of contract financial data and provider activity, and increased transparency for providers and agencies allowing providers to track the status of all procurements, proposals, contracts, budgets, invoices, payments and amendments in the Accelerator

system. These activities are enabled by four major components of Accelerator.

The Document Vault, which allows for storage and sharing of electronic documents. Prequalification, which is a collection of organization information and documentation of part of a standard business and service application. The Procurement Road Map, a central location where all Health and Human Service RFPs are publishes. Providers download all documents associated with the RFP, submit proposals and track award status by the Road Map; and Financials, which allows electronic management of financial printed documents. Providers and participating agencies manage budgets and invoices and track payments in the system.

MOCS and Accelerator at the core a service organization committed to providing support to users and stakeholders. Since the launch of Accelerator in 2013, system users have gone through more than 7,000. We have increased the vendor pool of organizations prequalified to compete for RPFs thorough Accelerator to over 2,500 providers. This step is full of strong and innovative programs. It's available to provide quality service to New Yorkers.

In Fiscal Year 2015, the Accelerator team hosted 127 provider trainings and presented at more than 75 information sessions, and other forms for the Human Service provider community. In total, the Accelerator team presented at nearly 300 events in the fiscal year. These numbers continue to grow as we offer ongoing training in person and online. The Accelerator team is also present at each agency RFP, pre-proposal counseling to ensure providers are aware of what is necessary to complete. In addition to provider training, the team has hosted 65 internal trainings for agency staff including procurement and financial teams. The city has issued 164 RFP through the Accelerator system since its creation in 2013. In Fiscal Year 2016, Accelerator released 44 RFPs for 12 agencies resulting in 780 awards. Many of the awards made through Accelerator in Fiscal Year 2015, were from DYCD. We leverage the system to get programs like Comprehensive After School System of New York City or COMPASS NYC, up and running quickly. Some agencies issues procurements for the first time. For example, in Fiscal Year, 2016, the NYPD issued its first Human Service RFP through Accelerator placing trained trauma counselors in police stations

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2 to support crime victims. In addition to RFP,
3 Accelerator provides the paperwork process for
4 managing budgets, invoices and payment for the City's
5 Health and Human Service contracts through Financial,
6 and uses by agencies of providers continues to rise.
7 In Fiscal Year 2016, nine agencies managed budgets
8 and payments for 684 contracts valued at \$1.1 billion
9 through the payment processing and providing greater
10 transparency for providers. This shift to the
11 standardized management of Human Service contract
12 budgets, invoices and payments, not only reduces the
13 administrative burden for both the city and the non-
14 profits by removing paper, and providing financial
15 controls, but also provides tremendous transparency
16 for-for providers as they manage their city funding
17 proposals.

18 In Fiscal Year 2017 with the addition of
19 nearly half of DYCD contracts including COMPASS,
20 Cornerstone and RFY as well as ACS Early Care and the
21 education contract. Nearly \$2.1 billion is being
22 managed in the quality of the Financials. We look
23 forward to continuing to work with the Council to
24 streamline and improve the procurement process
25 through initiatives such as the Accelerator. Thank

you again for the opportunity to testify today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And do you have an opening statement, or you're with him?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. I'd like to acknowledge Council Member Koo who has just joined us, and I do have a whole bunch of questions. So thank you. So when—I'm—I'm curious, when the Accelerator team moved over to MOCS from Operations. Why—why was that? What, is it better to operate that way, and yeah, what best practices do you think have improved since that merger happened?

MICHAEL OWH: So Accelerator, as we mentioned, has the competition oddly. So when you have RFPs, you fill out the evaluation process. It gives you all process, all of the kind of things that you have upfront that providers see as they compete for these opportunities and MOCS before, way before the merger had the award process. After the evaluations were completed, you had—they would hand off to the MOCS team. So now with the merger, we think we actually have—we know that there's an efficiency because now the team will process the same

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2 team that's working on the front end is now going to
3 be working on the back end. And--and I, you know, I
4 just stress that the merger actually has resulted in
5 all--all of the Accelerator team and the MOCS team to
6 come in one. And it's--it's a process for the office
7 to get together, but we're very, very proud of what
8 we're--where we are today, and we think that this is
9 actually going to show up in--in positive results for
10 agencies as well as providers in the future.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Even when--so in
12 the City's budget if you put together the Office of
13 Operations, and the Office of Contracts, is there a
14 change in headcount in the combined total? In other
15 words, would they minus two when you request two?

16 MICHAEL OWH: I--I have to check on
17 exactly how the budget would reflect it--

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Uh-
19 huh.

20 MICHAEL OWH: --but I believe that that
21 should--I think the Accelerator team might have been
22 listed separately--

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Uh-
24 huh.

25

MICHAEL OWH: --as its own--with those lines, and so that might not have been reflected in these documents. So, it's just more of an operational group--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Yep.

MICHAEL OWH: --the management team.\

MICHAEL OWH:

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, do you also have the--the dollar figure of the cost of running and managing the Accelerator?

MICHAEL OWH: So the--the system as it is now, is maintained by a cross-functional team at MOCS, or--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Okay.

MICHAEL OWH: --you know, formally colored (sic) and at MOCS. So, the maintenance of the system I think this is one of actually the--the great things about Accelerator is that we don't actually consider it just a system. We actually consider it a process, and we want to emulate that process actually across all of our other procurements. And so, that--the--the actual technical

maintenance is made through—is done by City Plus.

(sic)

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, so as you followed and applied this to other agencies, or other types of contracting, would you need to add additional staff?

MICHAEL OWH: If—as of right now we don't anticipate any additional staff needed because we think the merger allows us to have some efficiencies built in and we'll just—we'll probably—we are reorganizing our office. We're able to provide that level for the—to other agencies, and other contract groups as well.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. I may have missed the specifics, but there seems to be a disconnect between the number of agencies using the Road Map, and the number of agencies using the Financials. Could you explain why one of the city agencies might want to do one, but not the other?

MICHAEL OWH: So for—as I mentioned in the previous hearing and—and you mentioned, every agency that is doing a human service contract, or RFP is required to use Accelerator. We are—that is—that is implemented, and that is why in every agency that

is issuing a human service RFP is going to Accelerator. On the Financial side, we're—we've been very careful and thoughtful along with the agency to plan out the actual implementation of the module. When we're dealing with—when you're dealing with money and payments to providers, we want to make sure that we're doing it in a way in a way that's not going to create any disruption, and so every agency is—every single service agency is in that either partially or fully, and for the two that are not yet in, we—we have a Road Map for the them to use.

[pause]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [off mic]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you, Mr. Owh, yeah. I wanted to ask you a question and it's for those entities that may qualify, is there any crossover between MWBE certification, and as a—as—as or is there either pre-qualification outreach? And, can HHS Accelerator be leveraged and it includes MBWE contracting?

MICHAEL OWH: So for the—for—the scope right now for HHS Accelerator is human service contracting, which is not included in our MWBE program, but I think actually the situation is—and—

and the questions were—were great because I think the situation for smaller non-profits is very analogous to MWBEs that would be. And so the practices that we have for customer service that we're emphasizing the ease of access, the leveling of the playing, which we're trying to implement through Accelerator, which we have been doing since 2013 is the same type of activities that we want to do for MWBEs in the future.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Actually, to follow up on Council Member Koo's question, I understand that Small Business Services has the new data, has a new program to manage the MWBEs. I'm wondering if there's going to be a connection if you're contemplating a connection if those two like systems are going to be able to talk to each other.

