

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY  
WITH, THE COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE  
COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS, THE  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION,  
AND THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL  
OPERATIONS

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MAY 21, 2021  
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HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 2)

B E F O R E: DANIEL DROMM, CHAIRPERSON  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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Environmental Protection, CHAIRPERSON FOR  
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VINCENT SAPIENZA, Commissioner Department  
of Environmental Protection

MICHAEL DELOACH, Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Environmental Health

ANGELA LICATA, Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Environmental Protection

JOSEPH MURIN, Chief Financial Officer  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

DR. MITCHELL KATZ, President and Chief  
Executive Officer of New York City Health  
and Hospitals

DR. PATRICIA YANG

CHRISSY FLANNERY

JOHN ULBERG, Senior Vice President Health  
and Hospitals

DR. ROSS MACDONALD, Chief Medical  
Officer/Senior Assistant Vice President  
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FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ, CUNY Chancellor

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1  
2 SGT. POLITE: Sergeants please start your  
3 recordings.

4 SGT. BIONDO: Recording QPC in progress.

5 SGT. SADOWSKY: Recording to the cloud  
6 all set.

7 SGT. PEREZ: Backup is rolling.

8 SGT. POLITE: Okay, Sergeant Jones you  
9 may begin with your opening statement.

10 SGT. JONES: Good morning everyone and  
11 welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
12 Hearing on the Committee on Finance jointly with  
13 Environmental Protection, Hospitals, Higher Education  
14 and Governmental Operations. At this time would all  
15 panelists please turn on their videos? And to  
16 minimize disruption, please place electronic devices  
17 to vibrate or silent and if you wish to submit  
18 testimony, you may do so at [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov)  
19 and again that is [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) and thank  
20 you for your cooperation and Chair we are ready to  
21 begin.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
23 much Sergeant Jones, thank you to the Director of  
24 Security Carl Dalva and to all of the sergeants for  
25 the work that you do to make these hearings possible.

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We are most grateful to all of you. Thank you.

Good morning and welcome to the City Council's Eighth Day Hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel Dromm and I chair the Finance Committee. We are joined by the Committee on Environmental Protection, chaired by my colleague, the famous Council Member James Gennaro. I have to say it's a great pleasure to be able to, um, work with you, um, Council Member and Chair James Gennaro. The first time that we've had a hearing together, uh, after knowing each other for many, many years.

JAMES GENNARO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: We are joined... Yeah, thank you. We are joined also by a number of colleagues and I will get those momentarily to announce those here but let me say DEP Fiscal '22 Budget is \$1.5 billion, an \$81.2 million increase when compared to the Fiscal '21 adopted budget with a large portion of its funding coming from city fund and in comparison to prior years, the Executive Budget added more funding to several key programs as initiatives. As the agency responds it will by managing the city's water supply, air quality and hazardous materials pollution, DEP has one of the

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largest Capital Construction Programs and despite the tumultuous year we had in 2020, this year's proposed Executive Capital Budget is no exception with \$13.7 billion in proposed Capital Commitments between Fiscal '21 and 2025 with \$2.3 billion in Fiscal 2021 alone. Notably across DEP's Capital Portfolio of the \$1.04 billion being added, \$687.9 million was added for water pollution control, \$237.8 million for water mains, \$117.2 million for sewage and \$5.3 million for water supply. At today's hearing, I look forward to learning more about DEP's Proposed Executive Budget and how it plans to implement some of its new and existing programs and capital projects. Thank you to John Seltzer and Jaquoya (SP?) Francisco from the Finance Division for the preparation for today's hearings and I also want to thank Stephanie Ruiz, our Committee Counsel for all the work that she does to make these hearings possible and for always being on top of everything for me. I am most grateful to you. Thank you, um, Stephanie Ruiz. Um, and now I am going to turn it over to Chair Gennaro for his opening statement. Chair Gennaro.

CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: Thank you Mr.

Chairman, it is a real joy to be here with you. As,

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1  
2 as you said we've known each other a long time and  
3 never had the opportunity to, uh, uh, chair a hearing  
4 together and it's really great to be with you as  
5 always. Thank you for your, um, friendship and  
6 brotherhood, I really appreciate that. And, um, uh,  
7 good morning everyone. I am Jim Gennaro, Chair of  
8 the Committee on Environmental Protection. Today, we  
9 will be hearing from DEP on their Fiscal 2022, uh,  
10 Budget as the Proposed Expense Budget total \$1.58  
11 billion and Proposed Capital Community Plans totals  
12 \$30.7 billion over five years. I look forward to  
13 hearing more about the Agency's strategy to fill  
14 vacant positions which are Agency wide. Making sure  
15 the City is prepared for the Roundabout West Branch  
16 Bypass Tunnel shutdown which is on the horizon and  
17 DEP's Capital Strategy, uh, and timeline to build out  
18 short infrastructure in Southeast Queens to ease  
19 persistent flooding in my home borough of Queens.  
20 I'd also like to make a special note to thank the  
21 Mayor, um, and his administration for not re-  
22 instating the rental payment. That was a big  
23 crusade of mine back when I was on the Council and  
24 here Chair of this Committee and it's a very, very  
25 regressive, uh, tax on rate payers and I, uh, thank

1 the Mayor for you know rolling back on the rental  
2 payments. Many people have forgotten about it, not  
3 forgotten about and therefore the elimination of the,  
4 you know, rental payment, you will not be looking at  
5 a 2. something percent water increase, we would be,  
6 you know 20 something percent and so, uh, I have  
7 to give credit where credit is due. Um, yeah, I'd  
8 like to thank DEP, uh, DEP Commission Sapienza and  
9 all the good people in DEP, uh, who will be  
10 testifying here today. I look forward to hearing  
11 from your Commissioner and your good team. Um, I'd  
12 like to say, I'd like to say, I'd like to thank,  
13 Janera Swanston (SP?) of the DEP, uh, uh, DEP staff.  
14 My own, uh, my, my, my, my own, um, Legislative  
15 Director, um, Nabby Kohr (SP?) and I'm just making  
16 reference to my phone here, everyone'll, everyone  
17 will give me a chance here because I'm the new guy,  
18 you know, just getting settled back in again. Oh,  
19 they, they gave me first names, isn't that great.  
20 Okay, so I already thanked Janera, I'm thanking Ricky  
21 and Nadia and John for all their good work in getting  
22 us to this good, um, point, uh, to have this  
23 hearing and my statement says that I'm turning it  
24  
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back to the Committee Council. How did I do Danny? Okay? Is that okay?

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: You did great, uh, Chair Gennaro as always.

CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: It's great to have you back in the Council. Clearly, you are a strong advocate for the environment and we really benefit, New York City benefits for your presence here. Thank you.

CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: Thank you very much Danny.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yep. I also want to thank Robin Forrest, without whom I would also be lost because she takes care of all the things that, uh, I can't get to and she has been joining us on these hearings, um, ever since they started. So, thank you Robin as well for all of your work.

CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: And I should probably try to, let's see, um, let me ar-, I'm just messing with everybody today. Let me to go to gallery view and see what members of my committee are here as well. I should give them a shout out. I

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1 should, okay, um, I see Council Member Darma Diaz is  
2 here and I'm looking for others in the EP fold. Um,  
3 I would ask Nabby to text me the names of people I  
4 may not be able to see here on this screen. Um, and  
5 I'll give a shout out to my good friend, Barry  
6 Grodenchik just because I like him. I'm the Chair, I  
7 get to do whatever I want. And, so, um, there you  
8 have it. And so with that said, we're turning it  
9 over to the Committee Counsel, right Mr. Chairman?  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes sir.

12 CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: Okay.

13 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
14 you Chair. My name is Stephanie Ruiz and I am  
15 Counsel to New York City's Committee on Finance.  
16 Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that you  
17 will be on mute until you are recognized to speak at  
18 which time, you will be un-muted by the Zoom host.  
19 If you mute yourself after you've been un-muted,  
20 you'll need to be un-muted again by the host. Please  
21 be aware that there could be a delay in muting and  
22 un-muting so please be patient. During the hearing  
23 if Council Members would like to ask questions,  
24 please use the Zoom Raise Hand Function and you will  
25 be called on to speak. We will be limiting Council

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Member questions to five minutes including responses.

I would now issue the affirmation to the administration witnesses. Do you affirm that your testimony be truthful to the best of your knowledge, information and belief. Commissioner Sapienza?

COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Thank you. Deputy Commissioner, Michael DeLoach?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MICHAEL DELOACH: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Thank you. Deputy Commissioner Angela Licata?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANGELA LICATA: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Thank you and Chief Financial Officer Joseph Murin.

JOSEPH MURIN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Commissioner, you may begin when ready.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And just before the Commissioner starts, um, I don't have the text chain for this, um, hearing, can you, um, make sure that I get that?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Absolutely.

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CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Commissioner, we are ready for you to start now.

COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: Thank you and good morning, um, Chair Dromm, Chair Gennaro, members of the Committees on Environmental Protection and Finance and Chair Gennaro congratulations again on your, your election and appointment to the Committee and we look forward to working with you as well. I am Vincent Sapienza.

CHAIR JAMES GENNARO: Thank you I appreciate that. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: Oh thanks James. Um, I'm Vincent Sapienza the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection or DEP and I am here to speak about DEPs Executive Budget for FY '22, and some brief testimony and DEP's mission is to enrich the environment and protect public, public health for many New Yorkers by providing high quality drinking water, managing waste water and storm water, reducing air noise and hazardous materials pollution. We provide about a billion gallons a day of high quality drinking water, um, it's delivered through reservoirs and our watershed through 7,000 miles of tunnels, aqueducts,

1 water mains; another 7,500 miles of sewer lines  
2 convey the waste water and storm water and we operate  
3 14 waste water resource recovery facilities around  
4 the five boroughs. Now, on our operations during  
5 COVID. As I mentioned when I testified in March, I  
6 am very proud of the work that DEP staff has done in  
7 the past year, we've maintain all core services  
8 throughout the pandemic without interruption or  
9 impact to our quality. Our workforce smoothly  
10 adapted, uh, to the needs during the pandemic. Most  
11 of our staff continually reported to their job sites  
12 in the field, uh, that we implemented social  
13 distancing, required temperature checks and provided  
14 them with extra personal protective equipment.  
15 Office staff worked from home if it was possible to  
16 do with support of our Bureau of Information  
17 Technology. Um, on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, office staff began  
18 returning, um, following CDC and DCAS guidelines to  
19 keep everyone safe and healthy. Our staff has also  
20 stepped up to support the City's overall effort to  
21 fight COVID and starting this spring DEP and DOHMH  
22 worked together along with outside experts to  
23 establish a coronavirus wastewater testing program.  
24 The program provided DOHMH with additional pieces of  
25

1 data to alert them to potential outbreaks around the  
2 City. Staff also had an additional 17,000 gallons of  
3 hand sanitizer for other agencies, for the Visiting  
4 Nurse Service and to distribute to the Public and  
5 City Parks. DEP staff volunteered at the Command  
6 Center to make calls to identify PPE needs and to  
7 work in the vaccine hubs. We also made changes to  
8 some publically facing procedures to ensure that we  
9 are providing the best customer assistance possible.  
10 We implemented a digital permitting system so that  
11 business and property owners could apply for  
12 necessary permits remotely. We implemented paperless  
13 solutions for vender invoicing and payments and for  
14 construction contracts seal bid envelopes are not  
15 publically opened using Microsoft Teams for  
16 transparency. Uh, regarding physical impacts from  
17 COVID, like the rest of the City, DEP has felt  
18 financial impacts, our Operating Revenues are about  
19 \$175 million lower than they were this time last  
20 year. There are two main reasons, first, water  
21 consumption is down about 4.7% as offices and  
22 businesses were closed or less active, uh, the second  
23 reason is delays in water bill payments.  
24 Significantly overdue payments have increased by 26%  
25

1 over the year with more than 40% belonging to non-  
2 residential customers. We know that many residents  
3 and business owners have been financially affected  
4 and so our billing assistance teams have been  
5 actively working with customers on extended payment  
6 plans and to the Council Members if you hear from  
7 constituents who are having trouble paying a water,  
8 uh, please ask them to reach out to us at 718-595-  
9 7000 and we will gladly work with them. Simply  
10 ignoring utility bills can necessarily blemish credit  
11 and cause avoidable late charges. Because we do not  
12 when water consumption and bill payments will return  
13 to previous normal levels we must take a  
14 conservative approach to our spending, we continue  
15 to speak with our regulators about relief on  
16 certain unfunded mandates but we do not know what the  
17 outcomes of those discussions will be. DEP has  
18 proposed FY '22 to '31 Capital Plan is \$22.7 billion,  
19 of which 26% is for federal and state mandates. We  
20 are prioritizing projects to ensure that our funds  
21 are allocated where they best serve the public such  
22 as improvements to our wastewater resource recovery  
23 facilities, for sewer replacements and extensions and  
24 for a water quality preservation initiatives. A  
25

1 little bit around the water rate now, um, the water  
2 and sewer rate no increase for the past five years  
3 including this current year, Fiscal '21. Um, for  
4 Fiscal '22 the water board is considering an increase  
5 of 2.76% to cover protective needs. For an average  
6 total family, this amounts to a monthly increase of  
7 \$2.22 with a point of comparison the average single  
8 family in New York City spends 20% less on water and  
9 sewer charges than similar residents in other cities  
10 across the US. The proposed 2.76% rate increase in  
11 FY '22 enables a 58% expansion of our customer  
12 affordability program from \$20 million to \$30  
13 million, um, before any credits for an additional  
14 53,000 billed customers who are in need. The  
15 proposed budget has no rental payment to the water  
16 system, from the water system to the City's General  
17 Fund for FY '22. So looking forward, COVID has not  
18 stopped DEP from, um, moving in with critical work.  
19 Capital Construction Repairs have continued including  
20 the major Southeast Queens Surrey Buildouts in Water  
21 Tower III and the repair of the Delaware Aqueduct.  
22 In 2020, we built more than 3000 new green  
23 infrastructure assets in Queens. It's a record  
24 number of installations for a calendar year. The  
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1 other thing, last month we launched the Harbor  
2 Protective Volunteer Program which combines our Rain  
3 Gardens Stewardship Program with Catch Basin Clean  
4 Up, Catch Basin Stenciling and Shoreline Clean Up.  
5 The Program launched with a kickoff event in Coney  
6 Island with staff, volunteers, and children from  
7 local schools working together to clean up litter and  
8 stencil catch basins. We look forward to continuing  
9 our innovative programs and progressing other  
10 critical work in partnership with the Council and  
11 my and I are happy to answer any questions that  
12 you may have.  
13

14 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
15 much Commissioner, um, it is good to see you again  
16 too and this is, uh, my final Budget Hearings for my  
17 tenure in the City Council and I've enjoyed working  
18 with you, particularly with Michael DeLoach who is  
19 so responsive to, uh, any issues that I have had, uh,  
20 in the past so. Thank you and welcome again. Um,  
21 the Executive Plan, DEP already receives a small  
22 portion of Federal Funding. Can you please breakdown  
23 the sources of this Federal Funding, was it stimulus  
24 funding or something else? If it was stimulus  
25 funding how were these funds being used?

2 COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, so  
3 Mr. Chair, uh, when we do get small amounts of  
4 Federal Funding but none was from the, the stimulus  
5 program, uh, at this point, uh, you know we, we  
6 continue to, uh, look at all sources of funding that  
7 may be available, or, you know, particularly looking  
8 at some of the infrastructure, uh, funding that's  
9 being discussed now. We think that that may be  
10 helpful for the water program, um, that's where we  
11 are at this point.

12 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: So, you are  
13 having some discussions with OMB about, um, Capital  
14 Projects?

15 COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: Uh, as,  
16 as far as the current, uh, stimulus funding that has  
17 been provided to the City, um, we know that those are  
18 being looked at for other uses than, than the water  
19 system, um, at this point but again, we continue to  
20 work with OMB and, uh, with our Federal and State  
21 partners to find money for the water system.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Thank  
23 you. In your testimony you mentioned, uh, the water  
24 rate. Department's Home Water Assistance Program  
25 will be expanded by \$8 million for a total of \$14

1 million in Fiscal '22. The Multi-Family Water  
2 Assistance Program will also be expanded by up to \$2  
3 million for a total of \$12 million, uh, in Fiscal  
4 '22. How many household do you anticipate receiving  
5 a bill credit in Fiscal '22 for these programs?  
6

7 COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: So, my  
8 Chairman we felt it was very important, uh, with,  
9 with many, um, you know residents still struggling to  
10 pay their bills to expand our, our water  
11 affordability programs and so we are going to be  
12 providing additional bill credits, uh, to, to those  
13 that are in need. Um, the \$145 bill credit that, that  
14 goes towards this will land an additional 45,000  
15 households for a total of 96,000. And for the  
16 Affordable Apartment under the Multi-Family Water  
17 Assistance Program, uh, who will receive a \$250 bill  
18 credit, we are adding 8,000 affordable units, to, to  
19 the total of 48,000, so an additional 20%.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Thank  
21 you, did you say an increase in delinquency rate for  
22 non-payment of water charges in Fiscal 2020 or '21  
23 and can you please tell us what the delinquency rates  
24 were in each of those years and how they compared to  
25 prior years?

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2

3

COMMISSIONER VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah

4

I'll, I'll start and then turn it over to Joseph

5

Murin who is our Chief Financial Officer but we have

6

seen an increase in delinquencies, um, particularly

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among the, the non-residential portion of the

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billing. Obviously, you know businesses were, were

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significant affected and so there have been delays in

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what we consider, uh, you know significantly

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delinquent beyond 180 days on the bills, uh, and as I

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mention in my testimony it's important that those

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who, who are having trouble paying bills please

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contact us because, uh, just ignoring the bill if you

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are accruing late charges and fees. You are

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blemishing your, your credit to credit rating

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agencies, um, so, it's important that you get in

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touch with us and we have a number of payment

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programs to extend over as much as 10 years, oh, like

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wow, so that important. Uh, Joe do you have the, the

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numbers?

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JOSEPH MURIN: Uh, I have, uh, as you

23

referenced in the testimony Commissioner, it's up by

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26% over the prior year and that breaks down you

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know, the bulk of that of I should say a large

1  
2 portion of that is in the Commercial and Industrial  
3 Sector. There is still, you know a large increase as  
4 well on the, uh, residential both for the single  
5 family and the multi-family but we, we do have a  
6 breakdown which we could share with the Chair and the  
7 members as well in terms of where that, you know,  
8 the, where those number are at.

9 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, because  
10 the elect is also having a problem with the, um, you  
11 now the collection of taxes on commercial properties  
12 as well. So, that, it may be connected with the  
13 water problem, with the water, um, bills as well.  
14 You know this, I think they suffered a lot.

15 JOSEPH MURIN: And we've also seen, uh,  
16 Mr. Chair a large decrease in, the, the usage in our  
17 commercial and industry and, you know the inten-, you  
18 know the airports, the entertainment sector, so we  
19 think you know that's indicative and we've been  
20 working closely with OMB using those as indictors,  
21 you know for both, you know the impact of the  
22 pandemic as well as where the recovery might start  
23 happening. Um, we believe a lot of those, uh, those  
24 customers are having you know economic impact from  
25 significantly to business that has, you know, while

1  
2 it may be they are not using as much water, they  
3 also have accrued you know those larger balances on  
4 their non-payment of bills.

5 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: So, when you  
6 said that you've seen an increase, an increase in  
7 water usage?

8 JOSEPH MURIN: Or, no, an increase in  
9 the, uh, uh the delinquencies.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah, okay.

11 JOSEPH MURIN: There is a very large  
12 decrease in water usage.

13 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Right, right,  
14 a large decrease, right.

15 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, we've  
16 seen about a 4.7% decrease in water usage year over  
17 year and that's, you know, likely because a lot of  
18 businesses and offices have been shut down or, or, or  
19 slowed.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Uh-huh, would  
21 that translate then into an increase in residential  
22 usage?

23 JOSEPH MURIN: Yeah.

24 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, that's  
25 interesting, yeah that's interesting Chair Dromm, we,

1 we have seen on the single family homes, uh, one and  
2 two family homes a, a, a slight increase in water  
3 usage as more folks work from home. Uh, we have seen  
4 that but overall, uh, water consumption citywide is  
5 down.  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Right. Very  
8 interesting.

9 JOSEPH MURIN: If you've, sorry, Mr.  
10 Chairman, the breakdown was the single family was up  
11 about 3%, the multi-families were down about 1.6% and  
12 the non-residential is down about 18.4% you know year  
13 over year.

14 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Right, very,  
15 very interesting. Yeah. Unfortunate. Okay. Thank  
16 you for that. Um, the Executive Capital Commitment  
17 Plan includes \$946.3 million to build compliance to  
18 our overflow tanks at two locations on the Gowanus  
19 Canal to reduce sewage outflow in the water body.  
20 What is the timeline to fully install these tanks and  
21 what level of combined sewer overflow reduction will  
22 be achieved with the tank installation?

23 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Okay. I'll start and  
24 then, uh, turn it over to Michael DeLoach and Angela  
25 Licata but, um, I, I think the counsel is aware that

1  
2 EPA, uh, designated the Gowanus Canal as a Super Fund  
3 Site and as part of their record of decision several  
4 years ago required the City to reduce compliance to  
5 our overflows into the canal, uh, with the  
6 construction of two tanks, an 8 million gallon tank  
7 and a 4 million gallon tank which, were, were well  
8 underway with obviously their large and complicated  
9 project is going to be disruptive to the neighborhood  
10 once we start excavating and pouring concrete, over,  
11 over the coming years, but, but properties have been  
12 acquired, work is underway. Um, and we, we  
13 anticipate that the work will probably go on through  
14 the end of the decade. We are still negotiating  
15 dates with the EPA, uh, but that's where we are.  
16 Uh, Michael or Angela, do you have anything to add?

17 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't, I think that,  
18 I think that's a good summary of where we are.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank  
20 you, and, um, one second, so what type of, of  
21 overflow reduction will be achieved with the tank  
22 installation?

23 VINCENT SAPIENZA: I don't know, if  
24 Michael or Angela you have that? I know it's over  
25 numbers?



1  
2           MICHAEL DELOACH: Angela, do you want to  
3 go in to some detail about the new storm roll and  
4 sort of the overall?

5           ANGELA LICATA: Sure. Hi everybody, um,  
6 the tanks, the two tanks are expecting to exceed the  
7 EPAs requirements in their Record of Decision on that  
8 required arranged from 59% to 74% reduction in solids  
9 coming from combined sewer overflows and we aim to be  
10 in the 80% or so, um, target and we, um, also have  
11 for addressing growth, uh, do to and related to the  
12 City's proposed re-zoning of the Gowanus area, what  
13 is known as the Unified Storm Water Rule so this  
14 would address our requirements to control storm water  
15 flow and rate and would unify that with a new  
16 requirement to address water quality issues so it  
17 would target a water quality volume as well. So,  
18 together, um, those proposals would address, um, the  
19 additional sanitary flows that are expected in the  
20 area and end up with a neutral result to the sewer  
21 system.

22           CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you, um,  
23 Deputy Commissioner. Here, let me move on to the  
24 Mayor's Cleanup Corp. Mayor de Blasio recently,  
25 recently announced the launch of the City's Cleanup

1  
2 Corp., a program aimed to hire 10,000 New Yorkers to  
3 make New York City the cleanest, greenest City. With  
4 over 100,000 catch basins citywide has DEP had any  
5 discussions with the agencies overseeing this image  
6 to, to ensure the catch, the catch basin grates are  
7 kept clean and that water during rain event flow  
8 easily.

9 VINCENT SAPIENZA: And I'll answer the  
10 question Chair Dromm and DEP was, was authorized 254,  
11 head count allocation from that. We've already had  
12 staff start within the past couple of weeks, um, and  
13 we intend to build up over the summer but it's a  
14 great opportunity for, for us to get a lot of work  
15 done related to catch basins, hydrants to just making  
16 sure that our, our facilities are more adequately  
17 maintained and, and kept in good state of repair.  
18 It is also a good opportunity for those we hire as,  
19 as we have you know vacancies for positions, full  
20 time positions at DEP. Uh, you know we think it's a  
21 good opportunity for folks to, to move up into those  
22 positions ultimately.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: That's  
24 fantastic. That's really good news to hear. All  
25 right. You know as a New York City public school

1 teacher for 25 years before I got elected to the  
2 Council, so I have to as an Environmental Education  
3 question. DEP offers educational programming to all  
4 age groups and more to the DOE for gaining 12  
5 education. Uh, what are some of the educational  
6 programs being offered by DEP? And was this  
7 programming impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?  
8

9 VINCENT SAPIENZA: I'll start and then  
10 hand it over to Michael, but you know we want to make  
11 sure, um, people who pay a water bill, uh, and kids  
12 as well understand, you know where their water comes  
13 from and, and how complicated it is to get water to a  
14 tap and then what happen when you flush the toilet,  
15 where that, where that water goes and how it's  
16 treated. So, we've been doing many programs over the  
17 years and Michael, you can expand on that.

18 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, I mean we are  
19 incredibly proud of our Education Team who, uh,  
20 always does good work but during the pandemic really  
21 went above and beyond, uh, ensuring that we had  
22 virtual learning and that we had digital resources,  
23 online tours to walk through people, uh, the process  
24 of what DEP does, uh, we also did a new climate  
25 change, uh, education module which is in coordination

1 with DOE which is some really new pertinent  
2 information about the risk of climate change. So,  
3 yeah, we've, we, you know we think we reach about  
4 40,000 people in a no-, in a usual year and I think  
5 with everything we've done to be more nimble and  
6 digital, I think we reached more teachers, more  
7 students, so. We are also looking forward to getting  
8 back to you know being outside and doing, have child  
9 in the classroom and lots of activities at the  
10 Visitor's Center at New Town Creek so we are excited  
11 to get back to, to more outdoor programming but we've  
12 definitely adjusted in, in ways that are going to be  
13 beneficial moving forward even regardless of the  
14 pandemic to give more educational tools to teachers  
15 and to students so.

17 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah, thank  
18 you. I always find it fascinating and I think kids  
19 would too, um, to find out how New York City gets its  
20 water.

21 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: From all the  
23 way upstate and places like that. But anyway, um,  
24 I'm going to move on. I'm going to turn it over to  
25 Chair Gennaro. But, but before I do let me just

1 check to make sure that everybody has been announced.

2 Um, we have Council Members Adam, Adams, Barron,

3 Louis, Darma Diaz, Powers, Grodenchik, Ampry-Samuel,

4 Ulrich, Koslowitz, Minority Leader Matteo and Council

5 Member Van Bramer, and I hope that I've gotten

6 everyone but I think that I did. So, let's go over

7 to Chair Gennaro.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Thank you Mr.

10 Chairman, I appreciate that and thank you, um, Vinny

11 for your, um, for your good answers to the Chairman's

12 questions and all of your staff. Uh, it's a pleasure

13 to see Angela Licata, uh, with whom I know, a long

14 working relationship, uh, when I was at the Council

15 and then when I was over at DEC. It's a pleasure to

16 be with you. Um, um, this is a question for the

17 Commissioner, um, in review of DEPs Fiscal 2022

18 Budget I know that DEP has a number of, of vacancies

19 agency-wide, as it stands now the current Fiscal Year

20 the budgeted headcount is 6,258 positions, while the

21 actual number of filled positions is 5,679 leaving

22 over 579 vacancies. Um, let me just follow-up with

23 that, it appears that with regard to green

24 infrastructure, they seem to be according to the

25 staff analysis, the most difficult to fill with only

1 96 of the 210 positions filled to date and follow-up  
2 to that, it appears that engineer design and  
3 construction jobs are also have a lot of vacancies  
4 but only 353 of 423 positioned filled to date. Um,  
5 and as we move forward to Fiscal 2022 what is  
6 strategy to make sure that the budgeted headcount  
7 needs are filled in a more timely manner?  
8

9 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Mr. Chair, thanks for  
10 the question, um, the hiring slow down, um, over the  
11 past year, uh, has resulted in, you know a large  
12 number of vacancies as people left city service. Um,  
13 we've, we've done a number of things, um, in the past  
14 months to, uh, to work with OMB. Uh, now that the  
15 physical situation has stabilized with some of the  
16 funding that we've, uh, you know, gotten citywide,  
17 uh, so, uh, if I'll speak first about the green  
18 infrastructure programs. So many of those hires  
19 there are to maintain our rain garden and bio swells  
20 and those are seasonal hires so we will ramp those  
21 up, uh, rather quickly to get, to get all those  
22 filled. You mentioned engineering design and  
23 construction, uh, it's been you know it's typically a  
24 challenge to, uh, hire and retain engineering talent  
25 for the City. Uh, we've had a number of retirements

1 that the Bureau of Engineering with Design and  
2 Construction, um, but again as the, as the hiring,  
3 um, slow down and freeze opens up, we expect to, uh,  
4 you know call some civil service lists and hire  
5 there.  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Thank you,  
8 uh, thank you. I'm, I'm going to go off my question  
9 list for a second just to follow up on something you  
10 said about, uh, in DEPs very comprehensive COVID  
11 response and all the ways that, you know DEP stepped  
12 up to make a positive difference in their COVID  
13 Crisis. I want to thank you and all, and all of your  
14 staff for doing that. That's certainly more of a  
15 comment than a question. I just want to pay tribute  
16 to DEPs good work, uh, in that regard. I remember  
17 way back when, when I, uh, passed the Storm Water  
18 Management Plan and that became law and, and a big  
19 part of DEPs, uh, uh, Storm Water Management, uh, uh,  
20 uh, methodology has been to build the rain gardens,  
21 and many of them, um, around my district that are  
22 rather finished, or you know in a state of, of, of  
23 being constructed and, um, do you have any estimate  
24 on the, uh, on the, uh, on what kind of, what kind of  
25 CSO reduction will be realized by virtue of the

1 deployment of all of these rain gardens? Can I say  
2 like you, what is rain gardens really going to do?  
3 It is just a small area. Um, and, of course, I tell  
4 them that it was my legislation that led to these  
5 being built in the first place, which of course, the  
6 very breech at the above and I, I, I say that very  
7 jokingly because you know not so much, um, but, um,  
8 I'd like to be able to give them a formal response on  
9 the, uh, you know value added to local water quality  
10 from the installation of the rain gardens.  
11

12 VINCENT SAPIENZA: You're right Mr.  
13 Chair, this goes back, you know to, to a previous  
14 tenure, and just a little bit of a background, you  
15 know New York City, it's mostly paved. So when it  
16 rains, uh, water just runs off, goes into the sewer  
17 system and the sewers can be, um, you know  
18 overwhelmed and release excess water into local  
19 waterways that all combined to our overflows.  
20 There's all much, so much we can do, um, as far as  
21 hard, what we call grey infrastructure.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Yeah.

23 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Those are tanks and  
24 bigger sewers, so, we started at the time looking at  
25



1  
2 keeping storm water runoff out of the sewer system by  
3 building rain gardens and using these.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Right.

5 VINCENT SAPIENZA: I, uh, devices that  
6 store runoff that otherwise would go into a catch  
7 basin and into the sewer system and I think we have  
8 about almost 11,000, uh, now either built or, or in  
9 construction currently and, uh, Angela do you have  
10 numbers on, on reductions and compliance to our  
11 overflow?

12 ANGELA LICATA: Yes, Commissioner, uh,  
13 and absolutely, um, wonderful program. Thank you for  
14 your leadership and thank you for your, your trust in  
15 our innovation here. We expect that these 11,000  
16 assets that are either constructed or in construction  
17 will result in over 1500 gallons of combined sewer  
18 overflow reduction and we have targeted these assets  
19 within those priority water bodies where we are  
20 struggling, um, to meet Water Quality Standards for  
21 a variety of reasons. There are many impairments in  
22 those water bodies and CSOs is one of those  
23 impairments.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: But, but,  
25 when you speak in reduction of 1500 gallons I think

1  
2 you said, is that, um, 1500 gallons over what period  
3 of time or is that per, per asset or?

4 ANGELA LICATA: Um, um, thank you for  
5 correcting me.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Thank you.

7 ANGELA LICATA: I'm actually really  
8 sorry. Yes, it's about 500 million gallons of  
9 reduction and it is about 1500 greened acres.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Oh, okay.  
11 Great. I'm.

12 ANGELA LICATA: I'm sorry, yes. So a  
13 greened acre is, um, we measure that with one inch of  
14 rainfall over an acre of property.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Right.

16 ANGELA LICATA: So, that's how we  
17 calculate that, based on those 1500, um, greened  
18 acres we will achieve about 507 million gallons of  
19 reduction and combined sewer overflow per year.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Great, great.  
21 Okay, okay, that's kind of straightened things out a  
22 little better, thank you, thank you for that, um,  
23 Deputy Commissioner. It feels funny to call you  
24 Deputy Commissioner, I always call you Angela. So  
25 anyways. Um, I, I, I have a question for the

1  
2 Commissioner regarding Bio-solid Treatment and  
3 Disposal. Of course, we are all aware that a core  
4 function or ADC that it must process, export and  
5 dispose of bio-solid material; however I believe, um,  
6 I don't like the wording of this question. Uh, let me  
7 re-word it. Um, to what extent are we trying to  
8 achieve more beneficial re-use of the bio-solids  
9 rather than disposal and I say that with a knowledge  
10 that, um, sometimes the, um, that the bio-solid  
11 material has been contaminated by heavy metals or is  
12 it just is what it is? And if you have something that  
13 is contaminated, is, sometimes it is very hard to  
14 beneficially re-use it. So, um, to what extent, um,  
15 are we kind of forced to simply dispose of it rather  
16 than beneficially re-use it and is the some sort of  
17 pathway to how we can beneficially re-use this  
18 material or is the cost of doing that, um,  
19 prohibited?

20 VINCENT SAPIENZA: It's, it's certainly  
21 our goal, um, Mr. Chair to continue to push the  
22 beneficial re-use, the, the, and we generate about  
23 1300 tons per day, um, of this organic material that  
24 gets removed from the wastewater treatment plants.  
25 Going back I'm going to say to 2008 or 2009, the, the

1  
2 cost of landfilling that material was so much cheaper  
3 than beneficially using it because the beneficial use  
4 requires another step in the process and, uh, just to  
5 try to keep water rates in check going back to 2009,  
6 2010 and 2011, uh, we essentially did 100%  
7 landfilling. Over the last few years, though, we've  
8 tried to make a better effort to beneficially use.  
9 We are actually up to now about 31% of that material  
10 being beneficially used, 69% still going to landfill  
11 but the goal over time is to continue to more and  
12 more beneficial use.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: But, but,  
14 it would be fair to say that some, that there is  
15 some contamination of this material which precludes  
16 it's beneficial re-use and when you make reference  
17 to an additional step it's probably a step that would  
18 remove some of the harmful contaminates, is that fair  
19 to say?

20 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, and it's mostly  
21 what they call pathogen reduction. Um, Mr. Chair,  
22 at this point that's what we need do so doing things  
23 like composting, Lyme stabilization, digesting for  
24 more time, uh, does that. Uh, just I have the cost  
25 by the way where I can give you that to, for, for

1 landfilling, we are now paying \$122 per ton,  
2 beneficial use is \$139 per ton. So that, that extra  
3 processing, it's about \$1000 per ton.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Okay, we, we  
6 will, we will continue to uh, to track down and app-,  
7 and I certainly applaud your efforts to, uh, maximize  
8 beneficial re-use, you know within prudent physical  
9 boundaries so thank you for that. Um, another  
10 question about the, or my next question will be  
11 around the Rondout-West Branch Tunnel. Rondout-West  
12 Branch Tunnel conveys Delaware water supply across  
13 the Hudson River toward the City is a critical  
14 component to the water supply system delivering more  
15 than 50% of the drinking, of the City's drinking  
16 water annually. Uh, this is kind of a history of a  
17 problem. The leak was first detected in 1991 and I  
18 will remember that. I was on staff at the Council at  
19 the time and it was expected that the leak rate is  
20 about, um, 15 to 35 million gallons per day. That's  
21 been long known to, uh, so we had to build the bypass  
22 and okay. Let me finally get to the question, um,  
23 when does DEP anticipate connecting the bypass  
24 tunnel, um, I know we had a previous conversation  
25 where we talked about just a little bit about the

1  
2 preparations for the, for the shutdown and how long  
3 that will and if you can walk us through how we will  
4 operate during that shutdown so that we can, uh, make  
5 sure that all, you know New Yorkers have, uh an  
6 adequate supply of clean water during the bypass  
7 period? And how long will the shutdown be in place?  
8 You know, you get the general idea.