MICHAEL OWH: So we are—we're constantly in conversations with our partners at SBS, and Commissioner Bishop and I had conversations about how to better—how to better connect our data at the very least, and also keep it—make—making sure that the services that are offered to MWBE are clear, simple and efficient. And so we're going to be looking to

do-to leverage any-any type of system and go forward as possible.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, thank you. And so you've mentioned case related, the, you know, over the year, but Citywide Procurement Innovation Project. Is this a piece of it?

MICHAEL OWH: So we actually think--so the Citywide Procurement Project, and the way that we look at that is not just a technology issue, but really a way to streamline procurement and contracting across the board including business process, including some of the requirements that we have just looking at every potential opportunity for improvement. I actually think that Accelerator is a great example of how a successful project like the one that can happen. I mean business and re-engineering as well as process changes as well as communications with customer service. All of that we hope to learn, and the lessons learned there we want to implement throughout our citywide project.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. So, are there any city agencies that can--that have contracts with the human service provider that does not--you take charge to them. (sic)

MICHAEL OWH: At this point, every human service RFP it has to go through Accelerator by law and by rule, and so we are—I'm sorry, not by law, by rule.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Should we pass that law?

MICHAEL OWH: I would support that law, because--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Okay.

MICHAEL OWH: --because I think it's great--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Okay.

MICHAEL OWH: --and--and--and the feedback that we have gotten from providers, but also agencies because now it's become a standard process. It has been really great. I think we're, you know, we're looking for leverage and improvement of any groups as well.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Even like the Human Service Contracts through the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice their needs in this program as well?

MICHAEL OWH: Yes, for any RFP. So there may be rules—there may be other types of methods that they're using, and if they use those methods those may not go through Accelerator, but any new RFP and any past ones since 20—since 2013, it has to go through Accelerator.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [pause] There was something in your testimony that didn't quite follow through, and on page 2 or 4. What's the difference between a system user? What is—how do you define a system user? Say there are 7,000 system users and then 2,500 providers.

MICHAEL OWH: So, an agency or a provider may have multiple users. So we have system users like the procurement professional at an agency would be one user on financial side, a financial person would do the--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] and multiple users each one is called a system user?

MICHAEL OWH: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Hmm, interesting. Okay. Is it mean—so is it meaningful to track the number of system users? I mean are you trying to prove over time we want to make sure that 20—you

know, there are 20--there are 10,000 people in this city who would in some way touch the Accelerator. We want to make sure all of them are system users. What's your goal number?

MICHAEL OWH: I'm going to let Dan jump in on that--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Uh-huh.

MICHAEL OWH: --but I think broadly in terms of the number of users, I think it's important because those are the people that use the system--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Yep.

MICHAEL OWH: --not just in the city on the city side, but on the provider side.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yes.

MICHAEL OWH: And those are folks that we would also be providing support for services.

DAN SIMON: And from a technical perspective you want to keep track of the users because you want to be able to size the system appropriately. You have--you want to track how many users and how many transactions, how many contracts because that might dictate how many services you

might need to support that system to keep performance up. We don't want the system to slow down. It could slow down if you didn't have enough essentially machines running the system and the backing up with the overload of the procurement users with the companies that we're tracking.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [off mic] So there are agencies--[on mic] So there are agencies users, and there are provider users?

MICHAEL OWH: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And so you're going to--you would watch the agency users in terms of the city's system, right?

DAN SIMON: Well, we would track both. So the way the city's technologically infrastructure works is that there's--there's inside the city firewall--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Yes.

DAN SIMON: --so to speak, and so you've got--and those servers are separate from the external servers--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Yep, yep.

DAN SIMON: --that are available through the web, and so we track them separately, but together it makes up 7,000.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: How many are users inside the firewall?

DAN SIMON: I-I don't have that number off hand, but we can certainly get it to you. I will get it, but it would—we can definitely say that most of the users are on the provider side.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, that would make sense, but my question gets to how many people have we not trained to work in city agencies who need to be trained to use the Accelerator to become a system user? Does that make sense?

DAN SIMON: I think so. So, I don't that we're tracing the Delta between every agency staff member--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Uh-huh.

DAN SIMON: --and that those we—that are users of the system the agencies drive who actually would use Accelerator to manage an RFP as an example, and so—but we constantly are training agency folks on a weekly basis, monthly basis through a variety of different needs. And so we're—we're constantly

working with agencies to draw them in, but I believe that the agencies that are managing their work through Accelerator have the appropriate number of users. I don't think it training issue necessary that where the users are all alone with that. (sic)

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. I'd like to pursue that further, if that's okay because that's exactly what I'm hearing is that some of the city's staff are resisting to learn the technology, using the technology, and--and not everyone does use it, you know. That's a problem and I'm wondering--so that's why I am interested in the Delta, and sort of how we get it--how we get through that.

DAN SIMON: Yeah, I--I--that's a--that's a great point, and--and I think while there are training needs, I don't know that they would necessarily be users of the system. I think the problem is that if we have many different avenues to a non-profit, that's, you know, a human services provider--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Sure

DAN SIMON: --and it's a changed management issue at the agency. Not necessarily an Accelerator training issue. It's a particular staff

member at an agency knowing that they need to go and get something from Accelerator instead of emailing a provider to say hey give me your certificate of insurance, as an example. Instead of going to the place-

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]

Sure.

DAN SIMON: --where that priority is there.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure.

DAN SIMON: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And even—I mean that's a great description, but again so how many people I mean that change mainframes? I'd be curious to know, and your office it strikes me if you were analyzing the system users by agency, your office could be incredibly helpful in determining if you've seen whether or not an agency of a certain size or with a certain number of contracts is really using Accelerator to explore. Okay.

DAN SIMON: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Do you have that breakdown by agencies?

MICHAEL OWH: Of course. Yes, we can provide that.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great. Thank you. So, maybe you touched on this, but whatever steps are you taking to ensure that more service providers pre-qualify to compete for the RFPs? You mentioned some outreach.

MICHAEL OWH: We do a—we do a lot of outreach to the provider across the board. We also partner with organization so that we can use their members. We also I—I believe we get requests to come out to do a presentation to on-board providers to put them into using it. I touched on that a little bit in my testimony, but we—we—we are looking to use everything. We want everyone in the program—and—and prequalified and using the system, all of the providers because we believe not only for a couple of cities, because we're going to get a very good pool and diverse pool of—of providers and programming and, you know, from the cultural competent organizations that are sort of based in the smaller neighborhoods to the big organizations that through the citywide programming, but also this in connection just makes— it—it—it also increases the opportunity for the

providers themselves to be able to-to keep our city contract. (sic)

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: If I remember from our last hearing, there is something like 3,400 senior service providers, 3,600, something like that. So, yes. So I'm wondering about the 2,500 versus the 3,600.

MICHAEL OWH: So-so the number of contract, human services contracts taking this discretionary at-for the moment is roughly 3,700, but with roughly 12 to 1,300 provider.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh, okay.