9           VINCENT SAPIENZA: But, no, yeah jus-,  
10 this is the largest water supply, um, repair program  
11 that New York City has ever undertaken to the  
12 Delaware Aqueduct which conveys about 50% of the  
13 water use by the City of New York has been leaking  
14 for, for quite a while in a section of pipe that's  
15 directly under the Hudson River. About 600 feet  
16 below the Hudson River. To, to make the repair we  
17 just can't take the aqueduct out of service and get  
18 in there and spend a year repairing it. So, the  
19 solution was to build a parallel tunnel which is  
20 now built, 2-1/2 miles long, um, up near Newburg  
21 and next year, in 2022, likely October, we will be  
22 connecting that parallel section of new pipe to the  
23 existing old pipe that's leaking and that we expect  
24 to take about five months. So, during the winter of  
25 2022 in to 2023, the Delaware Aqueduct will be

1  
2 offline for that, that, um, repair project. But, uh,  
3 we do anticipate that we will have sufficient water  
4 from our Catskill System and from our Croton System,  
5 um, to make up the difference during that period.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Great. And,  
7 uh, I'll just add to anyone listening, there are some  
8 people that are, that you may be concerned about the  
9 water quality that would come from the now offline  
10 Southeast Queens Wells and it is DEPs plan as I  
11 understand it that in order to supplement the City's  
12 water supply during the, you know, during the, during  
13 that period when the Croton is off, well, when the  
14 Delaware Aqueduct is offline, DEP will not have to  
15 rely on any water from the Southeast Queens wells.  
16 Is, is that a fair statement?

17 VINCENT SAPIENZA: That's, that's a  
18 fair statement. So we've looked at the, uh, needs of  
19 you know New Yorkers and again we use about a billion  
20 gallons of water a day. Uh, the Catskill System and  
21 the Croton System, can, can achieve that without us  
22 having to activate the Queens wells.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Right.

1  
2 VINCENT SAPIENZA: We had considered it  
3 at one point but, uh, it's, it's not needed as far as  
4 we know right now.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Uh, great,  
6 great, uh, thank you, thank you Commissioner. Uh,  
7 next question, the Capital Commitment Plans includes  
8 \$610 million to complete the Brooklyn-Queens leg of  
9 the City Water Tunne-, Water Tunnel #3. The two  
10 shafts will be instructed equipment and the existing  
11 shafts will be rehabbed. Tunnel, tunnel corrosion  
12 will be addressed and the new electrical  
13 telecommunications and security systems will be  
14 installed. City Water #3 is important to ensure that  
15 we have redundancy in the system, uh, and a backup  
16 for Tunnels #1 and #2, many people know all of this.  
17 Um, so, here comes the question. When can we expect  
18 Water Tunnel #3 project to be fully completed and the  
19 system 100% online? It's, it's my own recollection  
20 that there was a project that was first conceived of  
21 in 1954, I'm during this from memory and I think  
22 that before and I believe started in 1971, is that  
23 right? Does that sound right?

24 VINCENT SAPIENZA: That's right.  
25



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: So this is  
3 the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of us putting shovels in the  
4 dirt and making this happen. So, um, I, but again,  
5 so, so here we are 50 years in. How close are we?  
6 When are we going to, um, um, be, be have the, have  
7 the total build out of tunnel #3 fully realized?

8 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, Mr. Chair you're  
9 right. It goes back 50 years and, uh, it's been  
10 built in sections. City Water Tunnel #3 of the Bronx  
11 portion went in to service in 1998, the Manhattan leg  
12 of the tunnel went into service in 2013 and we are  
13 now completing the Brooklyn-Queens leg of the tunnel.  
14 It's a 10-1/2 mile section of tunnel that will serve  
15 Brooklyn and Queens. Six of the eight shafts that  
16 bring water from 700 or 800 feet below ground to the  
17 surface have been completed. We have two final  
18 shafts to go, 17B and 18B, uh construction contractor  
19 is mobilized now. It's a company named Walsh that is  
20 going to be doing, uh, this work to build the, um,  
21 the two last shafts. Um, you spoke around redundancy  
22 and you are right tunnel 1 and tunnel 2 are, are  
23 decades old and that's why we are building tunnel 3,  
24 but as I mentioned the tunnel itself, that deep  
25 tunnel has been in service in the Bronx and Manhattan

1  
2 and there is actually fresh water flowing through it  
3 in the Brooklyn Queens section that is already  
4 constructed, so, uh, we feel that we have a good  
5 level of redundancy at this point. Um, but as we  
6 move forward constructing those two last shafts there  
7 is other work as you said that needs to be done, um,  
8 and tested. We anticipate that sometime around the  
9 end of the decade we will then take tunnel #1 out of  
10 service and do maintenance and repair there and have  
11 tunnel 3 fully in service.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Okay, um, but  
13 in terms of when the, uh, when tunnel #3 all  
14 remaining shafts are fully built out will that be  
15 another 10 years or something or how long?

16 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, we, we think  
17 less than that, um, you know we've, we've spoken to  
18 the construction contractor and as he said, you know  
19 until I start drilling through the bedrock and going  
20 down, you know 700 to 800 feet I'm not, uh.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Right.

22 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Know for sure, but,  
23 uh, you know we have estimates that, that, uh, it  
24 will take less than that.

25

1  
2           CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Thank you,  
3 thank you Commissioner and this is something that we,  
4 we've talked about previously. Uh, I mean, we're,  
5 we're doing redundancy with regard to tunnel #3 and  
6 of course we need there. There are sections of the  
7 City that, uh, that don't quite yet have a full built  
8 out with regard to, um, storm sewers and I'm talking  
9 of course about Southeast Queens. Here's the  
10 question with a narrative and then a question,  
11 flooding in Southeast Queens has been a persistent  
12 issue for many years. Um, and you know the residence  
13 of southeast Queens you know have to deal with  
14 these street flooding issues and home flooding issues  
15 and I know that DEP has been working assiduously to  
16 try to get plans for the southeast Queens Sewer Built  
17 Out. With respect to the executive plan in your  
18 Capital Strategy what is, uh, currently, you know a,  
19 no. Let me change this question, um, you know,  
20 when can the people of southeast Queens reasonably  
21 assuming, um, that what is on the drawing board now  
22 and from our last conversation I know that the  
23 full plan, right to the last catch basin, you know,  
24 already exists so we are no longer drawing it on  
25 paper, um, but when can expect for the, the uh,

1  
2 the southeast Queens Sewer Build Out, the Storm Sewer  
3 Build Out to be, to be, uh, fully constructed and in  
4 place?

5 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, Mr. Chair as you  
6 know the residents of southeast Queens have been  
7 long suffering since the area was developed and  
8 stream that, natural streams that had drained that  
9 are were fill in.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Sure.

11 VINCENT SAPIENZA: By unscrupulous real  
12 estate developers. Um, it's, it's been a challenge,  
13 um, and until Mayor de Blasio in 2015 announced a  
14 \$1.5 billion program and commitment to the residents  
15 there to build out the sewer system, that, that was  
16 the real first, you know large amount of funding that  
17 went toward that and we've been making incremental  
18 progress and we've been working with DDC and we've  
19 completed already a number of projects that have  
20 helped residents in some areas. We will continue on  
21 with the funding with the pot of money Joe Murin I  
22 think now is over \$1.7 billion, but, uh, we will  
23 continue that work until it's completed.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Uh, thank  
25 you Commissioner, certainly this, uh, I know that I,

1  
2 I think that I speak for you know all of the members,  
3 uh, from southeast Queens and also for Chair Dromm,  
4 also from Queens, uh, Council Member Adams, I, I, I,  
5 uh, I saw was part of this hearing and well and so  
6 we, we would urge, you know, DEP with all to you  
7 know seek to allocate, um, appropriate funding and of  
8 course building these sewers, um, you know does cause  
9 some dislocation, um, in the community, but um, this  
10 is something that I see as, as I begin my tenure as,  
11 as Chair of the Committee once again to, uh, try to  
12 work with my colleagues in southeast Queens and with  
13 your good people to, uh, move this on. Also, with  
14 the next administration, uh, I'll be pushing for as  
15 much funding as we can possibly have to make this, uh  
16 work, work as quickly as possible and with that, that  
17 is, um, all of the questions that I had, and, uh, so  
18 now what am I supposed to do?

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: We are going  
20 to go back.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Um, Mr.  
22 Chairman? So.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: We are going  
24 to go back to Counsel who has, uh, the list of  
25 Counsel Members who want to ask questions.

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS,  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Oh, so, so,  
3 you, now are, Danny are you, are you going out of  
4 your way to make my job easy today? Um, if so I  
5 gladly appreciate that. I appreciate that.

6 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Well I tell  
7 you Zoom, Zoom has been great now that we've learned  
8 it.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Right, okay  
10 and you've been doing this for so long and this my  
11 first at people texting me who's on, who's not or  
12 whatever and um, um, and so I, I, you know leave it  
13 in the able hands of, of the Committee Counsel to  
14 recognize other members for their good questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you Mr.  
16 Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you  
19 Vinny and your, and your great team, I of course  
20 reserve the right to come back and ask my questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Of course, of  
22 course.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: You bet. Okay.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL STEPHANIE RUIZ: Thank  
25 you. If any Council Member has questions for DEP,

1  
2 please use the Zoom Raise Hand Function and you'll be  
3 added to the que. Council Members, please keep your  
4 questions to five minutes including answers. Please  
5 wait for the Sergeant at Arms to tell you when you  
6 time begins. The Sergeant will then tell you when  
7 your time is up. We will now hear from Council  
8 Member Adams.

9 SGT. AT ARMS SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

10 ADRIENNE ADAMS: Good morning. Uh,  
11 thank you so much to our ch-, to our Chairs, Chair  
12 Dromm, Chair Gennaro, it is, it is just a delight to  
13 hear you, um, officiating th-, this hearing this  
14 morning. You have brought a lot of joy to my heart,  
15 so, I'm so happy to have you as Chair on  
16 Environmental Protection. You just don't know. Your  
17 expertise is invaluable to the Council. So, thank  
18 you and thank you also for highlighting, um, in  
19 you're questioning the issues of Queens. We've been  
20 through a lot. Commissioner Sapienza, we've been  
21 through so much haven't we?

22 VINCENT SAPIENZA: A lot.

23 ADRIENNE ADAMS: Before, we've been  
24 through a lot, um, a lot of change but, you have  
25 been there with us with day one, um, you know just

1 bringing tough with us through thick and thin  
2 literally, Michael DeLoach can't thank you enough,  
3 um, for your help as well during the extensive and  
4 it's still going on. The extensive, um, issues  
5 around the South Ozone Park sewer emergency that  
6 happened two years ago. My constituents are still  
7 suffering very greatly, greatly, I, I can't believe  
8 it but they are still suffering very, very, gr-,  
9 greatly, um, because of that emergency, that disaster  
10 which has turned out to be and I'm in touch with  
11 them, um, multiple times during the week actually,  
12 ongoing. So, um, I guess you know I don't really  
13 have anything prepared but it is such a sensitive  
14 issue for me, um, so literally being in the trenches,  
15 um, around this issue. Um, I guess Commissioner, you  
16 know I just, I just hear from my constituents that  
17 subsequent to the sewer emergency there have been  
18 issues of flooding that haven't existed before. So,  
19 I don't know if you are aware of it, I'm, I'm going  
20 to assume you are. Can you just, uh, give me a little  
21 bit of insight and explanation as to why that's  
22 happening? Why my constituents are still suffering  
23 with flooding? Um, even though the construction  
24 that is going on, we know in the long run, that's  
25



1  
2 going to be, you know the best thing for us but why  
3 are they still suffering with issues of flooding  
4 today?

5                   VINCENT SAPIENZA: Yeah, thanks Council  
6 Member and thanks for all of your amazing work. For  
7 months and months of being out there and supporting  
8 us all. Um, it was you know a terrible situation  
9 obviously for, for more than 100 property owners,  
10 they are the homeowners are still suffering as you've  
11 said. What we've done, um, to date and I'll talk  
12 about the flooding in a minute is replace about a  
13 half mile section of section of sewer that was built,  
14 um, by New York State DOT when they did the Nassau  
15 Expressway Job and we just determine that that whole  
16 section of sewer wasn't able to be rehabilitated. It  
17 was just of such poor quality so we built a, a new  
18 section a half mile longer, new sewer to do that.  
19 Um, the Storm Sewer Program that Chair Gennaro talked  
20 about is also proceeding and that will help. Um,  
21 Storm Water Flooding is still, a challenge for South  
22 Ozone Park, uh, I won't deny that during heavy rains.  
23 There is plenty of street ponding and flooding, but,  
24 um, you know as we move forward in time and get these  
25 additional projects done that will certainly help.

ADRIENNE ADAMS: I appreciate that.

We've got a long way to go. Um, my constituents are still pumping water, you know and you know my heart goes out to them. You know I've been, you know, um, in a whole lot of different setting with them in the homes, in press conferences, in meetings and like I said this, this is ongoing, so, I'm also going to throw out there before my time is up and, I, I don't know if you can respond to this. It may be somewhere else but we've had numerous complaints about the boiler installations that have gone on and the fact that some of these boilers are faulty. We don't know if they've passed code. We know that there have been noises. There have been fumes, um, and my constituents, I mean it's, it's just so much that's going on you know as a, you know as a backlash because of this horrible emergency so now we are looking at equipment that was installed that is possibly faulty that were not, you know up to code as it should be, so we don't know if it's just you know give them the left overs, whether or not this equipment was used, we don't know where this equipment came from, but, those are the facts. So, and a whole lot of other facts. So, I will just put

1 that there. I don't know if you have anything to say,  
2 I am going to request Chair Genaro's, um, ongoing  
3 advocacy with us in southeast Queens on resolving all  
4 of these issues. We've got issues of black mold, um,  
5 which we knew were going to happen and nobody really  
6 wanted to listen to the long term its two years later  
7 and now we have people being sick because of black  
8 mold because of that situation as well. It's just,  
9 you know multiple situations going on over there but  
10 can you address the boiler issue at all?  
11

12 VINCENT SAPIENZA: Sure, and, and I'll be  
13 brief and then turn it over to Michael DeLoach who  
14 has been really on top of this. So, we've gotten,  
15 um, complaints from some of the homeowners who  
16 received new boilers and we provided new boilers and  
17 hot water heaters to those who had basements flooded.  
18 Um, we've gotten complaints about, from, from the  
19 homeowners in the plumbing community, um, about some  
20 issues related to the boilers and we've been working,  
21 um, with the Department of Buildings on that and  
22 Michael, you can, you can take over from here.

23 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, I, I, hi council  
24 member, I've been working closely with Ms. Cook  
25 who's keeping good track of all the issues that

1 residents are having. I will, I just want to be clear  
2 from the beginning thought that all of the equipment  
3 that was installed was confirmed brand new through  
4 DEPE working with the contractor that we had and  
5 everything was done to code with all the DOB  
6 permitting that we kept track of. So, just to make  
7 sure that we are clear. It is new infrastructure and  
8 it was to code. Um, there is some existing issues  
9 with things not related to the direct installation of  
10 a new, um, boiler or a hot water heater that we  
11 didn't necessarily do that is having some issues but  
12 we are definitely working through, um, I know there  
13 is a handful that we are talking to Ms. Cook  
14 constantly with about to help resolve but I just want  
15 to make, to make clear because I was out there  
16 firsthand and saw it all happening and was working  
17 all the homeowners. I just want to make clear that  
18 it was to code and it was new that doesn't mean that  
19 there aren't some issues that we are still working to  
20 resolve, but, um, we're, we're definitely, um, you  
21 know working as much as we can, appreciating that  
22 this has gone on for too long and trying to do what  
23 we can to make it right for, for the property owners  
24 out there.  
25

1  
2 ADRIENNE ADAMS: I appreciate that  
3 Michael and again thank you for being on top of this.  
4 We know that Ms. Cook is our champion out there.