MICHAEL OWH: Yes, and so we-we feel like we have more than the lion's share of all providers that are doing business with the city. And so the thousand on top of that 1,200 or 1,300 I think is a diverse set of providers that are not yet doing business with the city but are supporting themselves with those opportunities, and that number continues to grow.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. That's helpful. I might come back to that one, although I guess I could ask the same questions about the system users that we just talked about on the city agency

side, but either. Have you noticed, you know, there's a change of management that applies?

MICHAEL OWH: Certainly so we're—we're constantly looking for public forums. You know, we have a whole road show that we—you know, we can go and do. In fact, we've been invited by elected officials in the past to come and join their meeting.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh.

MICHAEL OWH: And we've done that, but so the—the greatest driver of business I would, so to speak, is the actual RFP that agencies issue. So when an agency issues an RFP it's doing so through the system and on NYC.gov and we're reaching out to the entire non-profit sector to draw them in with the RFP itself and the opportunity to compete that's what draws into the system because then they know that they have to get pre-qualified in to order to submit a proposal.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So with the, you know, any advances I said that I'm just fully understating it So I apologize if you're having to repeat things, but if a human service providers wants you to come and give a presentation to their staff, you'll do that no charge?

2 MICHAEL OWH: Absolutely. Yes, no
3 charge.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, and--and
5 word is out. Like do you--do you know if the Human
6 Service Council gets the word out about that?

7 MICHAEL OWH: They are again a great
8 partner of the Accelerator on that inclusive since
9 its inception.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. Do you
11 have a sense of how many providers you still-- You
12 know is it a 100, is it a 1,000? Do you have a
13 sense?

14 MICHAEL OWH: So when Accelerator began
15 when the support was--when it was just a program, we--
16 you know, the--the IRS data to try and figure out how
17 many non-profits in the city. And the number of
18 25,000 came back, but then--

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: We really short
20 them. [laughter] They don't get anything.

21 MICHAEL OWH: And then only 5,000 that
22 actually had some level of revenue--

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
24 Yep, yep.

MICHAEL OWH: --and so it gets a little more active, and so that's sort of the universe that we've always dealt with, but then, you know, some folks are non-profits, but have no interest in city funding, and so we can--we'd split that list into waves, and a part of it very specifically with different types of methods and materials. So we feel like we have again the lion's share, but we're--we never, you know, we're trying to shine a light in every corner, and we're trying to find folks and let them know that this is in existence. That this is the way in which we should you doing business with the city for human services contracts.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I don't know if you look at this by provider or by agency, maybe both. I'm not quite sure how to slice for this question, but when you think about the four different services that you provide, which are the ones that are most used, and which ones, you know, do people need to get better educated for? So I would guess it's going to be the Road Map is the most used. I don't know.

2 MICHAEL OWH: The-the prequalification on
3 the Road Map and the RFP competition module I believe
4 are the most used, and can you say something.

5 DAN SIMON: Yeah, so the-I mean there's-
6 I-I just really think you can't compare them--

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Uh-
8 huh.

9 DAN SIMON: --because they're doing very
10 different things. So RFPs are-are issued on
11 sometimes a three or a six or a nine-year cycle and
12 so you-you'll see this one RFP now and then you won't
13 see it from another six years.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, right.

15 DAN SIMON: So it's-it's-it's tough to
16 compare where I think Financial you're managing
17 budgets and invoices and payments every single day.
18 And so there are daily transactions for that \$2.1
19 billion that manages and sustained. And then,
20 there's also the Document Vault, which is use on an
21 ad hoc basis daily for document change between non-
22 profits and providers. So there's three-three very
23 different ways, but all have constant activation.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And then from the
25 other side, from the human service provider side, I'm

wondering can you categorize the different types of human services providers and see which ones are using the Accelerator?

DAN SIMON: Sure, I—I guess it would be driven by the exact same thing. If they have a contract—

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
Yes.

DAN SIMON: --in Financials, then they're using it. If they're responding to an RFP, then they're using that. I think maybe what we could do some analysis on is which providers are doing document sharing with the agency using this one time. That's something we could take a look at.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And similarly on prequalification could you see which providers are getting pre-qualified in this one terminal. (sic)

DAN SIMON: Sure. We can absolutely do and we should probably share some data that you could look, too. This is also available on the—the City'—the Open Data Portal. So all the pre-qual information including maps are all available publicly/

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: The name of the
3 agency or do you mean the, just the data that like
4 the raw number 20 or--?

5 MICHAEL OWH: The-the provider--

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
7 Okay.

8 MICHAEL OWH: --the office address, what
9 it's prequalified in, the services that it's
10 prequalified in. These are all in the system.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [pause] So,
12 getting back to Council Member Koo's question, for-do
13 you have any comments? (sic) [pause] As you move
14 forward in this-in this SBS on the MWBEs, do you
15 think that the Accelerator tool will be one that will
16 be helpful in working with MWBEs?

17 MICHAEL OWH: Well, because it's specific
18 for these services--

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
20 Yeah.

21 MICHAEL OWH: --I'm not sure if it's
22 right tool, but definitely the framework and the
23 philosophy and the conceptual-the concept around
24 customer service, all of that. I think we will be
25 using more tools.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You know, and we think about it, the framework of it, not the, you know, thinking—as we start—is the city starting to move towards thinking about it as an Accelerator, then under the Accelerator you would have the HHS components, and then maybe, you know, the construction contract component, the MWBE component. Is that a fair way of looking at?

MICHAEL OWH: I—I think that's right. I think the—the concept that you just described is taking that model that Accelerator has--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yep.

MICHAEL OWH: --and applying it to other sectors and, you know, that. And I keeping coming back to this obsession with customer service because I think it's a—it's a huge—it's a huge value add, not only to the city, but also to providers and—and our business partners. You know, we—I think one of the things that people don't know is actually we have a team, our team who provides all the service actually calls providers before the RFPs are due, before the proposals are due, and if they see a proposal in draft, they will call the providers and say hey, did

you know that you have a pro—you have a proposal in draft and it's due today at 5:00 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I see.

MICHAEL OWH: That kind of service you don't not see it in the private sector.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: That this happens.

MICHAEL OWH: And we think--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --you call the day before or the day?

MICHAEL OWH: I think we call before. I don't know exactly when, but--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: This actually wonderful. That's great.

MICHAEL OWH: --but that's the kind of thing that we would like to--that practice, you know, for MWBEs, for other smaller vendors in the future, that kind of contact.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, great. So, I'm sure you're just following actually. Once the vendor or the provider receive a contract, and the contract is complete or even in an ongoing way, does the agency start rating how well the provider does, and is that information captured in Accelerator as

well so that when another agency might want to contract with the same provider they have that kind of feedback?

MICHAEL OWH: So the performance evaluation per contract is required every year, and agencies do that through a different system. It's— it's the agenda, actually, currently, and so that is not connected to the information that's available in Accelerator, but the procurement informational (sic) has accessed people's systems and they're required to use both in order to make that effective.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So is it going to move toward connecting them?

MICHAEL OWH: So, our—I—I think again conceptually I think we would love to do that. There are a lot of operational things that we have to work out.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: If Dan's working— someone on Dan's staff is working on it today?

MICHAEL OWH: Dan is doing it today, and he'll be done tomorrow.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, the—you guys are so good, but is that something I mean

2 hypothetically, you know, you want to marry those two
3 systems, yes?

4 MICHAEL OWH: I think the information
5 that exists in both of those systems should be—it
6 should be together, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right. So the—so
8 right now the ACCO (sic) right, has to look at both.