5 MICHAEL DELOACH: For sure.

6 ADRIENNE ADAMS: You know, for sure, so,  
7 um, we thank her publicly as well for all of her hard  
8 work. It has not been easy at all for her. So, I,  
9 cre-, I appreciate, um, your partnership ongoing,  
10 um, and Commissioner of course, your steadfast  
11 dedication to, um, to a solution to these problems  
12 that are just excruciating for my constituents and  
13 Chair Gennaro for your ongoing partnership in helping  
14 us, um, to, u, with solutions to these issues in  
15 southeast Queens. Thank you so much for your  
16 testimony. Thank you Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: And I, I'm  
18 just going to jump here for a second and make a, make  
19 a note to staff, to the Council of the Committee  
20 Samara Swanson (SP?), uh, and to my Legislative  
21 Director Nabi Khor (SP?) to follow up with Council  
22 Member Adams. You know she made a note about working  
23 with us to follow up on the mold issues and some of  
24 the other issues that she's addressed, and so I'd ask  
25 staff to put that in motion with Council Member

1  
2 Adams. I want to be part of that and so, um, and so,  
3 thank you for, uh, asking us to work with you Council  
4 Member Adams and we'll, we'll get that scheduled and  
5 we'll work with you on that. So, um, thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes and might I  
7 add, you know those residents are so lucky to have  
8 you Council Member Adams, out there, fighting for  
9 them and making sure that their situation, which,  
10 you know I heard of at a hearing I believe it was  
11 last year which was so terrible. Um, and, um, and  
12 hopefully as I hear you now that's being corrected.  
13 So, I can't imagine having a home, paying a mortgage  
14 and yet finding yourself homeless which was the case  
15 for many of those residents. So, it's good to hear  
16 that DEP is working with you on that. Thank you.  
17 Um, I think that that's it for questions and we are  
18 going to have, Health and Hospitals is here, I  
19 believe, yes. I see Dr. Katz is here so we're going  
20 to move right in to that section if that's all right  
21 with Counsel? I have a statement to read. Counsel  
22 we are okay? No other questions?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: I, I, I,  
25 I'll just take this opportunity if, uh, if we're

1 finished with DEP to, um, you know thank the  
2 Commissioner and his great team and, um, for their  
3 testimony today. For all of their work leading up  
4 to today and thanking them in advance for their  
5 ongoing partnership as we, uh, as we move through the  
6 budget and you know protect the environment and water  
7 delivery of New York City.  
8

9 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you, same  
10 here and thank you Chair Gennaro. Um, at this point,  
11 this will conclude this portion of today's hearing.  
12 Thank you to the Department of Environmental  
13 Protection for being here. We will now move on to  
14 Health and Hospitals. I ask my colleagues who will  
15 be joining us for this portion of the hearing to  
16 remain in the Zoom with your microphone muted until  
17 we are ready to begin. Again, thank you very much.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES GENNARO: Thank you Mr.  
19 Chair.

20 SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning. Dr. Katz.  
21 Can we give you an audio check right quick please?

22 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Good morning.

23 SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning. You're  
24 coming in loud and clear. Thank you.

25 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you.

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SGT. SADOWSKY: Okay. Good morning Dr.

Yang. Can we do an audio check please? Okay while we wait for Dr. Yang. Um, Chrissy Flannery, can we do an audio check please?

CHRISSEY FLANNERY: Good morning.

SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning you're coming in loud and clear. Thank you.

CHRISSEY FLANNERY: Thank you.

SGT. SADOWSKY: You're welcome. Council Member Rivera, can we do an audio check please?

CARLINA RIVERA: Good morning everyone.

SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning, you're coming in loud and clear. Thank you. Good morning John Ulberg, Senior Vice President, can we do an audio check please?

JOHN ULBERG: Good morning.

SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning, you're coming in loud and clear, thank you. Okay, good morning Chair Rivera, are you ready to start? Okay, thank you. Okay, um, Chair Dromm, are we ready to go?

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, I'm ready.

SGT. SADOWSKY: Okay, great thank you.



CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, good afternoon and welcome to the City Council's eighth day of hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel Dromm and I chair the finance committee. We've just heard from the Department of Environmental Protection and we will now hear from New York City Health and Hospitals. We are joined by the Committee on Hospitals, chaired by my colleague, Council Member Carlina Rivera and we are also joined by the following Council Members; Adams, Ampry-Samuel, Barron, Brooks-Powers, Darma Diaz, Grodenchik, Koslowitz, Levin, Louis, Maisel and Moya. In the interest of time, I will forgo an opening statement but I would like to turn it over to Chair Rivera for her statement.

CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Thank you so much. It's my favorite time of year, I get to preside with the inimitable Danny Dromm. Thank you Chair Dromm for everything. I am Council Woman Carlina Rivera chair of the Committee on Hospitals at the New York City Council. During today's hearing we will review the New York City Health and Hospitals \$980 million Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget Operating Subsidy of which \$619 million is city funding. This

1 week marks the beginning of the easing of social  
2 distancing restrictions for COVID-19 and we are  
3 beginning to see a resemblance of normality return.  
4 We are on the precipice of tremendous change and as  
5 we look back on the devastation of the past 15  
6 months, we can clearly see the important role, public  
7 health and our public hospital system played. The  
8 next steps we take will be key to New York City's  
9 future. Gone are the days where we can cut funding  
10 to health. Instead we must arm ourselves for the  
11 future and the next health crisis and systemic  
12 inequities already presents in our system.  
13 Thankfully, the Federal Government has invested  
14 billions of dollars to combat the pandemic including  
15 many dollars that have made their way to H and H.  
16 However, New York State's Fiscal 2022 enacted budget  
17 includes close to \$90 million in Budget cuts to H and  
18 H. The state must reverse these troubling cuts in  
19 next year's Legislative session and our City needs to  
20 commence to putting more funding in H and H for the  
21 future, particularly to ensure that any new or old  
22 initiatives funded through one time Federal  
23 investments are not suddenly eliminated. We cannot  
24 be caught unguarded ever again and funding needs to  
25

1  
2 be available every year in preparation for any  
3 healthcare risk. And though New York City is in a  
4 much better place having reached the lowest rate of  
5 positivity in the last six months there are still New  
6 Yorkers getting sick from COVID-19 every day. The  
7 number of people vaccinated must increase  
8 significantly, H and H must continue to reach people  
9 where they are with mobile vaccination sites and door  
10 to door vaccination efforts. The distribution of  
11 vaccines is still not equitable and while I  
12 appreciate the City's commitment of \$9 million to  
13 community based organizations to do further vaccine  
14 outreach, it's troubling that it took so long to get  
15 this money out the door and that it's coming from  
16 DOHMH, not T2 which has led COVID outreach efforts  
17 since the beginning of the pandemic. Outreach has  
18 never been more important and it must be improved  
19 particularly in all languages and media types and or  
20 those who still get infected, H and H will continue  
21 to provide support in helping them stay isolated and  
22 find the health supports they need. I look forward  
23 to seeing how the COVID Centers of Excellent support  
24 long-haulers. We also need to make an investment  
25 into the future of primary care. It has never been

1 clearer how necessary it is to reduce the rates of  
2 chronic illnesses such as asthma and diabetes that  
3 disproportionately affect people of color in our  
4 City. We've known for a long time how these greater,  
5 how these diseases can impact the daily lives of  
6 people but the pandemic emphasis how much of a  
7 greater risk people with chronic illnesses face. And  
8 as we move forward H and H is going to play a vital  
9 role in ensuring New Yorkers receive primary care and  
10 are able to prevent or halt the development of  
11 chronic illnesses before they become high risk. It  
12 has never been more important for New York to commit  
13 financially to the well-being of New Yorkers and  
14 finally COVID-19 has made us critically examine the  
15 role our public hospital system plays in the overall  
16 framework of public health initiatives. In just the  
17 last few years, we've seen new programs from H and H  
18 like the T1 Initiative which continues to draw both,  
19 both praise and debate from advocates, New York City  
20 Care which has helped countless New Yorkers gain  
21 health insurance and other fantastic initiatives like  
22 investments in Cure Violent Programs and EMS  
23 responses to New Yorkers struggling with mental  
24 health crisis. It's clear that H and H is at a cross  
25

1 roads when we think about where their services end  
2 and begin. Is it at the door of a hospital? Or the  
3 door of someone struggling in our community? I look  
4 forward to discussing the future today. And finally,  
5 I would like to thank the Administration for  
6 providing the backup documents for H and Hs budget to  
7 council in a timely manner. This has been an issue  
8 we've discussed throughout my term and I do want to  
9 acknowledge your efforts to assist us in providing  
10 the public with the level of transparency our  
11 citizens deserve. I'd also like to thank all  
12 representatives from health and hospital for their  
13 consistent hard work and dedication. I look forward  
14 to our discussion today about health and hospital's  
15 budget and the role in the recovery and future of  
16 health in New York. Thank you, and I will now turn  
17 it back over to the Chair.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Was I muted?  
20 Thank you Chair Rivera, thank you for your kind words  
21 and I do also love working with you, it's a pleasure,  
22 thank you. I will next hear, um, from H and H. We  
23 are joined by Dr. Mitchell Katz, President and Chief  
24 Executive Officer of New York City Health and  
25 Hospitals who is joined by several colleagues.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS, COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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1  
2 Before H and H begins their testimony I'm going to  
3 turn it over to our Committee Counsel to go over some  
4 procedural items and to swear in the witnesses. Um,  
5 Counsel.

6                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes  
7 Chair. My name is Stephanie Ruiz and I'm Counsel to  
8 New York City Council's Committee on Finance. Before  
9 we begin, I want to remind everyone that you will be  
10 on mute until you are recognized to speak, at which  
11 time you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you  
12 mute yourself after you've been unmuted, you will  
13 need to be unmuted again by the host. Please be  
14 aware that there could be a delay in muting and  
15 unmuting so please be patient. During the hearing if  
16 Council Members would like to ask questions, please  
17 use the Zoom Raise Hand Function and you will be  
18 called on to speak. We will be limiting Council  
19 Member questions to give minutes including responses.  
20 I will now administer the affirmation to witnesses.  
21 Do you affirm that your testimony will be true and to  
22 the best of your knowledge, information and belief.  
23 Um, Dr. Katz?

24                   DR. MITCHELL KATZ: I do.  
25

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS, COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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1  
2                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
3 you. Mr. Ulberg?

4                   JOHN ULBERG: I do.

5                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Dr.  
6 MacDonald, just give us a moment to unmute. Dr.  
7 MacDonald?

8                   DR. ROSS MACDONALD: Yes I do but I'd  
9 also like to note that Dr. Yang is, is present as  
10 well, Dr. Patsy Yang.

11                   DR. PATRICIAN YANG: So I do as well.

12                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
13 you Dr. Yang. And Ms. Flannery?

14                   CHRISSY FLANNERY: I do.

15                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Dr.  
16 Katz, you may begin when ready.

17                   CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And just before  
18 you begin Dr. Katz, I just want to say thank you  
19 very, very much to you and to everyone at H and H for  
20 the tremendous work that you have done over the last  
21 year. I don't know how you were able to keep up with  
22 and accomplish everything that you did, um, you know  
23 I spoke highly of you at the beginning of the week at  
24 Elmhurst Hospital, uh, and I am particularly grateful  
25 for your personal touch via Outreach for the phone

1 conferences that you gave us. For the placement of  
2 folks, in, in hotels so they could convalesce and I  
3 just wanted to say, um, thank you to you, to all of  
4 the doctors, all of the administrative staff, the  
5 nurses, um, everybody at H and H for the job that you  
6 have done over the last year. Um, thank you very  
7 much Dr. Katz.

9 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, thank you Chair  
10 Dromm, thank you Chair Rivera and to all the members  
11 of the Committee on Finance and Hospitals. It, it's  
12 truly an honor, um, to work with all of you, it's  
13 truly an honor to lead the amazing women and men of  
14 health and hospitals who I do think as you've said  
15 Chair, have done such an amazing job, uh, through  
16 this incredible year, both in healing people, in  
17 holding people's hands as they sadly passed away, of  
18 bolstering their colleagues when people felt low.  
19 People came in, um, even though they were fearful of  
20 taking home the virus to their families, getting sick  
21 themselves, many people got sick themselves, um, and,  
22 but everybody stood up, uh, that's what I really  
23 noticed is that people, people came, they did their  
24 job, you know when there was a shortage of oxygen in  
25 places in India I, I was remembering how my amazing



1 facilities person who is on this call, Christine  
2 Flannery have figured out at a moment when we too  
3 looked like we were not going to have enough oxygen  
4 in one of our hospitals, she figured out how as an  
5 engineer to cool the oxygen tanks so that the oxygen  
6 would keep flowing and that was the kind of thing,  
7 you know, everybody came in at 11 o'clock on Saturday  
8 night or 2 a.m. on Sunday and did whatever needed to  
9 be done. So thank you for the privilege of, of  
10 being here. Uh, this is a, a finance report so I'm  
11 going to mostly talk about finance and I know that  
12 you'll raise program as, as you want to talk about  
13 them. Um, bottom line is we're going to close Fiscal  
14 '21 year with \$734 million. Um, which is a very  
15 healthy balance for us to close the year. Um, we've  
16 achieved 1% above budget variance, um, by \$65  
17 million. Um, we've brought in, uh, insurance revenue,  
18 \$331 million high in quarter three Fiscal year 2020  
19 which matches the health insurance revenue that we've  
20 brought in \$500 million above in the prior year. And  
21 I just want to take a minute and say I know 3-1/2  
22 years ago when, uh, Brooklyn boy who had mistakenly  
23 been in California for 25 years returned home and  
24 said "Gee I think there's a huge revenue opportunity  
25

1 here." People thought that I was crazy, that I  
2 wasn't prepared necessarily to make the hard  
3 decisions, but I, I didn't understand, you know the  
4 constraints but we've proven, no, we can, we're not  
5 interested in billing patients, we're interested in  
6 billing insurance when people have insurance and  
7 we're interested in doing all of the parts, the  
8 coding, make sure that our diagnostic codes match  
9 billing codes, making sure that our contracts pay us  
10 their rates, um, from insurers so that we are not  
11 giving them a free ride because we don't know how to  
12 do our business and it's proven that yes in fact, we  
13 can make a huge, uh, difference, uh and so I, I know  
14 you'll want to talk more with my, uh, terrific John  
15 Ulberg who is on the call, um, about what we've done  
16 but I, I think it has been financially a very great  
17 success story. Um, Chair Rivera was kind to mention  
18 our efforts around vaccines. Um, we're very proud of  
19 the role that've played of vaccinating people in all  
20 of the hospitals, um, and all of our clinics. Um,  
21 we're proud of the T2, I know it was a bumpy start  
22 but it became the, we believe the most successful  
23 and largest test and trace efforts anywhere in the  
24 US and had better metrics and we were one of the few  
25

1 places to show metrics and we did it with our  
2 sister, uh agency, the Department of Health and  
3 Mental Hygiene with whom we enjoy working with and  
4 we will continue I think in the coming years to  
5 deepen that connection. Uh, we had a recent  
6 success, um, with our show vans which, uh, we are  
7 very proud of. We have vans that are now going out,  
8 uh, and vaccinating homeless individuals also  
9 providing them dressing changes and other medical  
10 care and it's been exceedingly successful and, uh,  
11 it fits a really nice nitch that I, again I go to  
12 Chair River's narrative about where health and  
13 hospitals begins and ends. Uh, we know that there  
14 are people who need us that don't come to the  
15 hospital, um, but of course I can tell you as a  
16 practicing physician it is challenging to take care  
17 of people in a train station or on a sidewalk because  
18 you have no privacy, so how can you, how can you  
19 begin to ask people or undress their wounds? And we  
20 think that these vans are a really good compromise.  
21 Cause we can go, we can park the van where is a  
22 place, um, with a lot of people who are homeless or  
23 poorly housed and then we can bring them into the  
24 van, um, we offer snacks and water, and then we have  
25

1 a private place and we've found it very successful  
2 for vaccination. Very successful for giving people  
3 Narcan kits in cases of overdose, um, and we think  
4 that we can keep to grow this initiative and that it  
5 has a really nice nitch, uh, for our City. So, we're,  
6 we're very proud of that. Uh, I'd have to mention  
7 that there are, you know, always financial risks  
8 going forward, um, probably, the largest is there is  
9 a complicated practice both that is reimbursed by  
10 FEMA. Um, and we have spent out of pocket \$1.7  
11 billion on the COVID response that we believe is all  
12 reimbursable under FEMA and you know our President  
13 Biden had made the reimbursements 100%; however, the  
14 process of getting those bills paid is not simple  
15 and it is not quick um, we, we were the firsts  
16 out in terms of putting in our receipts to, um, the  
17 Federal Government but payment has been very slow.  
18 Um, so we, we continue to have, um, watch the cash  
19 flow very carefully. We believe that we will get the  
20 dollars but I think of all of our financial risks  
21 going forward, that's the best. So, inclosing, uh,  
22 to you Chair Dromm, to you Chair Rivera, to all you  
23 great council members, I just want to say thank you  
24 for maintaining a public system long before I got  
25

1 here where a lot of cities did not. Um, and I, I  
2 hope very much that the horrible experience to COVID  
3 at least showed people how valuable your decision was  
4 in maintaining a public hospital system when other  
5 cities did not. Thank you so much Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you Dr.  
8 Katz. I really appreciate your testimony. I want to  
9 start off by, um, asking you some questions about my  
10 favorite H and H Hospital which is Elmhurst.

11 Obviously, I represent them so, uh, let's start with  
12 the one right there in my district. According to the  
13 CDCs website, the first and second round of payments  
14 of the provider relief fund COVID-19 high impact  
15 grant have been issued but Elmhurst Hospital did not  
16 receive a second round of payments. Given the role  
17 Elmhurst played in responding to the pandemic, why  
18 didn't the hospital receive a second round of  
19 payments? And was H and H able to secure funding to  
20 make up for the lack of the funds?

21 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Um, I'm, I'm going to  
22 turn to John Ulberg to give a more detailed answer  
23 than I could do on the dollars, John?

24 JOHN ULBERG: Yes, uh, uh, good afternoon,  
25 good morning, um, yeah let me just explain a little

1 bit, um, you know, where, uh, where Dr. Katz, uh,  
2 kind of just explained our overall financial  
3 situation as it relates to the COVID response. And  
4 you know, as you had mentioned, uh, we spent about  
5 \$1.7 billion, that's our estimate, right? We'll  
6 spend you know, \$1.7, you know, billion. It could  
7 reach as high as \$2 billion and the relief that we've  
8 gotten thus far is \$1.2 billion from, um, PRF, uh,  
9 Provider Relief Fund and we are grateful for that and  
10 we've only been able to secure roughly \$200,000,  
11 \$260,000 from FEMA. That leaves a gap, right, and,  
12 and this gap is really what has us most concerned.  
13 We need to get the difference between the \$1.7, you  
14 know billion and the roughly \$1.4 billion that we've,  
15 uh, received this far. Um, the way that we treat the  
16 PRF dollars is that we aggregate that within the  
17 system and then we spend those dollars based on where  
18 we, we see the need. Um, I'll also say that there's,  
19 there's a small amount left, I mean small, you know,  
20 somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 billion out of  
21 the total amount allocated, um, by Congress, um you  
22 know to, to the Provider Relief Fund and we are  
23 advocating for, you know, some of those dollars to  
24 come to ourselves as a safety net and other safety  
25

1  
2 nets across the country. So I hope that, explains,  
3 explains, your, uh, your question.