9 MICHAEL OWH: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [pause] So,
11 technologically it's difficult to have one attached
12 to the other?

13 MICHAEL OWH: It is and, you know, it is
14 something that we are working—we are looking at, and
15 we're working towards, but it is—it is a very big
16 operation.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Do you want to
18 confirm that?

19 DAN SIMON: I—I—so it is an operational
20 challenge. I think the—the city gets sometimes
21 caught up in it and it's build on system to replace
22 them all, and—and it never worked out very well. And
23 so our goal is not necessarily to build one system
24 where it's all in the same stream as an example, but
25

making sure that these two systems are interoperable-

-

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, yeah.

DAN SIMON: --and making those data talk to each other, and that's the big challenge.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. Thanks very much, and then as prequalification, does that include the DOI component to really make sure there's a background, a DOI level, responsibility level prequalification. Is that similar or is it a different type?

MICHAEL OWH: It's a different type and I'm going to let Jeanine and Dan sort of go into more of the details, but that--the DOI check actually has been--at the time of award once was selected we have a responsibility information of which the DOI's information is a part of that process, but Jeanine and Dan will--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] And then, though, would the Accelerator information, prequalification information expedites the DOI review and making sure they're completely separate animals, right? But go ahead.

JEANINE RUSSO: [off mic] I can tell you a little bit more about the business application and service application. It's meant to be more of a—a way to reduce conspirements (sic) at the time of proposal. So the prequalification takes place along our sites every two years instead of every single time organizations they make a proposal. So it's not a full 130 (sic) determination. It's really meant to be—it's a very small sort of upfront administrative list on those provider and agency sides of that. So that's what we're trying to test that goal of the pre-qual.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And so similarly down the road could you see DOI's responsibility reviews feeding into the—and a larger view Accelerator?

MICHAEL OWH: I think again conceptually that makes sense. Having all of the information about a provider or a vendor in one place is probably a best practice, and we're trying to work out the—sort of the kinks that Dan talked about earlier. We don't want to—we don't want to boil the ocean. We want to take—take the pieces that work and then make sure that we're—we're making smart decisions about

how to make them work together. But yeah, I think the concept is--is something that we would support.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and then what's the relationship between boiling the ocean and throwing the baby out with the bath water? Sort of similar?

MICHAEL OWH: Um, I--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I think so.

MICHAEL OWH: Yeah, now we're mixing up. Now we have to--we've got to--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Completely an awesome amount of sort of staff. So, performance evaluations given by one agency. Another agency would be able to see that by looking at a central performance evaluation mechanism--

MICHAEL OWH: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --not HHS Accelerator?

JEANINE RUSSO: Right.

MICHAEL OWH: Yes, through this system--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
That is once? (sic)

MICHAEL OWH: Yes. Through the system that exists now, the annual performance evaluations are viewable by-by agencies.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: How do you know that they-how do you know-how do you know as the MOCS Director that those evaluations are looked at and considered?

MICHAEL OWH: So as part of the responsibility through the determination process that is one of the requirements that they look at performance evaluations, and if the performance evaluations are not satisfactory, that their-their information is addressed. And-and we see those-the response to those information as part of the recommendation for awards now, and we would review that. And if the performance evaluations were not addressed, then we would kick it back and have agencies address those.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and anyway it seems very logical. I-I guess I keep asking questions about it, but that you want to merit those two things.

MICHAEL OWH: I-I don't disagree with that.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. Let's see. When vendors are assigned to an RFP with the Accelerator, what characteristics of the vendor we see with that, and how are points distributed inside those printers. (sic)

MICHAEL OWH: So, I again Jeanine and Dan could help and go a little bit more into detail, but one thing that I do want to point out is that the RFP today through Accelerator looks very different from the RFP that you fill out pre-Accelerator, and that's because a lot of the regulatory requirements, a lot of the—the—the things that actually made the RFP potentially hundreds of pages long had been separated out, and made either a part of the requirements of the prequalification or a part of attachments to the RFP that are required to be reviewed and reviewed. You know, make sure that providers download that as part of the RFP process, but what we've tried to do is streamline the RFP to focus on the scope. Because what's really important especially for our human services providers is that we're talking about what kind of services and programs are running, and we want—and that's what they're seeing now. And in terms of points, the pre-Accelerator you would have

had probably two or three big chunks of points, and there was very little visibility into what has the agency actually performed? Like how many—and what am I—what am I supposed to be focusing on. And now what you see is very discrete categories, and sort of the points align with the categories on the RFP itself. So even before you get ready to do a proposal, you know what the agency is scoring, and what you should be emphasizing, and what baseline is important. So I think that transparency is huge, and then we also have been since 2014 encouraging and implementing structured proposals, which goes in further. So you have the actual questions, the actual—like the three items that the agency wants to review, and having the providers enter that information in innovative standard to our process. So there's also Stream Linking. I think it would reduce a lot of the sort of guessing the providers have to do, and also on the evaluation side it's made it a lot easier. [off mic] Do you want to—

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: But you—exactly when—when it's pressing it, which is the—the Accelerator allows the City to standardize forms or sort of request for these prequalification

information between agencies, or are some agencies still asking for stuff that's different?

MICHAEL OWH: So they shouldn't be asking for stuff that's different, and if they are asking for things then they should be asking for it through the Document Vault so that it's only asked once. You're not having to go back over and over again. I think there are certain--there may be instances where agencies for the RFP in question may have different requirements in a different agency. But I think the broad information about the--about the providers remains the same agenda.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean--I mean yeah. The community sort of the vending (sic) and agencies who are outliers in the information they're requesting.

DAN SIMON: So the prequalification application is standard in Accelerator. There isn't a DYCD version of the pre-qual or the DOHMH version. It is one version, and hasn't changed very much. We've made tweaks here and there, but it hasn't changed very much because we've resisted customizing it because then we manage--you're managing 12 different prequalification applications, and that's

not what we want. But there are times when an agency wants to go a bit deeper on a particular topic that might be covered in the prequel application, but just not for the stuff that they want, and so they move through that criteria in a particular RFP. But all RFPs are coming through the Accelerator piece for approval and, in fact, the—the Accelerator team is actually cooking the relief button when an RFP gets released. And so, we have that sort of overview to ensure that they're not infringing upon re-asking something that we've done in pre-qual.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So how is that going with—in terms of changed management which agencies have had to shift?

JEANINE RUSSO: [off mic] I would say that, you know, with the—it's—it took a few—a few months to get all the agencies on board, but I think when it comes to using a standardized template for the RFPs, agencies are all on board with that. Because it's the simplest format. It's—it's—there's no—they're talking about the repetition and, you know, at the—the heart of it, they're really just saying here's—here's a basic description of our programs. Here's what we're stressing generally as

far as program design goes, and here are some of these points that are going to be assigned to each section. And it's really a standardized to that extent so everyone follows the same format. But we haven't standardized what those different topics are because for obvious reasons the nuances in-in the programs themselves. And so that has not been pressed out (sic) from a changed matrix perspective. And so it's standards that go through Accelerator on the procurement side of the house, and so, you know, from-from that perspective it's done great.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: But a Michael Owh lock. (sic) [laughter] I want to welcome Council Member Miller and Council Member Johnson and Council Member Constantinides, who was here, but had to leave. I'll just ask is there an intersection or could there be an intersection with Local Law 63 and the Accelerator. So as we start to think about it, particularly for even in terms of being a human service contracts, but, you know, also as we go-as it goes to other agencies, could there be an intersection there?