4 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: We will keep Elmhurst  
5 fully funded I think, um, is the punchline here as  
6 all our hospitals but it is true Elmhurst was the,  
7 the center of the center of the center of the center  
8 of the pandemic and I will still, for the rest of my  
9 life remember when Israel Rocha, the then CEO called  
10 me up. It was about 11 o'clock at night and said "In  
11 the last two hours, we've intubated 16 people. This  
12 has never happened before. This is like something  
13 we've never seen. Uh, so, we recognize the  
14 outrageousness and we will make sure they are fully  
15 funded.

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you Dr.  
17 Katz. You know I was not inside the hospital but I  
18 was outside the hospital as I mentioned to you the  
19 other day, um, and just to see those lines and lines  
20 of people outside of Elmhurst Hospital. I mean every  
21 single one of them did get care, thank goodness but,  
22 um, we really were the epicenter of the epicenter  
23 there and I see that Council Member Moya is on, um,  
24 the Zoom call here as well, and you know our  
25 community has suffered from health disparities for a

1  
2 very long period of time so I'm glad to hear that you  
3 are making that commitment to fully fund Elmhurst  
4 Hospital. Um, and let me just ask about should  
5 another pandemic or should something happen in the  
6 future are we prepared for that, especially at a  
7 place like Elmhurst.

8 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: We've learned there  
9 is so much about preparation, um, on a, on a level,  
10 um, that, you know never happened. I, you know when  
11 COVID first started, as having been an AIDS doctor,  
12 one of my first sense was oh, I've already lived  
13 through my first pandemic. Um, and you this was like  
14 10 times faster, harsher in terms of the number of  
15 deaths over a short time and so, you know, sadly it  
16 has brought us much more prepared. Um, now for every  
17 single hospital we know exactly how we would expand  
18 services. We have six months caches of service of  
19 supplies. Christine has fixed its air handling is  
20 better in all our facilities and we can see into  
21 rooms and we've done a lot of renovation and  
22 improvement. So, but before, let's try to live the  
23 rest of our lives Chairs without seeing another  
24 pandemic. I think, I think we've had our share.



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, I lived  
3 through the AIDS one as well as you are absolutely  
4 right. Um, just in terms of Elmhurst again, there  
5 was supposed to be an emergency room expansion which  
6 I don't believe has started yet and also the  
7 psychiatric unit, um, renovation. The psychiatric  
8 unit on the first floor, not on, on the upper floor  
9 the emergency psychiatric unit. Do you know, uh,  
10 where that stands in the timeline for those, um, with  
11 Project R?

12 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Let's ask Christine.  
13 So, she can give a much more detailed explanation  
14 than I could.

15 CHRISSY FLANNERY: Hi, can you hear me?  
16 Cau-, that.

17 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes.

18 CHRISSY FLANNERY: Good morning, it's  
19 still morning. Um, so the Elmhurst, uh ED edition as,  
20 can be expected was absolutely impacted by the COVID  
21 pandemic. Um, and so we currently, the CONs had gone  
22 to the state prior to COVID, actually, I know, uh,  
23 Chair Dromm and, and many others from Queens came to  
24 that, on the rooftop, um, event and I was actually  
25 present for that and that was a big celebratory

1 moment. Unfortunately, we still are in the, um, back  
2 and forth from a regulatory perspective, on getting  
3 the final designs fully approved before we could take  
4 that project out to bid and that does impact the um,  
5 the other area on the first floor as well. Um, we  
6 also are working with our new CEO and we will be  
7 issuing shortly an RFP for master planning for  
8 Elmhurst Hospital. This is a campus that, uh, is  
9 very land locked and we want to ensure that any  
10 additional necessary modernizations that happen here,  
11 we are really thinking thoughtfully across the entire  
12 campus and making sure we know our full needs there.  
13 Critical care is a major area of expansion, our ORs,  
14 there is a lot of needs. An additional log at all of  
15 our healthcare facilities and Elmhurst is one of them  
16 and so, um, so that, I might have expanded my answer  
17 a bit but, um, healthcare infrastructure funding is  
18 really important for our system. Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: A-, a-, and  
21 with the ambulatory care center also?

22 CHRISSY FLANNERY: Yes, the ambulatory  
23 care center, um, is in the design phase. We have a  
24 large quantity of projects in the design phase but,  
25

1  
2 um, we are working to get that into, um, the next  
3 step of procurement and construction.

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Do you have an  
5 idea of when the timeline is for the start of the  
6 actual putting of the shovel in the ground for the  
7 emergency room expansion?

8 CHRISSY FLANNERY: I-, ya-, I would like  
9 to say next Fiscal year, um, but I do want to caution  
10 just the back and forth of regulatory with the  
11 relocation of CPEP. We have regulatory sign offs  
12 both from OMH as well as DOH state. So, um, you know  
13 and we also are looking and making sure that we're  
14 taking COVID into account in the design, and, um,  
15 ensuring that if there is additional lessons learned  
16 from that, we are integrating that into the design.  
17 So, we, we just want to make sure that design  
18 captures the, the needs appropriately.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And I, I just  
20 want to say thank you. You know, I do recognize the  
21 challenge there between balancing and providing the  
22 health service at the same time, re-constructing the  
23 emergency room but I think it was at the, um, the  
24 opening that we had or the announcement of the extra  
25 funding from Borough President Richards, um, at the

1 beginning of the week where it was mentioned by Dr.  
2 Kessler, the, um, the head of (cross-talk)

3  
4                   CHRISSEY FLANNERY: Yeah.

5                   CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: The emergency  
6 department that they had 121 stretchers I think in  
7 the emergency room at one time during the COVID  
8 crisis so it really is important that we get that  
9 accomplished. I just want to, uh, stress that. I  
10 know that you probably agree with me on that but  
11 again, I just wanted to bring it up to your  
12 attention.

13                   CHRISSEY FLANNERY: Of course, it's, it's  
14 in my top 10 list because of the size and importance  
15 and I think figuring out our services as we do that  
16 project is going to be very complex.

17                   CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah, yeah.  
18 Thank you. Okay, let me move on to telehealth  
19 equity. How is H and H directly working to eliminate  
20 telehealth inequity? How many languages is  
21 telehealth offering? And, uh, how does H and H  
22 support people living without technology or access to  
23 internet? And what more can be done to ensure, uh,  
24 the most valuable, or the most vulnerable are reached  
25 with telehealth?

1  
2 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, thank you Chair,  
3 well, the best part is that we've found that we can  
4 now use our system on people's smart phones. Um, and  
5 so the digital divide is much smaller around smart  
6 phones than it is around, you know, people having  
7 laptops and, and home, you know, cable. I mean that  
8 that we find very few of our patients have that, but  
9 smart phones, we find that almost all of them have.  
10 Um, and so we've been, we've been using that  
11 heavily and we have a full translation service, no  
12 limitations, people call and it is all, I think 140  
13 languages, um, as needed and so when someone, if, if  
14 even if their smart phone does not work or they  
15 cannot handle the technology then we do it as a  
16 regular phone call. And either way we, we have full  
17 translation through our translation service.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, do ASL  
19 (American Sign Language)?

20 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yeah.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: With, with  
22 that as well because I do know some deaf people  
23 actually who do avail themselves as service.  
24 Sometimes it's a little hard to schedule, uh, the  
25 Sign Language Interpreters?

1  
2 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yeah, I, we actually  
3 find that the, I mean obviously that requires the  
4 video. So they do need to have a smart phone but,  
5 if, if they do, it works quite well. I t appears as  
6 box on the screen simultaneously so. Uh, we have  
7 been able to make that technology work.

8 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank  
9 you. Um, then back to the issue, uh, the issue of  
10 psychiatrists. I understand that there is a  
11 psychiatrist shortage. Um, has H and H included  
12 funding in the Fiscal '22 executive budget to address  
13 this psychiatrist shortage?

14 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, Chair, uh, the,  
15 because there is a national shortage of  
16 psychiatrist, um, it isn't, this is not a case  
17 where our problem is necessarily that we are paying  
18 less than the competition, there just simply are  
19 not enough psychiatrists. So, most of our work  
20 today is trying to figure out alternative models.  
21 Um, we're hiring more psychiatric nurse practitioners  
22 who can prescribe. We are hiring more psychologist,  
23 they cannot prescribe but they are equally capable of  
24 diagnosing serious mental illness. We're trying to  
25 move therapy to, um, licensed social

1 workers/psychologists so that the psychiatrists, uh,  
2 can function as needed to do our prescribing. Um,  
3 we're working with the state to try to decrease the  
4 shear bureaucracy of an inpatient admission and  
5 discharge which, uh, makes a lot of people not want,  
6 psychiatrists not want to do the work. So I think  
7 the major, the major changes have to be workforce  
8 related and I, you know, Bellevue is the center of,  
9 you know, public psychiatry in the world and I  
10 feel like we should be the ones who are saying,  
11 look, yes, ideally we would have a lot more  
12 psychiatrists, that's not going to happen.  
13 They're, they're not being produced, and they're not  
14 going into public work. Many of them choose now to  
15 do therapy through telehealth, um, themselves so then  
16 we need a different model, um, because the patients  
17 still need care.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Are there any  
20 incentive programs to get people to go more in that  
21 direction? So, to choose psychiatry?

22 Dr. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, we don't we don't  
23 have now. Again, part of the problem is that, if  
24 you say Chair, sort of what the process is, that  
25 decision of going into psychiatry at the medical

2 school level, someone makes a decision I'm going to  
3 be a neurologist. I'm going to be an ophthalmologist.  
4 I'm going to be a psychiatrist. We, we do want to,  
5 uh, and have incentive programs to increase the  
6 number of represented minorities among our physicians  
7 which would include, psychiatrists. But I'll go  
8 back and also look and see whether people have  
9 other ideas on, uh, how we might either get more  
10 people to join and decide to be psychiatrists or more  
11 people interested in public setting psychiatry.

12 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank you  
13 doctor. I'm going to, I have some more questions  
14 but I'm going to turn it over to my co-Chair  
15 Carlina Rivera, um, to ask questions and then I'll  
16 follow up, um, when she is done or if there are other  
17 Council Members who have questions, after they're  
18 done. Thank you.

19 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: All right.  
21 Thank you so much Chair Dromm. And again, thank you,  
22 good to see you Dr. Katz, looking forward to seeing  
23 you and a lot of your team, you know as soon as  
24 possible in person. Um, so I'll just get right into  
25 some questions about some federally funded new



1 programs. You touched on this a little bit. I  
2 realize there are a lot of things that play here with  
3 the FEMA, reimbursements and the money that came from  
4 the Federal Government. So, I'm going to ask you  
5 about federally funded new programs and I'm really  
6 excited about, um, two major new programs that are  
7 being introduced at H and H. The mental health EMS  
8 and the public health core? So with \$41 million and  
9 \$50 million allocated in Fiscal Year 2022 with mostly  
10 one time federally funding, I want to make sure that  
11 the programs are fully supported by H and H with  
12 responsible spending for a successful and sustainable  
13 program, of course. So the \$50 million public  
14 health core, that's an extension of the text and  
15 trace program, right T2? Initially, when T2  
16 initially went through H and H instead of the  
17 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for the ease  
18 of contracting; however, now that this program is  
19 being extended, we would want to move away from  
20 contracted services and it's a directly hiring city  
21 employees. Is there any benefit to having this  
22 program housed in H and H over DOHMH at this point?

23  
24 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Well, the, the T2 did  
25 involve hiring 1,000 people. So, I think part of the

1 decision to go to Health and Hospitals was also our  
2 hiring is faster, um, and, uh, to me of course, it's  
3 always about mission. I, I am happy to hire people  
4 and have them work beyond other people's supervision.  
5 Uh, to me it's all about how do you get the work  
6 done? I, I have no, it doesn't matter to me. I can  
7 hire them and they can work in whatever formation  
8 people think would achieve the best goal. I think  
9 the idea and you did relate to this, uh, Chair in  
10 your comments. Uh, maybe people need care but for  
11 whatever complicated set of social, economic reasons  
12 have challenges making it to the doctor's office,  
13 making it to the hospital office and so then I think  
14 the question for the, for if the goal of the public  
15 health core is to reach people where they want, where  
16 they are, and bring them into care, do you want to  
17 connect them to the agency that provides the care?  
18 The cost? Or do you want to create a, what would  
19 have to be a warm handoff and there might be reasons  
20 in both directions but I think the idea, uh,  
21 continuing the employed people, especially in health  
22 and hospitals was that we will then be able to say we  
23 want you to see, your col-, our colleague at  
24 Sydenham. We want you to see our colleague at  
25

1  
2 Barlume. We want you to see our colleague at  
3 Gouverner. And actually bring the person as an H and  
4 H outreach worker to the cited care. So, I think  
5 that's the model we're currently working under. If,  
6 I'm always open. I love working with the Department  
7 of Health and Mental Hygiene, so, I'm happy to, to  
8 switch the model if that's what people think, feel is  
9 best.

10 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Okay, well,  
11 and I appreciate that, but who's going to be hired  
12 for the public health core? Like what are going to  
13 be the requirements and training? And is there a  
14 path toward a professional certification or licensure  
15 to be a healthcare provider?

16 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Right. So the goal  
17 would be to first focus on those people who are  
18 currently employed by us. Um, so they are already  
19 our employees at health and hospitals, um, and to, we  
20 would do trainings. It's a good question, I haven't  
21 thought about whether we would try to do a specific  
22 certification. Um, but, but I would certainly be  
23 open to that. Um, we want people who represent the  
24 hardest hit communities and our hiring was focused on  
25 those communities to get the highest percentage. We

1  
2 are very focused on language and cultural competency,  
3 um, those have been the major drivers of who was in  
4 the program and we will try to keep it that way.

5 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: And how does  
6 this integrate with the services already provided by  
7 NYCCARE?

8 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: So, NYCCARE, um,  
9 which we are very proud of, um, was based on the idea  
10 of coming. You know, a promise of a doctor's  
11 appointment or nurse practitioner's appointment in  
12 two weeks with your own provider and then whatever  
13 else you need. I think what we've learned through,  
14 you know the COVID is that there is a large group of  
15 people who, for whatever reasons make it to the front  
16 door and need a, you know, more hands on from the  
17 community, uh, let me bring you to the front door and  
18 so the idea would be that the core members would help  
19 us to increase membership at NYCCARE, keep people  
20 coming back, keep people taking their hypertensive  
21 medicines, make sure, um, they don't run out of  
22 medications which happens all the time. Even, even  
23 when you solve the economic problems just because  
24 people's lives are busy and other things are going  
25 on, I find that my own patients, you know, run out

1  
2 of medicines and I say, well, but they are provided  
3 free. You know, you just needed, the refills are  
4 there, sometimes people need a little bit of extra  
5 help, they are so busy, focused on supporting their  
6 families that they forget that it's important to take  
7 care of themselves.

8 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: And I, and  
9 you know I understand that and I just want to go back  
10 to like that's why, I felt the Community based  
11 organization, the relationships there were so  
12 important and some of the questions that I asked  
13 about certification and licensure because we do want  
14 kind of the seamless transition, whatever happens.  
15 We want to make sure people in the community are  
16 receiving these sorts of messages, the messaging is  
17 coming from people they know and I know H and H was  
18 working with community based organizations on  
19 outreach for the past year and I want to ask why was  
20 the vaccine outreach contract for \$9 million in  
21 vaccine outreach, transferred to H and H and then how  
22 is this going to impact the relationship with these  
23 community-based organizations and the public health  
24 core?

1  
2 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, I just want to  
3 make sure we have the same program, so, um,  
4 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has released  
5 the new RFP. Um, that's via them. Uh (cross-talk)

6 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: And just  
7 really quick Dr. Katz, right, because the community  
8 based organizations will have to reapply for this RFP  
9 even though they were in the, the old program. I  
10 know you are going to make a distinction but I just  
11 want to clarify that?

12 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yes, they don't have  
13 to re-apply to the old one. So, if they were getting  
14 money already and I think it's 35 agencies were  
15 getting money. It's our belief, uh, we will be  
16 going to our board but we'll be asking our board to  
17 extend those contracts for all agencies that have,  
18 um, satisfactory performance which is overwhelmingly  
19 the agencies. Separately, those same agencies or  
20 agencies that are not part of that pot can apply for  
21 the additional \$7 million being released through the  
22 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Does that  
23 make sense? So, if you are receiving the amount of  
24 money that, if you are already doing what you want to  
25 be doing, then assuming my board approves the

1 continuation it will not have to reapply. But to get  
2 additional dollars or if they are not in that group  
3 they will have to apply under the DOHMH authority.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: I know and I  
6 get the, and I appreciate what you are saying. I  
7 guess the, what I'm looking for is the acknowledgment  
8 of like is DOH the better agency for this kind of  
9 work or it is just that DOH was the only agency  
10 eligible for this funding? And I'll ask you a  
11 question about vaccines, as well, because this ties  
12 to the community based organizations, but considering  
13 all of this planning and the public health core and  
14 the work, the incredible work that H and H has done  
15 and DOHs role there is only funding for Fiscal year  
16 2022 and so what is H and Hs plan for future years  
17 and considering that the federal funding is one time  
18 does it not make more sense to spread the funding  
19 over multiple years.

20 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: I, uh, well just on  
21 the last part, just if we spread it out over multiple  
22 years it would have to be smaller. And so, my hope  
23 is that there will be other sources of reimbursement  
24 for these kind of services but we will just learn as  
25 you said in your opening comments how important

1 primary care is to preventing disease. Um, but I  
2 don't yet have, um, I don't yet have a source to  
3 tell you it is going in the future but I, I do it and  
4 I think you would agree with me, the need is now so  
5 I, I do want to address the need and then try to work  
6 creatively, um, to you know continue. As, as I said  
7 before, to me, you know whether something comes out  
8 of DOHMH or something comes out of us, it should come  
9 out of wherever, can be done more expeditiously. I, I  
10 don't have, you know ownership or need for ownership.  
11 Uh, I just want to see the services delivered rapidly  
12 in a culturally competent way, um, love working with  
13 the community based organizations. I think that  
14 particular RFP, um, many of those relationships are  
15 long-standing in DOHMH and so it was felt that was  
16 the best place to do that RFP again, um, you know I  
17 think whatever the tensions that existed before, at  
18 least at the department level do not exist currently.  
19 Um, Dave Chokshi and I talk almost every day, um, we  
20 figure out with each issue how to get it best done.  
21 Um, I, I don't, I don't believe there is tension any  
22 longer.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: No, and  
25 that's great and I want, of course I want us all to



1  
2 be working together and why, I think I've been  
3 ringing the bell for probably a year at this point  
4 about the community based organizations and it's  
5 because of people's hesitancy even today, you know,  
6 pre-pandemic it was, it was primary care and getting  
7 people to have primary care physicians but now  
8 there's a little bit of vaccine hesitancy and there  
9 are many, many reasons and so, I just did a pop-up  
10 vaccine in the Murray Hill neighborhood and granted  
11 we have a wonderful hospital role but I think  
12 sometimes going into a hospital can be a little bit  
13 overwhelming and so having, you know, pop up sites  
14 that people can go to I think have been incredibly  
15 helpful and a little bit more welcoming than kind of  
16 that, that standard of going into the hospital. So,  
17 so I want to ask about vaccine incentives because, I  
18 was expecting more people to get vaccinations at this  
19 site, and, though there are many, many reasons I do  
20 know that some of the issues, uh, you know, I don't  
21 know if its vaccine incentives and the state just  
22 announced the scratch off incentive at state sites  
23 and city sites do have various incentives. We also  
24 have the, the burger and fries press conference, that  
25 was, that was cute but has there been any discussion

1 at all around providing money to people who get  
2 vaccinated, who do not have paid time off. I do feel  
3 that there are many people who hesitate because they  
4 worry about taking off work. I think, uh, the  
5 incentive is probably a no-brainer at this point. It  
6 aligns with T2 support in people who need to isolate  
7 because of COVID who don't have paid time off and I  
8 knows there been a suggesting that offering about  
9 \$200 to people who are low-wage workers and who worry  
10 about taking time off, it would allow them to get the  
11 vaccine and why I bring up money is because we do  
12 have incentives, at, at some places, yet none kind of  
13 directly address the inequities hat cause barriers to  
14 getting people vaccinated and someone who doesn't  
15 have paid time off likely will not benefit from  
16 what's a low chance of maybe winning like Nicks  
17 playoff tickets.

19 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Right.

20 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: So, you  
21 know, I was, I was wondering, um, if you could just  
22 address kind of what's the next step in reaching our  
23 next milestone for vaccinations.

24 DR. MITCHEL KATZ: Well, well thank you  
25 Chair and I think you hit a lot of the high point.

1  
2 Um, I just want to say because I, I sit in an exam  
3 room I do hear that there are people who has  
4 continued to fear the vaccine. Who even coming,  
5 even their my patients I say to them, I really want  
6 you to get vaccine and they say not now, not ready,  
7 not, not testing. Um, those people, they have, we  
8 need to keep working on them from an emotional,  
9 psychological, cultural point of view. But then I  
10 agree with you and I like your, uh, you know there  
11 has been some concern about financial incentives,  
12 only on the side that no one wanted to be seen as,  
13 uh, putting undue influence on someone to get  
14 something that they didn't want. But I love your  
15 idea. I don't see, uh, providing essentially a sick  
16 day with the city employees, paid time off. I don't  
17 see anyone who would consider that an undue incentive  
18 to get vaccinated. They are just getting the same  
19 thing that you or I are entitled to get. Um, so I  
20 would 100% support that and I will, I will bring that  
21 back to the group. Um, I think everybody with a  
22 lottery is trying to figure out, you know what does  
23 move people and its not going to be one thing. It's  
24 going to depend upon, you know, which of the reason

1 that they are, you know, not wanting to be vaccinated  
2 at that moment.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Absolutely,  
5 absolutely and I know we are getting near kind of the  
6 time so just two more quick questions. I wanted to  
7 follow up on Chair Dromm's comment about  
8 psychiatrists. Um, I know we all know there is a  
9 psychiatrist shortage and we are hearing that Gotham  
10 clinics aren't really being able, aren't really being  
11 provided funding to address mental health worker  
12 attrition. And, can you just confirm that Gotham  
13 clinics will be provided funding to address these  
14 attrition issues if they have identified potential  
15 hires?

16 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yes, I, I have no  
17 holds on hiring. Um, all, all clinic, I have no  
18 holds on clinician hiring. All clinician positions  
19 are open, doctors, nurses, mental health  
20 professionals of every kind, we will hire every,  
21 every good mental health clinician we can find. And  
22 we are actively recruiting and actively hiring.

23 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Okay and so  
24 I just want to put, you know I visited Jacobi  
25 Hospital with Council Member Riley and they were in

1 desperate need of a child psychiatrist, if not, they  
2 said a psychologist. I know I've brought this up  
3 because they do have young people 7 and 8 years old,  
4 suicidal ideation and they just don't have the  
5 resources to address that very serious issue. So if  
6 I could just put that plug in for the Bronx and then  
7 just my last question. Since we talked a little bit  
8 around head count and hiring, how is the pandemic  
9 affected registered nurse retention at H and H? And  
10 can this staff by title be provided for each  
11 facility?  
12

13 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: So, we'd be happy to  
14 provide that unless there were, you know, very good,  
15 um, um, Chief Nursing Executive Natalia Cineas to, to  
16 provide that for each facility. I think so far we're  
17 good. I think a lot of us have fear that when the  
18 pandemic is really over we will have a lot of  
19 retirements. Um, I think there are a lot of people  
20 who keep coming to work because they know how  
21 important it is. Um, and we needed, every, every  
22 nurse that we can hire. I do worry that, you know,  
23 when we enter the next phase, we are lucky enough to  
24 enter the next phase, um, we have, you know very few,  
25 um patients who have COVID. We've been, uh,

1 hovering, uh, around 40 patients in the ICUs. Um, we  
2 actually had our first hospital have no COVID  
3 patients in the ICU this week, Metropolitan. Um,  
4 we've had about 140 COVID patients still in the  
5 hospital, um, but of course, when, when, given that  
6 we once had 3700. You know, it's, it's quite small  
7 but I do worry, you know, people, the nurses have  
8 been amazing heroes and heroes through this and I do  
9 worry that there will be retirements when its, when  
10 people feel like, okay, I did my pandemic thing. You  
11 know, I, I, came in, I split up and now I'm entitled  
12 to a rest.

14 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: And, uh,  
15 you know I would say that you had a pretty intense,  
16 uh, four years yourself. So, I want to acknowledge  
17 that and I'm glad to hear, you also mentioned the  
18 hiring of clinicians. I know, at the Roberto  
19 Clemente, uh, Mental Health Center in my district, I  
20 just want to mention that they want to hire social  
21 workers to help with some of the mental health  
22 services that they are providing, but they said  
23 they've experienced some challenges in that hiring  
24 process. So, I'd love it if we could follow up on  
25 that to make sure that they have what they need

1  
2 because it's such an important, um, institution and I  
3 wanted to thank you, of course, you know, be, r-, as  
4 we reflect over the past four years for everything  
5 that you've done and how you've worked to turn around  
6 H and H and for all of your staff and every staff at  
7 every hospital, I just want to thank you. Uh, I'm  
8 going to turn it back to the chair to see if there  
9 are any questions from my colleagues. And again, Dr.  
10 Katz thank you and everyone that's here from, from  
11 your team.

12 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: John,  
14 everyone, thank you.

15 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If  
16 any Council Members have questions for H and H please  
17 use the Zoom Raise Hand Function and you will be  
18 added to the cue. Council Members, please keep your  
19 questions to give minutes including answers. Please  
20 wait for the Sergeant at Arms to tell you when your  
21 time begins. The Sergeant will then let you know  
22 when your time is up. You will now hear from Council  
23 Member Darma Diaz followed by Council Member Brooks-  
24 Powers.

25

1  
2                   DARMA DIAZ: Good morning and thank you  
3 for the opportunity, it's not a question, it's more  
4 of a token of gratitude, during my COVID experience I  
5 chose to isolate through the program established HHC,  
6 the customer care. It was, it was amazing at one of  
7 my weakest points to have people from, entering in to  
8 the hotel, to the teleconferences to the follow ups.  
9 I was extremely impressed that you were able to find  
10 individuals that showed compassion and just thank  
11 you. It allowed for my mental health to remain  
12 positive. I'm glad that I had chosen to isolate as a  
13 way, if ever tested positive I, I wanted that to be  
14 my experience to isolate for fear of exposing my  
15 family. So again, just thank you for the opportunity  
16 to have been able to isolate and walk away proud to  
17 be a part of New York City and knowing that when many  
18 systems don't work this one did work. Thank you.

19                   DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Well, that's  
20 wonderful. Thank you for sharing that experience.  
21 Thank you for protecting our community by isolating  
22 yourself and giving me a minute to say we ran five  
23 hotels, we walked people's dogs, we picked up  
24 people's medications, we ordered, uh, all kinds of  
25 foods for people, um, we did whatever, we arranged



1 transportation, door to door whatever was necessary.

2 So, thank you for highlighting that.

3  
4 DARMA DIAZ: You're very welcome. No  
5 sweat.

6 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We  
7 will now hear from Council Member Brooks-Powers.

8 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

9 SELVENA BROOKS-POWERS: Um, good  
10 afternoon and thank you so much for taking the time,  
11 uh, to speak today Um, I would like to, first say  
12 thank you to your staff who has been very responsive,  
13 um, since I have assumed, um, the City Council  
14 position for the 31<sup>st</sup> District representing parts of  
15 southeast Queens and the Rockaways. Um, I do have  
16 some areas, um, of concern. Some of which are  
17 already being addressed in terms of the access of  
18 vaccinations. Um, coming in to the seat we did not  
19 have any permanent sites, which we now have three  
20 permanent sites in the Rockaways so I do want to  
21 acknowledge and thank you for insuring that we were  
22 able to receive those, um, sites. I also urged, us  
23 moving quickly in terms of the other side of my  
24 district in southeast Queens to establish, um,  
25 permanent facilities there as well considering that

1 we still, um, fall in the lower end of vaccinated  
2 residents. Um, also I have received questions in the  
3 community in terms of, uh, job opportunities and I  
4 know you spoke about like clinician physicians but  
5 even in terms of like the testing sites and, uh, and  
6 the vaccine location, we have for example one of the  
7 earlier ones was a testing site in Edgemere, which  
8 has now turned over into a vaccine site and, um, the  
9 community would love to see locals hired for those  
10 positions creating that opportunity as well. I am  
11 even understanding, um, Health and Hospital's plan to  
12 be more aggressive in the communities hardest hit in  
13 terms of what that access looks like and then the  
14 final, um, piece, I'd like to just highlight in terms  
15 of the pop-up location, the incentives, um, if we can  
16 look and get creative with what incentives can be  
17 offered to some of these organizations who are  
18 struggling and doing their part to open up their  
19 facilities to have these pop-ups. For example, there  
20 is no one that will come behind and kind of clean up  
21 what is left behind, um, or even any type of  
22 financial incentive for this and so I'm just sharing  
23 some of the concerns that I've heard more locally.  
24 Um, I'm not sure if that translates to other  
25

1  
2 districts but I did want to highlight that but I will  
3 also close with saying thank you once again to your  
4 staff because they have been very responsive and very  
5 supportive, um, of the needs so thank you so much for  
6 this time.

7 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you and I  
8 wrote down all those issues and I will work on them.  
9 Socioeconomic status is the best predictor of  
10 health and so hiring locally is a way of providing  
11 health, um, so I'm very focused ourselves on hiring  
12 people, getting them good jobs, that will bring  
13 greater health, um, so I thank you for your comments  
14 and I, and I have notes and will work from those  
15 issues.

16 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You  
17 will now hear from Council Member Moya.

18 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

19 FRANCISCO MOYA: Thank you. Uh, thank  
20 you Dr. Katz, uh, always good to see you. Um, I just  
21 would like to reiterate the points that, uh, Council  
22 Member Dromm made about Elmhurst Hospital. You know  
23 how much we care about, um, Elmhurst and we just hope  
24 that equity, um, stays the same as we go forward in  
25 its funding. Um, my question, Dr. Katz is, you know

1  
2 you've mentioned more about the, the testing vans and  
3 the vaccination vans, H and H, when the H and H vans  
4 go out it's great service. No complaints. Nothing  
5 like that but it's the contracting that is done with  
6 the vendors. Uh, and I might have mentioned this one  
7 of the times that we saw each other, is really the  
8 problem. Um, so in communities like Corona, the  
9 epicenter of where this pandemic happened, when we  
10 wouldn't get an H and H van and we'd get the vendor  
11 vans to come out, um, there was no signage, uh, folks  
12 there were not bilingual. We had to have staff out  
13 there talking to folks. The lines were really long.  
14 How do we go about vetting these vendors and like  
15 what is the criteria, uh, to select them? So if  
16 we're going to have more vans, uh, out there, if  
17 there is going to be contracting with other vendors  
18 that are not, uh, H and H vans, or H and H staff out  
19 there themselves, what is the criteria? Who is  
20 tracking that? Uh, because it's super important  
21 that if we are going to send, uh, these vans out into  
22 the, uh, communities that are most impacted by it, uh  
23 communities of color, immigrant communities that  
24 there is the appropriate staffing and that there is  
25 somewhere where we can actually talk to folks, uh, if

1 we see problems like this continue to arise, uh, when  
2 these vans are out in our district.

3  
4 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Well, thank you  
5 Council Member and again I want to thank you, um, and  
6 Chair Dromm for coming this week to celebrate the  
7 gifts to Elmhurst and for being such great supporters  
8 of Helen Arteaga as the new CEO. She's doing a, a  
9 phenomenal job and we couldn't be happier to have  
10 her.

11 FRANCISCO MOYA: Go Helen.

12 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yeah, Helen is a very  
13 special person. Um, the, you know, I'm a public  
14 sector guy of course. I believe in, you know well,  
15 well paid union jobs for people from the community  
16 and so you know I try to do things as much as I can  
17 to, um, to the public sector. Sometimes expansions  
18 have to happen rapidly and we, we have to rely on  
19 vendors and certainly that was the case in some of  
20 the T2 and unlike, uh, long-standing arrangements  
21 that we've had with CVOs, where we know them very  
22 well and we know where they are capable, um, I admit  
23 it was, you know hit and miss. We had some great  
24 vendors who, you know, really did well and we had  
25 some who did not do so well. And I, you know feel

1  
2 it's what has been our responsibility help by people  
3 like you who give us honest, direct feedback which I  
4 always encourage, I never mind hearing negative  
5 things because that's how you fix things, you can't  
6 fix things unless you know that there is a problem  
7 and can acknowledge it, um, so we will. And then I  
8 think we'll have fewer and fewer vendors and I, I  
9 know that Dr. Long talked with vendors about their,  
10 uh, language and adequacies. There were some things  
11 they, they did not know of at that time and we will  
12 continue to improve performance, um, but thank you  
13 very much for raising the issue.

14                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We  
15 will now hear from Council Member Rosenthal.

16                   SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

17                   HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much. I  
18 appreciate that and great to see you doctor. Um, I  
19 heard Council Member Moya raise this point about  
20 contract vendors and I just want to double down on  
21 that. Um, I'm impressed that he even knew that, uh,  
22 the vendor was there at all. The truck was there. I  
23 got no notification, um, and was walking by and  
24 noticed it and talked to the person who was giving  
25 out shots and he said, yeah, he was, he actually knew

1 the upper west side and he too didn't understand why  
2 they located the truck, um, in the location of, they  
3 shouldn't have put it where they put it. There were,  
4 um, much.

5  
6 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL:

7 Council Member we cannot hear you.

8 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Locations that could  
9 have really, um, helped more people but it wasn't  
10 really.

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Council Member  
12 Rosenthal we can't hear you. Council Member  
13 Rosenthal. Council Member Rosenthal.

14 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Oh, did you lose me?  
15 I'm sorry.

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes.

17 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Can you hear me now?

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, we can  
19 hear you now.

20 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Apologies. Um, I don't  
21 know how much you missed but basically doubling down  
22 on what Council Member Moya said. I was not notified  
23 and the location it went in to really just made no  
24 sense. Um, there were, you know if you're going to  
25 come to the upper Westside which we love. Um, you

1 know, there are places that really need, uh, vaccines  
2 and I think my office could have been helpful in  
3 letting somebody know the location. So.

4 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Got it. I noticed  
5 the.

6 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Was the coordination, I  
7 guess, or.

8 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yes. We will, we will  
9 do better council member, thank you for raising it.

10 HELEN ROSENTHAL: I mean, going forward,  
11 uh, I know the guy said it was a contract agency  
12 working for H and H, can I expect another van coming  
13 out? And do you think it would be possible for them  
14 to contact my office because I have some ideas where  
15 we really do need them?

16 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: We will do that, we  
17 will contact your office today.

18 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much.

19 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you.

20 HELEN ROSENTHAL: I mean, uh, the reason  
21 I bring it up and the reason it is important and I  
22 double down on it to Council Member Moya's point, we  
23 are spending money on these contract vendors and I  
24



1  
2 don't care if its reimbursed by FEMA or not. These  
3 are limited tax dollars.

4 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Agree.

5 HELEN ROSENTHAL: And, if each of us, if  
6 these two council members have had this experience,  
7 how many more? You know, you can't say that you have  
8 20 vans out there and be proud of it if 19 of them  
9 are in the wrong location and not vaccinating any of  
10 them. Or even if two of them are in the wrong  
11 location and not vaccinating anyone. And this truck  
12 was there for two weeks. Um.

13 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Understood.

14 HELEN ROSENTHAL: So, I think it's sort of  
15 a whole cloth review of, and I'm sure you have  
16 someone dedicated to this. So, just sort of asking  
17 your team, I mean sure, come back to me and fix it  
18 for my district, but I think you, it's a systemic and  
19 I would say, and the only reason I spoke again is  
20 because Council Member Moya brought it up, is that,  
21 if he's seeing it, if I'm seeing it, that counts as  
22 systemic.