MICHAEL OWH: So, I believe that Local Law 63 does not include human service contracts, but

again going to sort of the framework question, the Procurement Road Map is something that I think should be a best practice across all of our procurements. What that does is it allows providers, the public to see what RFPs are coming up, and that from—from what I understand Local Law 63 that's one of the purposes is to give the public a view into procurements that are coming up. And so I think if we can operationalize or—or—or come up with something like that where we give a view for—for the next year, which is—which is typically according to then design, then I think we might be able to best conform (sic) to this law in terms of that law.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. So is that something that's part of what you're working on operationally?

MICHAEL OWH: [off mic] We would—we would love to have had something like that as part of this—part of the—the featured stated model in picturing the space. (sic)

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and that's next year?

MICHAEL OWH: Tomorrow.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Tomorrow. Yes. Okay. You guys are on many things. So, I know the Council has over the last year tried to use Accelerator for its own discretionary rules. From your perspective, how is that going on?

MICHAEL OWH: I think it's going great. I mean I think the Council is a great partner, and the--the actual like cooperation and--and collaboration in getting us last year to--to use the Accelerator Prequalification of the is one of the layers and one of the requirements of the awards (sic) process. That's been hugely successful and this year that's it. We're not doing paper any more. We're going to go through that processing. So I think it's been working out really well.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And so shout out and kudos to the City Council Finance staff for that. Can you--can you see a measurable out--is there a way to measure the impact that's had on the ability of the awards section to get to this ladder?

MICHAEL OWH: So that is a really great question, and I think one of the things, one of the challenges that we've had is that in the previous paper process for prequalification it's hard to get a

good handle on how long that took, like what that is. But I can tell you that in our process in the new process, not only were the majority of the discretionary awards—awardees in the Accelerator pre-qualification already. So they didn't have to do anything, but the one that had to come on board would have had like from the point that they commit an application to the point that they get prequalified, the median time has been three days.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: That's great, and then would you expect all of those awardees to use the financial system in order to get paid?

MICHAEL OWH: So I think that's actually one of the biggest benefits to those providers. Now, they have visibility and an opportunity to compete for all of the RFPs, and if they were to get a contract, we would welcome them for use of financial assistance.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I see. So, but—just as a discretionary award, they cannot?

MICHAEL OWH: Dan, do you want to talk about that?

DAN SIMON: So we actually already have some discretionary awards using financials. It's

really dependent upon the city agencies their transition and migration into managing their financial activities in Accelerator, and to the extent that they have, they're bringing their discretionary awards with them.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Give me a breakdown of that.

DAN SIMON: Sure, I can get that to you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thanks. That would be helpful. In less than three days?

DAN SIMON: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you, thank you. So, okay, so-[pause] so your answer to your own--the city's own contracts it's hard to see the delta because it's hard to know how many days it took for prequalification prior to Accelerator or can you measure the success?

MICHAEL OWH: [interposing] I think those--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Because the City's contracts may be by agencies.

MICHAEL OWH: For the ones that go through RFP process--

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
3 yes.

4 MICHAEL OWH: --not the discretionary
5 process?

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, right.

7 MICHAEL OWH: So, it's—I think we have
8 some data on that, but I think one of the—one of the
9 things that, you know, from my own experience.
10 Actually, before I came to MOCS, I was a—also with
11 USCG, and I did a big RFP right before I started at
12 MOCS that I had done on paper pre-Accelerator. I
13 think about six years before or four years before,
14 and then I did again one with Accelerator, and we
15 were able to measure that front end piece, the—the
16 Competition Evaluation process. We were able to take
17 about 20 weeks from—from that process, and not only
18 that but like things that took—used to take me weeks
19 started taking me hours. And so we—we were able to a
20 huge value add in terms of timing.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Council Member
22 Miller, did you have some questions lined up?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yeah, just one or
24 two brief. Thank you, Madam Chair. [coughs] Excuse
25 me. Obviously, you were talking about the great

benefits of the collaboration of this system here.

Have we seen the same benefits to some of our smaller venues and not-not-for-profits in terms of its use?

Has the benefits been universal on both sides not just obviously on-on our side, and administratively, but to the vendors and those who were providing services? Has there been smaller community based organizations a profiting or benefiting so much?

MICHAEL OWH: So I-I believe that all the benefits—a lot of the benefits that we're—that are seen from going through Accelerator standardizing, streamlining, reducing paper are definitely ones that the smallest providers, and community based are more neighborhood based provides are benefitting from?

One little anecdote. When we—when I used to these RFPs and the would require five copies, and paper and—and organizations from your district would come, have to hire drivers. Have to go and get copy services to make those—to-to carry the--the boxes--

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] Uh-huh.

MICHAEL OWH: --to our office before 5:00 p.m. That has—that whole process has been eliminated. Now, they can stay in—in the comfort of

their own office, push the button and now they—and they're able to apply for an RFP. I think in terms of leveling the playing field, I think it has done a ton.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, which is—so my next question was do you feel that it's made them more competitive from the RFP?

MICHAEL OWH: I—I—I do think so. Dan, did you want to add to that?

DAN SIMON: So, the prequalification process, the intent there was to level the playing field by removing some of the organizational structure type information that was asked each and every time there is an RFP issued. It would move up front, and so everyone. There—there is no scale of prequalification in Accelerator. Everyone hops over the same bar, and when you eliminate that—that type of information from the RFP, now the RFP is simply on the scope of services that the agency is trying to prepare, and so to that extent it's more organizations competing with the larger organizations on the exact same scale.

MICHAEL OWH: And I would add that even with the innovations that Accelerator--Accelerator

has led including things like a structured proposal, that is—I think that actually eliminates the—the advantage that maybe bigger organizations have because now it's not about who—how big your grant writer is. It's about who is providing that answer for that service, that question that they usually have.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: That is—that has been one of the biggest impediments and—and folks coming to you all the time, and say do we have a grant writer? Can we use this and that. So, yeah, that is so. So these additional efficiencies has it cleared up agency personnel to be more on the ground in—in other areas? Have—we have we seen that, that we're not spending as much time on paperwork and administratively as be of more assistance to these smaller groups that often need mentoring?

MICHAEL OWH: So, I—I'm hoping that the service level—the service that at the agency level matched what I believe the service here the MOCS Accelerator was striving for. I think the other part of it, and this I take responsibility for is again Accelerator does that sort of time, and then there's that award process that is still very much on paper,

very much not as streamlined as it could be, and we are looking for, we are looking to identify areas for improvement there. We're going to hopefully, you know, we're going to be making—we are making some headway on—on changing some business process and—and—and doing all of the things that we need to do. But, you know, one of the things that having a streamlined and standardized process allows us to do, and I go back to the service that we offer is we have a team that calls providers for things like hey make sure you get your RFP in on time because it's due tomorrow or the day—or two days from now whenever it is. And then also it walks them through online as well as on the telephone, and in person for any of the challenges that they have to get this one. So, we're—I think that that level of service is represented well.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Well, if I could follow up Council Member Miller on this point, so sort of combining what you've been talking about, Michael, from 20 day—20 weeks to three days of your

time as a--What was your--were--were you in the ACCO team? You were or project manager.

MICHAEL OWH: [interposing] Yes, so I--I was manager.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You were the ACCO. Right so that--it would seem that you would have more time to do other things, and what you seem to be saying is the other things that you would do is--is to do more of the--the substance of the contract awards. But then if MOCS is now doing the customer service, how about the ACCO at DYCD? Would they be doing that as well?

MICHAEL OWH: I think there's definitely a lot of that customer service being provided by the agencies at the ground level, and what standards, I mean if there's something if I'm missing something. But, and then the actual like drafting, negotiating all of the stuff that happens even after award. There's a ton of work that happens on that. We would love to streamline it. It's just hope because there's a lot of legal requirements there that we have to untangle. But that is a level of effort that if we were able to streamline that, then I think we could even be able to further allow agency staff to focus

on that customer service, with the hand holding that, but we can't with the technical assistance that was in operation ladders.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Would you see—is there a possibility that there might be fewer staff people needed in the ACCO team.

MICHAEL OWH: I do not see that at the moment just because there are so many actions and paths needed for our contracting process right now. Dan, do you want to add anything? No?

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: It's sort of where you're going on that one, and it's very effective. Double checking that. Okay, great. Thank you. Let's see. Do you think that—so could we talk about the impact of the financials, the modules specifically? Do you think that—what do you think the impact of having this all online now has been in terms of the be it the payments, accuracy of the data, stuff like that?

DAN SIMON: Sure so I think the data accuracy is absolutely one of the home runs here because prior to managing the contract and the financials, you actually had—it may—it may have been in Excel, and emailed in, but it's—it's not much

better than paper, right? And so what the budget and invoice module allows you to do is to have the agency and the provider agree on what the budget will be.

So the provider is filling out their budget on particular lines, and then once that's agreed upon and approved by the city agency, now the invoice is simply an additional column on that budget where you are just, you know, invoicing off of those lines. In the paper process if I had \$10 on my pencil line, I could submit an invoice for \$11, and then the agency has to go through this cycle of no you don't have \$11 here. Where the system has the controls in place that would not even allow them to submit an invoice for anything more than what they have available on their budget. So, that alone has eliminated tons of back and forth with the agency and the providers on this budget and invoice management.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And similarly, because the invoices can be uploaded like into a vault or something?

DAN SIMON: So, it's—you shouldn't even think of it as like a form. You've got a stream with your budget on it, and then you I want to do an

invoice, and you're then filling out the invoice in what looks like your budget stream.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, because you've already managed what the dollar in your budget is already remains--agreed to what the dollar amount is going to be.

DAN SIMON: Yes, that's right.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And so, how does that--huh. So how does that choose between a rate based system like if you're paying \$2.00 per meal a senior serve--senior services provider, and a cost-based system?

DAN SIMON: So the budget is multi-pad, and so we have line item expenses. If we are paying based, you know, reimbursing based on expenses like PS and mulita PPS, but we also have tables that are rate based or milestone based. So if you want to pay \$2.00 per meal or if you have milestones that are the performance based contract, we can manage that as well. And you can lock and unlock the tabs so that you isolate the type of contract that it is for that particular budget.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [pause] If someone has--would it be possible for someone to have

a rate based system, a provider to have a rate based system contract with one agency and a cost-based service contract with another agency? Like when I was talking about ACS, they seemed to have more cost based contracts, and then DFTA has more rate based.

DAN SIMON: Yes, actually so providers have both experiences, but in Accelerator you would have a unique budget per contract. In fact, you could have sub budgets, depending on how you want to combine those. And so you could have a budget with one agency that is rate based for a hybrid. It could be partially rated, partially for all--all costs-- costs and milestones and-- I mean with a contract you can configure it however you want to.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You're amazing. I think for Halloween people should dress as the Accelerator, you know. It would be a great--

MICHAEL OWH: [interposing] Like Dan.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --costume. It would be beloved. The reason I think it's important is because I know you guys. The City is working really hard to make sure that we're paying our human service providers what they need to be paid, and I'm just-- As a reason--so the reason I'm asking that is

should the city decide to move from a rate based system to a cost based system? You're indicating that might not be so hard if the data might already be in there, or similarly, or first it's accessing (sic) and then, of course, the next section would be as we increase wages from, you know, working towards \$15 an hour, right, for some of the employees. Can they use the Financials modules to get that, and expedite them?

DAN SIMON: So, yes. So you could implement--implement that change. One of the things that we've been working very closely with OMB on is the, you know, the data collection around raise adjustments and the cost of living adjustments. And so, we're actually working on enhancements to the budget modules to collect different types of data that would allow for future adjustments to contract costs or what have you, or whatever it might be. The wage--I think the--the wage ladder that is going to be going on over the next couple of years. And so you have your budget. If you are amending your budget with additional dollars, that is your--your--it's also managing finances or you're amending the budget, and that gets registered. It gets reflected in the

budget, and so yeah, the vault (sic) root is to be able manage all the fluctuations of the human services contracts and budget.

MICHAEL OWH: And I think one of the benefits we haven't touched on--on having Financials is actually having that transparency for--for the provider as well as the agencies. So everyone sees the same thing. Whereas, before if you're a provider and I remember the calls that I would get where--what, you know, when my--when my--when I'm going to get reimbursed, you know, when my check is coming? Do you if have actually--if--if my actual invoice has been approved? Now all of that is visible to the providers directly.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Would that--does that contract still need to go to--I mean you still have to modify the contract.

DAN SIMON: If you're adding--

DIRECTOR GLAZER: [interposing] In addition to it.

DAN SIMON: --money or--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, yeah

DAN SIMON: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So do you know—I mean this sort of as a side point now that I have you here. Do you know how it's going to be implementing the first year wage increases? The bill is often implemented now to get everyone up to I think it was \$11.50 was the first year and then \$13 and the \$15.00.

MICHAEL OWH: believe that we have the majority of those contractors on this register, but there are some that we're still pushing in order to get the funding to the providers.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Could that be sorted through the Accelerator to know that information?

DAN SIMON: [pause] So the difficult part there is that for the sake of efficiency, some agencies have combined amendment amounts.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure

DAN SIMON: And so a COLA might be this much, but they combined it with an amendment that's that much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure, sure.

DAN SIMON: So they'll do just do one instead of doing them sequentially, and so it would

be difficult to parse out, which—So in an Accelerator I will have— Okay, I wouldn't be able to analyze which amendments there are, but to be able to identify each and every one and the piece that is COLA would be very difficult.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And how do you— how would the city track whether or not that COLA has been—those amendments have been made to the contract?

MICHAEL OWH: Because we have reporting by the agencies, and so the agencies are tracking. So if they did combine the limit then they'll tell us that's—that's how we tell if that amendment has been registered or not. But then it's hard for us on the —the back end to sort of parse out ourselves. We would need to rely the agencies to report that bill.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Because the—some days for those systems to talk to each other?

MICHAEL OWH: Do you mean financial?

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh, I don't know what I'm talking about. It—is just the, you know, you understand this stuff better than I do. Behind the firewall for you to know. If an agency is tell you they did it, and let's say they didn't, you could see that happen through the Financials modules that

no change has been made, and it would strike me that you could have those two systems talk to each other.

DAN SIMON: Yeah, I think that we can definitely tell the difference between there's been no amendments, and there has been an amendment on a particular contract. It's really--so almost every contractor we would see amended at some point during the year, and so it's trying to identify of this one of many amendments, which one is the COLA if it's--if it's embedded in the amendments with--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
They really in the--

DAN SIMON: --with other amounts.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean--

DAN SIMON: Yes, particular human services.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. How about, you know, one of the things that the Council we talked about in our last budget was increasing OPPS by \$25 million for the human service contract providers. Is that something that the Accelerator would--should we decide to budget that, which I would encourage you to do, is that something that could be

implemented quickly via the Accelerator or no we're back contract modification?

MICHAEL OWH: So those would have to go through contract modification, and the--the normal amendment process. But the amounts could be requested in Accelerator.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: It's pretty cumbersome for me. If we could go back to Vendex just for one second, as we move forward, our--what is your timeline for integrating? Do you think the two systems and--yeah, what's your timeline for that?

MICHAEL OWH: So I--I would--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing] For Vendex online I guess I should say?

MICHAEL OWH: So we are working towards the goal of some time next calendar year.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay.

MICHAEL OWH: We would like to have something, and I just want to note that the introduction that you have--you have made I think will be very--I mean it's very forward thinking in terms of what we think should happen--and--and we would love to talk to you more about how to operate, some more about that--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [interposing]

Okay.

MICHAEL OWH: --and do more.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great, great, great. Thank you. So one of the things that our City Council analyst notice that was in the Procurement Road Map, from--going from 2015 to 2016 there was de--decline in the number of concept papers from I think 22 to 14. Is that simply because, you know, as you were explaining earlier different agencies are contracting different things at different times or could something be going on?

DAN SIMON: That's certainly a part of it but then there's--there's a requirement for a concept paper only when a program has changed significantly, and so if an agency is simply re-competing a program, and it's not substantially changing, then a concept paper would not be required, and so we would rely on the Road Map as that sort of heads up to the sector that that--determines that.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, great. I think that's it. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

2 MICHAEL OWH: No, I think we covered a
3 lot.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, thank you
5 so much for your time. I really appreciate the great
6 work that your offices are doing. Thank you.

7 MICHAEL OWH: Thank you very much, Madam.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Next, I'd like to
9 ask Tracy Robinson from the Human Services Council to
10 come on up. [pause] Tracy, thank you so much for
11 your time. You know, I'm going to let you give your
12 testimony, but I just say—say over the last few years
13 as I've—as I've gotten to know you and the Human
14 Services Council, we really appreciate your expertise
15 on the Accelerator, and really count on your advice,
16 and—for all of us helping to make it better systems
17 for providers. So thank you so much for taking the
18 time today, and for all of your work.

19 TRACY ROBINSON: I don't know—oh there
20 you go. [laughs] Thank you so much, Council
21 Member. The agency is always so grateful to have you
22 as a partner. You've been a really great
23 collaborator of us, and a great champion of the human
24 services sector on the Council and beyond. So we
25 really appreciate that, and also thank you for

organizing this room, and for giving a HSC an opportunity to speak about the benefits of Accelerator. So I'll start by apologizing because I hear that most of what I'm going to say is now superfluous, and [laughs] I could probably just go back to the office. But I think it's important for someone to be here representing the providers' perspective on HHS Accelerator. So I do want to say a few things on the record, and then I will give you my written testimony, in which I elaborate on it. So basically, as you know, HSC represents about 160 non-profit human services providers. All of our members are registered and prequalified in HHS Accelerator, and we're really proud of that, and the main points that I wanted to cover today were first the benefit of Accelerator, and the fact that it has really transformed a procurement process for human services, and in some—in several ways. So it's increased efficiency by reducing a lot of redundancies, and also mitigating human error. In the past paper-based system, you know, with ten different city agencies contracting with about 1,200 non-profit providers, as you can imagine there great variations in practices among agencies, and with respect to different

programs and contracts. So a lot of the inconsistency has been reduced, and efficiency has been increased in terms of the amount of paper that is pushed around, and of, you know, for what it's worth, there's a lot of anxiety that goes into the procurement process especially on the provider side. In past life I was on that side, and I've—I've done plenty of proposals, and I've got three from my early assignees of actually writing from Volkswagen to the Fed Ex that was, you know, opened the latest in the city. It's really to get something in by the deadline. So not for nothing. That has been a major improvement for us providers. It has also leveled the playing field, and I—I know that Council Member Miller is gone, but I was really hoping that I would get to address his question about smaller providers. Accelerator at first might have seemed scary to small providers because of its technology, and it's online, and that's a change. But there are small organizations in which people wear different hats, and so you might have someone who works on the front line as a social worker who really knows this program and, therefore, they're also the person writing the proposal. The less time that they spend on the

proposal, the more time they can spend on the front line providing the services that we expect these providers to deliver in our communities. I think that's the--the important about it. Accelerator is always remembered for the impact that it has on communities. So yes, it's an online system, and it's really technical, and there's tech support, and there are a lot of people on the Accelerator team who are fantastic, but at the end of the day, it exists so that providers can do the great work that they're doing, uplifting our community. And the more we level the playing field and also increase the pool of qualified providers, which I really think that Accelerator does a great job at, the better off we are as a city. And then I mean I've already alluded to it, but the customer service with Accelerator is--has been amazing, and I want to give--I mean I just want to give an example on the record. So one of our providers contacted us, and said you know, agencies ask--keep asking us for those documents that we've already uploaded and shared. And a lot of times organizations ask us this because they're not comfortable addressing the contracting agency directly. HHS Accelerator will put in a call to

agency X, and within half an hour agency X magically finds the document in Accelerator. It's under the line. You don't need that any more. There you are, and--and there's just been a tremendous spirit of collaboration among the team Accelerator and the sector. The agency has organized I think three or four focus group sessions now where providers sit in a room face-to-face with the Accelerator staff, and give feedback on extremely granular technical stuff like the file size limits, or attachments. And Accelerator every single time hears that feedback and they take it back, and they will do something with it, and if they don't, they give us a good justification for not making those changes. We wish that every government agency would work like that. So, the one issue that we've already pointed out before is the switch (sic) of the system. So not all city agencies are using its with full potential, and even within agencies, there can be inconsistency. Because sometimes staff are divided by programs, and maybe the agency staff on this program are using it completely, and--and confidently and everything is great, and then staff on this--on another program within the same agency are not using it, and then we

see staff—we see staff go off to each other. So there is still some inconsistency in use. The usage is incomplete, and we think that with the Mayor's new Non-Profit Resiliency Committee, we can work to change agency culture and Accelerator already told us today they are more than willing to work with us on this. I do think that training for city agencies is important. Just as we train providers, I think that city agencies need to be trained. I need to think—I—I think that agency heads should promote this culture of using Accelerator. Because it's—it's actually better for everyone. At the end of the day, I—I believe it will make life easier for the agencies themselves as well. So, we welcome ongoing investments in Accelerator. We think it's very worthwhile and then again, I just want to stress at the end of the day this is about communities and the way the city identifies and engages partners who deliver services to communities. We all want to be good stewards of public funds. We want to make sure that the organizations we're giving our money to are doing what they say they're going to do with it. And I think Accelerator just has the potential to increase the—to increase transparency, and ensure

that we are giving money to those providers who are doing the work, and we're getting great results for the city. So, that's it, and I see the clock hasn't moved so I guess I'm good. [laughs]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Beautiful. Thank you so much for your testimony. You have plenty of time. [laughter] So let's keep going. But I do want to just ask a few questions.

TRACY ROBINSON: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Could I ask you to oust the agencies that are little more challenging?

TRACY ROBINSON: Well, since we're not live streamed, [laughs] I mean the ones that our members have complained about the most is DYCD.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I've heard that, too. So, the earth didn't end because of that. Yeah, and we've heard the same thing, and so that's—that helps to confirm that.

TRACY ROBINSON: And any of the outside knowledge of the awkward condition that providers are in. If you have a contract with an agency, you don't necessarily want to fax them and be like look, I've already uploaded it. That can be very difficult.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. They're
3 also one of the agencies that has problems on most
4 contracts so--

5 TRACY ROBINSON: And also just a lot of
6 different programs.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Different types
8 of programs. That's right.

9 TRACY ROBINSON: Yes, within the agency.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: That's right. So
11 do you think that the many different people in the
12 agency less have residence (sic) on the Accelerator
13 so it's serving more of staff extremely?

14 TRACY ROBINSON: Yes. Definitely.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, great. Do
16 you see any drawbacks using the Accelerator?

17 TRACY ROBINSON: I don't. Truly I think
18 that--I--I guess the only drawback is maybe the fear
19 that comes with using a new system. It is. It's--
20 it's a change, and it's very difficult, but I don't
21 see any drawbacks to using it because it increases
22 transparency. It reduced paperwork. I really do
23 think it levels the playing field and I--I think once
24 people get the hang of it, it's like riding a bike.
25 I think, you know, once they overcome the fear

factor, I think they'll all agree that it's actually a great system. I mean, our membership, you know, we've got about 160 members, and it's—it's really diverse. You have the Chinese members to, you know, organizations that have hundred million dollar amount budgets, and our members that we all agree that it has greatly increased the process.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [pause] Did you yourself perceive the change?

TRACY ROBINSON: I have. I have—I did one training when I first started working in HSC. So I guess that was in—it's been two years ago, October 2014 probably, and then I've also organized training, organized opportunities for Accelerator to come and give training to our members.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [off mic] For the city.

TRACY ROBINSON: [off mic] Okay, you have and this--

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Our agency. Okay, so do you think that—have you noticed on 160 providers' side an opportunity for those providers to access more RFPs through the Accelerator than they otherwise would have known about?

TRACY ROBINSON: Absolutely. When I—when I was doing the research for the Accelerator report, that was actually one of the questions that I asked providers in our survey in both—in interviews, and across the board regardless of size or program area, people told me that they were just getting a lot more notifications of opportunities and in particular the organizations that really liked that were the smaller ones. Because all of a sudden they were—they have so much more access to RPFs at the same time because they all go out. The notifications all go out at the same time in the same medium. So this playing field is completely level in terms of finding out about opportunities. As long as you are pre-qualified and then given services, you will get notifications when an opportunity arises in that area.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So how about in terms of your providers' experience on the playing field side once they get the contract? How is that? Have you—what feedback have you gotten about that?

TRACY ROBINSON: So that I—I don't know that I can really speak to that in any meaningful way because a lot of our members are not at a point in their contracts where they are using financials yet,

or the agencies that they're contract with are not using financials who are not really sure. And I think that's something that I need to update, and with respect to my research because the Accelerator Report was done almost two years ago now, and that is something that I think we need to look into again. And we—we knew at the time that we weren't going to get many responses on financials because there were just so few providers that were even using it.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, what's the timing for your report?

TRACY ROBINSON: So, well, we would--
[laughs] We need money for that. [laughs] So that's the thing. We—that report took me a long to do, and it was a major part of my duties when I first start working at HSC. We got—we received a grant for the report, and if we were to do another one, we would either need a consultant or another staff person to work on it, or we would need a special fund to cover our staff time to do it. We're only eight people so--
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CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: The information that's produced in your report do you think that's something that the Accelerator tools could be

collecting that information in lieu of your group?

In other words, could—could the City request that—

would providers answer as honestly right? Would we

come into that problem? Is this something we should

require of the city, too?

TRACY ROBINSON: So I understand the question. I understand the nuance, and I also think that's a great idea. So, the first thing is part of the reason that HSC undertook the report was that you want something just kind of independent, right? You want an independent source, and we were independent of the government, and that's why we did it. But I do think that the government should collect this information as well. To your point about whether providers will answer these questions honestly if they're coming from the city, I don't know. I can—I can name some provider who will answer anything honestly no matter who's asking it, and you probably know who I'm talking about. But not all of our providers are that bold. So I don't know. I—I guess the short answer to your—to that question is I don't know, but I do think it would be great for Accelerator to collect this kind of information. It's—it's—it's basic user satisfaction information I

guess, and I think it is appropriate for--for the Accelerator team to collect it, but I also think there's something to be side for HSC or some other organization. It doesn't even have to be us, but for some other organization outside [off mic] collating that stuff. [laughs] Sorry, this is here is falling apart. For some other organization to collect this information. [laughs]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, well let's follow up on that, and maybe the--use the switch on there. (sic)

TRACY ROBINSON: Okay. [pause]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Got it.

MALE SPEAKER: The mic is on.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Could you--I already have a copy of your report, but could you actually-- You know, one thing that would be really helpful is if you sent over a list of maybe the updated list of questions that you would want to research--

TRACY ROBINSON: [laughs] [interposing]
Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --in such a report. So right? So the initial questions like you

2 were asking about getting on and pre-qualifications
3 that you now have to evaluate the Vault, how to
4 evaluate the Financials conformance, and how to
5 evaluate the Road Map. [pause]

6 TRACY ROBINSON: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you very
8 much.

9 TRACY ROBINSON: I will—I will send that
10 to you.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you and
12 then lastly, is there anything in particular and
13 maybe you have this in your testimony, but is there
14 anything in particular you'd like to highlight that
15 could be an improvement, you know, today to the
16 Accelerator? My biggest takeaway is training of the
17 system users on the agency side. Is there anything
18 else you'd like highlight as an improvement to the
19 Accelerator?

20 TRACY ROBINSON: At this point no because
21 I—I suspect that the things we will most want to
22 improve has to do with the Financials modules, but we
23 just don't have enough information about it yet to
24 know what we want to improve. So for us I mean from
25

the provider's perspective, it's really agency use of the system that has been an issue. [pause]

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Any other agency, do you want to out at this time? [laughs]

TRACY ROBINSON: No, Council Member.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [laughs] Alright, maybe we can talk offline. Anything we can do to be helpful, you know—you know we certainly want to do it. Is there anything else—

TRACY ROBINSON: [off mic] Nothing.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --that you want to say. Okay, thank you so much for your time and effort. Your agency is just instrumental to helping the providers who do a service that the city is required to do--

TRACY ROBINSON: [interposing] Thank you for noticing that.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: --for them to do it [laughter] efficiently and effectively, we always need to make sure we're paying them on time, we're paying them right amount. So thank you so much for assistance with this.

1 COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS

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2 TRACY ROBINSON: Thank you for having us.
3 We really appreciate it, and thank you for calling us
4 in.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great. Anyone
6 else interested in testify? Okay. Thank you very
7 much. I call this hearing closed. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date October 21, 2016