23 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Understood. Thank  
24 you.

25 HELEN ROSENTHAL: I appreciate your time.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, I would  
3 like to announce that we were joined by several other  
4 Council Members, hold on a moment, and, they are or  
5 were, Council Member Gibson, Ayala, Levine, Reynoso,  
6 Rosenthal, Majority Leader Cumbo, Minority Leader  
7 Matteo, um, okay and I just want to see if Council  
8 Member and Chair Rivera has any additional questions  
9 before we close out?

10 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: No I just  
11 want to say, uh, thanks again to everyone. Um, as  
12 for the mobile vans, um, you know I would love to see  
13 a mobile vaccination van on Avenue Z in my district  
14 right besides thousands and thousands of NYCHA  
15 families. I'd love to work with you on that, um, and  
16 just to thank you for everything thus far. I'm  
17 looking forward to a continued partnership and thank  
18 you to Chair Dromm for being an incredible leader.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you, you  
20 know, doctor, I forgot, I do have one last question  
21 and it's really important to me and I think probably  
22 to you as well which is transgender healthcare  
23 training and data collection. So, can you provide an  
24 update on the current funding amount? The number of  
25 personnel? Uh, the program activities and the

1  
2 program outcomes for the transgender healthcare  
3 training that was baselined in 2020 in the Executive  
4 Plan?

5 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Uh, let me ask John if  
6 he has that number? If not, we will get it but let  
7 me reiterate and we see this as a, as a key issue for  
8 us. It's part of our, affirming all populations and  
9 we want to make sure that our services are culturally  
10 appropriate for people who are transitioning. John,  
11 can you provide the numbers today, or will we get  
12 them to the Chair?

13 JOHN ULBERG: Yeah, we will get them to  
14 the Chair. I know this is an area that we keep  
15 trying to, uh, expand with the resources that we  
16 have, but we will get you a full accounting of the  
17 numbers.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay and Dr.  
19 Katz I believe you only have three outreach workers  
20 there, um, I would love to see five because we have  
21 five boroughs and I think that the other three are  
22 assigned to a borough each and as Debbie Rose  
23 constantly reminds me, Staten Island is a borough  
24 too. Uh, so I would love to see outreach there. Um,  
25 and can you maybe just, uh, uh, include who those

1 folks are when you get me the information about the,  
2 uh, about the transgender healthcare program. And  
3 finally, bring up this issue to you, uh, does H and H  
4 collect data on sexual orientation and gender  
5 identity for each person who interacts with H and H  
6 service?  
7

8 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Yes, it is, it is  
9 part of our, uh, epic roll out is that we collect  
10 that information. And how is that done? Is that  
11 done like on, uh, somebody voluntarily offers that  
12 information? Or is somebody giving us flip. I know  
13 when I went to a private hospital in east-, in  
14 western Nassau for example, um, they actually handed  
15 me a form and you just checked off voluntarily and  
16 then they translated it or they put it in to the  
17 computer. How, how was that done at H and H?

18 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: And it's done in more  
19 than one way. If the person registered through My  
20 Chart which is what we encourage, then they would put  
21 it in themselves, which I think is the best system.  
22 Um, but if they are coming in person then they would  
23 put it on a piece of paper or tell the person, and of  
24 course, we, it is voluntary. We don't make anybody  
25 tell us but we encourage and hopefully create the

1  
2 kind of warm environment that people know we welcome  
3 everyone.

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I do think  
5 having that questions indicates to LGBTQ people that  
6 in fact you are open to that and that you is, it is a  
7 warm and welcoming environment. I do see the  
8 posters that you have around the hospitals as well, I  
9 want to encourage that more. You know, that we will  
10 keep them up and that really, when I walk into H and  
11 H and see that, it makes me very proud to see that,  
12 um, you know H and H is doing that type of outreach,  
13 so I'm, I'm very glad to hear that you are doing  
14 this. It's, it's really vitally important. I mean  
15 for me, having a doctor know that I am gay is  
16 important because I think he can better address my  
17 healthcare situation knowing that, than if he didn't  
18 know that and rather than me having the initiative to  
19 always continuing to come out, if it is right there  
20 on the form and the doctor can see it or whatever,  
21 um, I think it is much better and much easier.

22 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Totally agree.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you and  
24 I think Chair Rivera has a final wrap up. Can't let  
25 you go you Dr. Katz, you see.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Yeah, sorry,  
3 because you know at the beginning of my questions I  
4 mentioned these two initiatives and I just want to  
5 ask you about the Mental Health EMS? So, the Mental  
6 EMS program which will employ EMS workers and social  
7 workers to cor-, to correspond to, to co-respond to  
8 non-violent mental health crisis through 9-1-1 calls  
9 is budgeted at \$90 million for Fiscal Year 2022, \$41  
10 million of which will be allocated to H and H and  
11 this program too only has one year of funding and  
12 requires the hiring of hundreds of new employees  
13 within the Fiscal Year. So why is H and H the best  
14 agency to hire these social worker which we all so  
15 desperately need and what funding will be used to  
16 sustain these hires over future Fiscal years?

17 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: I'm going to let John  
18 do the financial part, but, um, the programmatic  
19 point of view, I thought it did make sense for us to  
20 do it because we're running all the psychiatric  
21 emergency rooms in the City, um, including there are  
22 no private psychiatric emergency rooms, they're all  
23 public and so I felt that by us doing it, we stand  
24 the best chance of being able to know the patient, so  
25 we may know them before we actually meet them, um,

1 through the system because they may have experienced  
2 care which will give us a heads up on whether this  
3 represents a worsening of their condition or this is  
4 a new, a new break for them. Um, and the feeling  
5 that you know we have most of the active clinicians  
6 both for child and adult. So that's why it's here.  
7 John, can you, do you have the, the financial  
8 information?  
9

10 JOHN ULBERG: Yes I, I, think, you know  
11 while we're grateful right, for the, for the funding  
12 right it allows us to you know experiment with new  
13 models of care. I think one of the things that's  
14 we've learned throughout COVID is you know, different  
15 ways to meet the patient, uh, and we talked a lot  
16 about that you know during the course of this  
17 conversation, including you know 65% of our patients  
18 are now enrolled in My Chart. Uh, I guess that's a  
19 long way of saying that we have to get the dollars to  
20 match where we are meeting the patient to provide  
21 care, so this will be something that if, you know,  
22 successful, right, we will have to find the financing  
23 to make it work and there's, there's ways to do that.  
24 There is obviously creative, you know, waivers that  
25 we can ask the federal government for, uh, you know

1  
2 there is sub-capitation payments and working with  
3 insurance companies, but that's my job. I got to  
4 find ways to make models of care that work, uh, I got  
5 to find money for them. So, we will, we will start  
6 working on that now.

7 CHAIRPERSON CARLINA RIVERA: Fairly op-,  
8 I'm not sure if H and H is expecting any more federal  
9 funds to come in but, um, I, I appreciate all that  
10 you are doing and I know that, you know mental health  
11 outreach has been so incredibly important especially  
12 the past year and more where people haven't had the  
13 same access to services and programs so thank you Mr.  
14 Chair for indulging me in that last question and  
15 thank you again to H and H for doing the best work  
16 that you can give the circumstances.

17 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
19 much and thank you again Dr. Katz and to everyone on  
20 the H and H team, we really appreciate you coming in.

21 DR. MITCHELL KATZ: Thank you. I  
22 appreciate it.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you  
24 again. Okay, now this will conclude this portion of  
25 today's hearing. Thank you H and H for being here.



1  
2 We will now move on to the City University of New  
3 York. I ask my colleagues who will be joining us for  
4 the CUNY portion of the hearing to remain in this  
5 Zoom with their microphone muted and we will be ready  
6 to start momentarily.

7 SGT. SADOWSKY: Good morning Chair  
8 Barron, can I get an audio check?

9 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Good morning.  
10 Can you hear me?

11 SGT. SADOWSKY: Yes. Actually it's good  
12 afternoon, sorry about that.

13 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Oh, thank you,  
14 I'm glad you got me. Yes. Thank you.

15 SGT. SADOWSKY: All right I can hear you  
16 loud and clear.

17 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you.

18 SGT. SADOWSKY: All right, when you are  
19 ready to go, uh, just let us know.

20 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Two minutes.  
21 Ten seconds.

22 SGT. SADOWSKY: All right, you got it.

23 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay, I'm  
24 ready.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS, COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Great.

Good to see you.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Hi Danny, how are you?

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I'm doing well, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: You're doing a great job.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very much and so are you. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I think this is our first hearing together if I'm not mistaken?

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Uh, didn't we do it last year?

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I'm not sure.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: I think we did.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, good, all right, good, okay. All right. Uh, good afternoon and welcome to the City Council's 8<sup>th</sup> day of hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel Dromm and I chair the finance committee. We've previously heard from H and H and now we will hear from the City University of New

1  
2 York. We are joined by the Committee on Higher  
3 Education, chaired by my esteemed colleague, Council  
4 Member Inez Barron. Let me introduce who is here  
5 with us today. Um, we are joined by Council Member  
6 Adams, Ampry-Samuel, Ayala, Brooks-Powers, Darma  
7 Diaz, Gibson, Grodenchik, Koslowitz, Louis, Maisel,  
8 Moya, Rosenthal and Minority Leader Matteo. Uh, in  
9 the interest of time, I will forgo an opening  
10 statement but I would like to turn it over to Chair  
11 Barron for her statement.

12 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you very  
13 much, um, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, I'm Inez Barron.  
14 I'm the Chair of the Committee on Higher Education  
15 and I would like to welcome you all to our virtual  
16 hearing on the Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget,  
17 including the Fiscal 2021-2025 Executive Capital  
18 Commitment Plan and the 10-year Capital Strategy for  
19 the City University of New York (CUNY). We are  
20 joined by Felix Matos Rodriguez, CUNYs Chancellor,  
21 Matthew Sapienza, CUNYs Senior Vice Chancellor and  
22 Chief Financial Officer, Hector Batista, Executive  
23 Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer and Jose  
24 Luis Cruz, Executive Vice Chancellor and University  
25 Provost. Thank you for joining us today. I do want

1 to make mention that on this past Wednesday, May  
2 19<sup>th</sup>, the celebrated the birthday of Ilyasah Shabazz,  
3 who is referred to as "our shining prince." It has  
4 been my honor to serve as chair of this committee  
5 since Fiscal 2015. In those 12 and now 13 separate  
6 budget hearings, I have made clear just how important  
7 it is for faculty and upper management diversity,  
8 tuition costs and those impacts on affordability and  
9 accessibility for students and child care support and  
10 increases in the base aid from the state. Today, as I  
11 join you for my final budgeting hearing as Chair of  
12 the Committee. I am re-emphasizing my position in all  
13 of these areas and more. I just want to talk briefly  
14 about this painful pandemic that has spotlighted and  
15 magnified the grave inequities in our communities, in  
16 social and economic arenas. In black and brown and  
17 low income communities the pre-existing conditions  
18 are being marginalized, being obscured, being  
19 patronized, being under resourced and being under  
20 funded. These stark systemic practices in addition  
21 to the racially weight response given by the state  
22 and local governments exacerbated the negative impact  
23 and results of this pandemic. We've heard the  
24 expression that we are all in this together which  
25

1 implies some kind of sameness in weathering this  
2 storm but we're in different boats. Some are only in  
3 masts and some only have life preservers but in this  
4 storm, many of those with responsibility and the  
5 ability to implement changes and take both actions to  
6 ameliorate these injustices had the opportunity to  
7 address the inequity and many of them did so.

8 Unfortunately, the President of Hunter College, who  
9 has sole authority to determine the admission  
10 criteria for Hunter College High School decided to  
11 continue the policy that has resulted in only 2% of  
12 that student population of black students, continue  
13 that policy which has limited the number of black  
14 students, although we've had years of protests and  
15 concern from students and alum that there is a gross  
16 inequity and if we believe that black and brown  
17 students are equally qualified academically we must  
18 be using a tool that is limiting and denying them the  
19 opportunity to come. Very upset about that and we  
20 will address that further. I also will need  
21 additional clarity from CUNY on the accounting of all  
22 of the federal stimulus aid it has received and will  
23 be receiving to offset revenue losses, cuts from the  
24 City and how remaining funds can be used toward s  
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1  
2 investment in student services especially in the  
3 areas of mental health and student advisement  
4 supports. I need to know if the Office of Management  
5 and Budget is working with CUNY to ensure there is  
6 sufficient funding in CUNYs Budget to attract, retain  
7 and hire the adequate staff and teachers currently.  
8 These issues are all very critical to manage right  
9 now and we need to ensure taxpayer dollars on being  
10 applied efficiently and best determine how and where  
11 stimulus aid can and should be applied into the CUNY  
12 system. As the City gets ready to open up and CUNY  
13 prepares to return to a portion of in person services  
14 this far, questions arise like will there be  
15 enrollment spikes as students feel safe again and are  
16 inspired to re-engage in their educations. Will CUNY  
17 raise tuition costs on its students this coming year  
18 or next? Will agency partnership support CUNY as  
19 CUNY has historically work to train and teach so many  
20 of our City's employees and is the City and CUNY  
21 taking its rightful position to ease the current  
22 economic, and social pains for its students and in  
23 preparation for the Mayor and OMB thoughtfully  
24 considered, what is a fully funded CUNY would mean as  
25 a blooming engine of recovery for so many City

1 residents and student and lastly I want to hear from  
2 CUNY what it's budget request and priorities are for  
3 Fiscal 2022. So, this afternoon, I will ask CUNY a  
4 series of questions to attain greater clarity for  
5 this body, to perform the task ahead of us as we work  
6 towards adapting the Fiscal 2022 Budget. Everyone  
7 knows the task ahead of us so let's be productive and  
8 engage herein as we do what's required to support our  
9 City's current and future student at CUNY. CUNYs  
10 Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget of \$1.2 billion adds  
11 funding to support new needs and for new initiatives  
12 and introduces intra-city transfers typical during  
13 the media with one substantial tuition revenue  
14 adjustment in Fiscal 2021, primarily due to under  
15 enrollment this past year. I also look forward to  
16 learning more about how the University is wrapping up  
17 projects this Fiscal year and next within CUNYs two  
18 \$603.3 million Capital Commitment Plan. Before we  
19 begin, I would like to take this moment to thank my  
20 staff, particularly William Flay, my Chief of Staff  
21 and Indigo Washington, my Director of Legislation and  
22 CUNY Liaison, Michelle Paragrín the Finance Analyst  
23 to the Committee, Iysha Wright the Unit Head, Amy  
24 Briggs, Council to the Committee, Chloe Rivera,

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS, COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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1 Senior Policy Analyst to the Committee and Frank  
2 Perez the Committee's Community Engagement Liaison. I  
3 also want to thank all of my district office staff  
4 and all of those who have worked diligently with me  
5 preparing my, during my tenure at the Council. I  
6 want to give special thanks to my fellow members of  
7 the BLAC, members of this Committee, our Speaker  
8 Corey Johnson for his leadership and of course, Chair  
9 Danny Dromm, my esteemed colleague, not just here in  
10 government but from teaching a well, who works  
11 tirelessly during all of these executive budget  
12 hearings to an informed body as well as through work  
13 to pass the Budget. And big thank you to Latonia  
14 McKinney, the Director of the Finance Division,  
15 Regina Poreda Ryan and Nathan Toth, the Divisions  
16 Deputies and the rest of the Council Finance for all  
17 of the hard work and dedication to this process.  
18 And, I also want to thank those persons behind the  
19 scenes for all of the technical assistance that you  
20 give. And of course, I want to thank my family, my  
21 husband, Charles Barron for all of the love and  
22 support day in and day out. I have been blessed in  
23 so many ways with life's riches and I'm grateful for  
24 this important work I get to participate in for the  
25



1  
2 good of this dynamic City. Chair Dromm, I turn the  
3 hearing back to you, thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
5 much, uh, Chair Barron, I really appreciate your very  
6 kind words, uh, and your closing there, uh, yes we  
7 are very privileged and we are very lucky in our  
8 lives. I feel the same way, very blessed that we  
9 have been afforded this opportunity and especially  
10 that I've been afforded the opportunity to work with  
11 you over the last eight years in the City Council.

12 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I look up to  
14 you and admire your enthusiasm and your advocacy very  
15 much. Thank you Chair Barron. And Bienvenido, um,  
16 to my friend, um, Former Queens President, uh Queens  
17 College President, Felix Matos Rodriguez, now the  
18 CUNY Chancellor. Uh, we welcome you and I'm very  
19 happy to see you again, uh, and uh, I look forward to  
20 hearing your testimony. I am going to ask our Counsel  
21 to swear you in and, uh, after that, we'll do the  
22 testimony and then we have some questions for you.

23 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh,  
24 thank you Chair. My name is Stephanie Ruiz and I'm  
25 Counsel to New York City's Council's Committee on

1 Finance. Before we begin, I want to remind everyone  
2 that you will be on mute until you are recognized to  
3 speak, at which time you will be un-muted by the Zoom  
4 host. If you mute yourself after you've been  
5 unmuted, you'll need to be un-muted again by the  
6 host. Please be aware that it could be a delay in  
7 muting and un-muting so please be patient. During  
8 the hearing, the Council Members have, would like to  
9 ask a question, please use the Zoom Raise Hand  
10 function and you'll be called on to speak. We'll be  
11 limiting the Council Member questions to five minutes  
12 including responses. I'll now administer the  
13 affirmation. Do you affirm that your testimony will  
14 be truthful to the best of your knowledge,  
15 information and belief? Chancellor Rodriguez?

17 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Yes, yes I do.

18 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr.  
19 Jose Luis Cruz?

20 JOSE LUIS CRUZ: Yes I do.

21 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
22 you. Mr. Hector Batista?

23 HECTOR BATISTA: Yes I do.

24 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
25 you and Mr. Matthew Sapienza?

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MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I do.

STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Chancellor you may begin when ready.

CHANCELLOR FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And, and, um, good afternoon and (SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE) and to Chairs um, Dromm and Barron, and teachers Dromm and Barron. Uh, thank you for your leadership and your support. Um, and to the members of the New York City Council's Committee on Finance and Higher Education, uh, many, many friends in those committees and many, many supporters of the City of New York, uh, to Staff of the guest, I am Felix Matas Rodriguez, the Chancellor for the City University of New York. I'm delighted to be joined this afternoon by the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, Jose Luis Cruz, uh, Chief Operating Officer, Hector Batista, and our Chief Financial Officer, Matthew Sapienza. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. I am proud to be able to share today how the City University of New York stood strong against a relentless pandemic and outline our Priority Plans and goals for the coming Fiscal year and beyond and answer any questions that you might have. I am

1 extremely honored and humbled to have received a  
2 premiere and largest urban University in the United  
3 States serving half a million students, 9,000  
4 faculty, 21,300 staff at our 11 four-year colleges, 7  
5 community colleges and 7 graduate and professional  
6 schools. On behalf of the entire CUNY community, I  
7 want to thank the New York City Council for your past  
8 and sustained support which has enabled CUNY to  
9 deliver strong results for students and the citizens  
10 of New York City. 20/20 was a year that both  
11 demanded and inspired great fortitude and  
12 resourcefulness from our students, faculty, staff and  
13 leaders. The coronavirus forced CUNY to all but shut  
14 down its 25 campuses in March of 2020 and quickly  
15 switch to distance education. When classes resume  
16 after a week, a week long academic recess, 95% of the  
17 university's 50,000 core sections have transitioned  
18 to online instruction. We quickly realize that  
19 thousands of students lack the tools to participate  
20 in distance learning. In response, we purchase  
21 33,000 laptops and tablets and make sure that they  
22 were safely distributed to students in need and later  
23 provided 4,000 personal hot spots for those students  
24 who require Wi-Fi access. It was just one part of  
25

1  
2 our broad efforts during the year to help the  
3 students weather the academic, economic and emotional  
4 challenges they faced. Our efforts to support  
5 students surely did not stop there. Early in the  
6 COVID 19 crisis we established a Chancellor's  
7 Emergency Relief Fund with \$1 million each from the  
8 Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation and the James  
9 and Judith K. Dimon Foundations. By default, support  
10 from additional donors grew the fund to more than \$10  
11 million and allowed us to distribute emergency grants  
12 to more than 12,000 students. Individual colleges  
13 and schools on their own raised more than \$8.6  
14 million enabling them to ensure to help a thousand  
15 student more for a total of nearly \$17 million in  
16 emergency relief funds, um, in parish philanthropic  
17 collected across the university. We were also among  
18 the first systems in the nation to begin awarding  
19 student emergency grants that were funded by the  
20 Federal CARES Act. We have now fully disbursed our  
21 Federal CARES Act Student Emergency Grant allocation  
22 with almost 161,000 students receiving awards  
23 averaging \$736 per student. Earlier this month, we  
24 began distributing the second part of \$180 million in  
25 Federal Emergency Grants, part of the pandemic relief

1 package passed by Congress last December and made  
2 available to the nation's educational institutions in  
3 the spring. The second round of the federal relief  
4 funds called the Coronavirus Response and Relief  
5 Supplemental Appropriations Acts which we called  
6 CRRSAA for shorts provides grants averaging about  
7 \$750 to help students meet educational and living  
8 expenses during the pandemic. More than half of  
9 CUNYs 270,000 re-seeking students qualified for the  
10 CRRSAA Emergency Grants with the average amounts  
11 ranging from \$600 to \$1,100 depending on the  
12 student's financial need and factors including full-  
13 time or part-time enrollment status and whether they  
14 support dependent children. I am pleased to report  
15 that we already dispersed almost \$140 million of the  
16 second Federal allocation and over 151,000 CUNY  
17 students have received awards in the recent weeks.  
18 That's part of our CRRSAA Allocation strategy. We  
19 required CUNY colleges to reserve 5% of the funds for  
20 future discretionary awards to students including the  
21 possibility that the Federal Government may allow  
22 them to be dispersed to international students,  
23 dreamers and other undocumented students for the  
24 first time because that did not happen during the  
25

1 CARES Act. We were therefore thrilled with the  
2 decision announced last week by the Federal  
3 Department of Education to reverse the previous  
4 Administration's policy of barring un-documented  
5 students from receiving federal pandemic relief.  
6 This important decision corrects a great inequity in  
7 the distribution of funds that started with the last  
8 spring's CARES Act. The new policy would allow  
9 colleges and universities to distribute Federal  
10 pandemic relief to involve students who need  
11 financial help regardless of their immigration  
12 status. We are now working to release these grants  
13 to dreamers and other undocumented and international  
14 students. These thousands of students would also be  
15 eligible to receive emergency grants from the  
16 American Rescue Plan Package signed by President  
17 Biden last March. We are also working on our campus  
18 budget allocations for Fiscal year 2022 which would  
19 include the institutional funds from CRRSAA as well  
20 as the resources becoming available now from the  
21 American Rescue Plan. CUNY joined the city's battle  
22 against the coronavirus on many fronts. Campuses  
23 used 3-D printers to produce PPE equipment. Experts  
24 at the School of Public Health and Health Policy  
25

1 produced a weekly tracking survey of New Yorker's  
2 attitudes and behaviors toward the pandemic. CUNY  
3 Scientists repurposed their work to take on  
4 coronavirus related research. One problem that  
5 gained national attention devised a process for  
6 monitoring the level of coronavirus in the City's  
7 wastewater to help identify new outbreaks before  
8 testing did and guide health official's responses.  
9 The long awaited coronavirus vaccine became available  
10 for public distribution in December and we are  
11 extremely proud that it was a CUNY Nursing Alumni  
12 Sandra Lindsay who was the first person in the US to  
13 receive the vaccine. Once vaccines became available,  
14 CUNY once again proves its important to the fabric of  
15 our City as the University has made five of our  
16 campuses available to serve as vaccine centers. About  
17 half a million New Yorkers have been vaccinated at  
18 either Medgar Evers College, York College, City  
19 College, Lehman College, or Queensboro Community  
20 College and one of 2,000 CUNY students were activated  
21 to help at vaccine centers across the City as this  
22 impressive future leaders riding to help their fellow  
23 New Yorkers even as they face unthinkable pressures  
24 and loss. Our amazing students continue make our  
25



1 University and our City proud. Just last week, where  
2 the three CUNY Community College Students were named  
3 as recipients of the highly selective Janet K. Cook  
4 Foundation undergraduate transfer scholarship,  
5 honoring the nation's top community college students.  
6 CUNY Community College witnessed also figure  
7 prominently in the capital location on the nation's  
8 most recent awards. At the same time we are in the  
9 midst of a major transition leadership that began  
10 with my appointment as Chancellor two years ago this  
11 May. I have continued to assemble a cabinet and  
12 college President of unprecedented diversity who  
13 reflect the City we live in and the students we  
14 serve. The Board of Trustee has appointed 10 new  
15 Presidents during my tenure including our most recent  
16 appointment of Dr. Patricia Ramsey as President of  
17 Medgar Evers College. The first woman to ever serve  
18 in that role at Medgar. The appointments also include  
19 the first two Asian Americans ever to serve as CUNY  
20 College Presidents, four women and four African-  
21 Americans. Looking ahead to life after COVID where  
22 we double our effort to help our students succeed,  
23 graduate on time and find a sustainable career paths  
24 that would also help drive the state and the City's  
25

1 economic recovery. Among the most important  
2 developments were planned to expand mental health  
3 services on our campuses and a new partnership. The  
4 New York Jobs CEO Council which is working with the  
5 CEOs from 28 of the largest employers in the New York  
6 area to create a pipeline to job opportunities for  
7 25,000 CUNY students. Additionally, CUNY is working  
8 with the Department of Youth and Community  
9 Development and the Center for Youth Employment to  
10 launch CUNY recovery costs, a partnership to offer  
11 5,000 CUNY students from targeted low income and  
12 vulnerable populations the opportunity to participate  
13 in the sub-reduced employment program. Employment  
14 and job sites will be focused on helping with  
15 recovery efforts in the education, healthcare  
16 community, non-profit and small business area. CUNY  
17 launched its newest set of offerings to the CUNY  
18 Upscale Challenge that began one year ago, to help  
19 students. I love my New Yorkers with free  
20 opportunities to train in areas, highly demanded by  
21 employers and over 30 Q-rated offerings from partners  
22 like Microsoft, Google, data assembly and salesforce.  
23 We added two new courses to the mix through the  
24 scholarships funded by Delos Ground Grant by the Bank  
25

1 of New York Mellon Foundation. We are offering over  
2 1300 scholarships for training at 9 colleges and we  
3 will be introducing 26 more training offerings this  
4 summer. We have funding to the US Department of  
5 Education and we will be introducing new courses of  
6 programs through the year as the economy picks up and  
7 employment prospects improve. Finally, we are  
8 pleased to offer the internship with partner program  
9 this summer in partnership with several small  
10 businesses intermediaries through the Brooklyn Navy  
11 Yard and the Grand Central Station to give recent  
12 CUNY graduates paid internships, wait at least half  
13 of the positions converting in to full time pay.  
14 Professional positions in technology, marketing and  
15 engineering roles. These are an important program  
16 for small business recovery and we hope to get it  
17 over the next year. To date, 100 students have taken  
18 part in this program. The fall 2021 semester is  
19 closely upon us. The well-being of every member of  
20 the University community continues to govern on this  
21 issue linking in every respect. Regrowth, reopening  
22 created by the central office and each CUNY campus  
23 last summer are being updated in consultation with  
24 university stakeholders, faculty, students, unions  
25

1 for the fall of 2021. Earlier this month, Governor  
2 Cuomo announced that COVID-19 vaccinations will be  
3 required for all students attending in person classes  
4 beginning this fall. With this in mind, I continue  
5 to strongly encourage every member of the CUNY family  
6 to get vaccinated. My office has made a careful  
7 decision to mark the week of August 2 as the date for  
8 staff to return to the work places in preparation for  
9 a more in person fall. Faculty will follow in  
10 according with the academic calendar of the campuses.  
11 The return to in person work would be guided by the  
12 University Safety First approach which includes a  
13 branded scheduling system combining remote and in  
14 person arrangements. Let me turn now to the Mayor's  
15 Executive Budget proposal. While we are grateful for  
16 the funding of mandatory cost increases, the budget  
17 also includes a \$77 million efficiencies target in  
18 Fiscal year 2022. A component of this efficiencies  
19 target included a \$10 million reduction to the  
20 incredibly successful ASA program which has more than  
21 doubled community college graduation rates and is  
22 being reciprocated in several other states. We are  
23 pleased that the Mayor's office has committed to  
24 rescind this cut to ASA as part of the Fiscal 2022  
25

1 adopted budget. With this adjustment, CUNY is left  
2 with a \$67 million reduction which is \$21 million  
3 higher than when the City removed from our current,  
4 from the current year budget. If this reduction were  
5 enacted CUNYs Community Colleges would experience a  
6 12% cut in City support since the pandemic began. We  
7 also had to abstore a one-time \$20 million reduction  
8 in the last quarter of Fiscal 2020 when the  
9 coronavirus first began to heavily impact the City's  
10 finances. A reduction of this size would severely  
11 limit a community college's ability to provide the  
12 core sections and other vital support that our  
13 student rely on in pursuit of their degrees. We also  
14 seek the council's help in restoring \$1.7 million  
15 that was provided for remediation in the current  
16 Fiscal year, \$1 million for the security initiative,  
17 \$510 million for community college charter centers  
18 and \$2.3 million for various centers of institutes in  
19 the Fiscal '22 City Budget. We are also requesting,  
20 uh, \$750,000 investment for the Center of Ethnic,  
21 Racial and Religious Understanding (CERRU) and Equity  
22 Education Center that works in both academic and  
23 community settings providing impact based non-violent  
24 communication tools for individuals and groups and  
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1 helping them to reach social differences. In  
2 addition to this reduction, the pandemic has caused  
3 unprecedented stress on our finances. Specifically,  
4 the Community College involvement has been negatively  
5 impacted. In their current academic year, student  
6 full time equivalent enrollment decreased by 40% from  
7 pre-COVID levels. This was a trend that was  
8 experienced state wide and nationwide at Community  
9 Colleges. As a result the year to year tuition  
10 revenues lost to the community colleges is \$42  
11 million. The university has frozen tuition rates at  
12 its community colleges for five consecutive years.  
13 Let me repeat that, the university has frozen tuition  
14 rates at the community colleges for five consecutive  
15 years. We are also proud that 2/3 of our full-time  
16 undergraduate resident students attend tuition free  
17 thanks to generous financial support, merit top  
18 program, excessive scholarships and the City  
19 Council's Vallone Merit scholarships. We are  
20 grateful to the City Council for continuing securing  
21 resources for the Vallone Merit scholarships. We  
22 will ask for advocacy again as funding for this  
23 critical student support program was not included in  
24 their Fiscal '22 Executive Budget. CUNY's Budget  
25

1 request for Fiscal 2022 takes into account by need as  
2 well as the current Fiscal environment. Our focus is  
3 on responding to the pandemic and jump starting New  
4 York's Economic Resurgence. Some of the program  
5 which we are seeking support including priority types  
6 including mental health, creating a nursing program,  
7 connections with private industry partners to create  
8 career pathways for students, expanding the  
9 successful CUNY course internship program and  
10 enhancing the adversity within the faculty full-time  
11 ranks. We are also seeking crucial capital budget  
12 support to enhance our IP systems, the needs of which  
13 have come to the forefront during this pandemic  
14 times. Thanks to the continued support of the New  
15 York State and City Partners I am extremely  
16 optimistic of the future of this great university,  
17 despite the challenges we have collectively faced  
18 from the coronavirus. Having seen our  
19 administration, faculty, students and staff pull  
20 together and lift one another even as their families  
21 and communities were buffered by profound difficulty  
22 and loss, it shows me that CUNY like New York itself  
23 will also persevere. I have never been prouder to be  
24 a member of the CUNY community or more certain of an  
25

1  
2 integral role the University plays in the sustenance  
3 of New York City than I have ever been. This  
4 concludes my testimony and I will now ask our Chief  
5 Financial Officer, Matthew Sapienza to provide more  
6 information on CUNYs Capital Budget. Thank you.

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Good afternoon, Chairs  
8 Dromm and Barron and members of the New York City  
9 Council Committees on Finance and Higher Education. I  
10 am Matt Sapienza, Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief  
11 Financial Officer at the City University of New York.  
12 I am grateful for the opportunity to testify this  
13 afternoon about the University's Capital Budget  
14 needs. You hear from our Chancellor regarding the  
15 challenges brought on by the coronavirus and that  
16 also certainly applied to our capital program. Due to  
17 public health and financial constraint the City  
18 stopped all construction early on in the pandemic  
19 with the exception of prior health and safety  
20 projects. Over the past year as more priority health  
21 and safety projects came up we received individual  
22 approvals to proceed. We are pleased that the  
23 Mayor's office has normalized a process and we are  
24 proceeding with business as usual which means  
25 projects are restarting and new projects are being



1 initiated once again. Despite the delayed start, the  
2 University is on target to complete 13 capital  
3 projects in Fiscal year 2021 and an additional 23 in  
4 the next Fiscal year. One of the key projects  
5 completed this year is the expansion of the CUNY in  
6 the Heights facility with increased operations that  
7 are due to begin in the fall semester. The Capital  
8 Plan outlined in our Fiscal 2022 Budget request  
9 reflects two critical priorities in response to the  
10 pandemic. The first is a need for higher air quality  
11 standards and the second is the recognition that we  
12 need to accelerate our IT improvement efforts.  
13 Designs for Capital Renewal Projects will include new  
14 criteria to improve the indoor air quality for our  
15 buildings and the latest public health information to  
16 ensure the safety of our community. Regarding IT the  
17 required pivot to distance learning has underscored  
18 the need for reliable, flexible and user friendly  
19 technologies. We must continue to improve and  
20 modernize our IT operations to be supportive of  
21 business needs and involve our systems to adapt to  
22 the changing needs to our students, faculty and  
23 staff. Moving to modern cloud solutions will help us  
24 to replace paper and manual business processes with  
25

1 digital workloads and to centralize data that is  
2 currently located in systems managed by external  
3 providers. The City's Executive Budget proposes \$615  
4 million in capital funds for CUNY over the five year  
5 plan from Fiscal year 2025 including \$5.1 million in  
6 Capital Funding from the Borough Presidents. We have  
7 worked collaboratively with the Mayor's Office of  
8 Management and Budget so more accurately realign the  
9 five year plan with expected start and completion  
10 dates of Capital Projects. We are also pleased that  
11 the City's Plan includes an agreement between CUNY  
12 and the school construction authority to build a new  
13 building on a campus of Medgar Evers College. The  
14 project will remove about 19 trailers which have been  
15 used as classrooms and replace them with a new  
16 building to be shared with the Department of  
17 Education. One of the most critical issues affecting  
18 CUNY's Capital Program is the age of its facilities.  
19 The University's Facility Portfolio consists of 29  
20 million square feet and 300 buildings across our 25  
21 campuses. The average building at CUNY is more than  
22 50 years old. Most are over 30 and some exceed 100.  
23 Capital Construction however is a known strong  
24 economic engine to restart economies. CUNY has been  
25

1 a major part of that process for New York City.

2 Investment in CUNYs Capital Program will create jobs  
3 for the local economy resulting i-, resulting in an  
4 incredibly strong return on the City's investment.  
5

6 We are very grateful for the City Council's strong  
7 advocacy on behalf of CUNY and its students. We are  
8 now happy to respond to questions from the Finance  
9 and Higher Education Committees.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
11 much but before we begin with the questioning let me  
12 say that we have been joined by Council Members Riley  
13 and Ulrich. Felix it's always good to see you. Just  
14 trying to pull up my questions here. Okay. The  
15 expense budget, CUNY has a total proposed budget of  
16 \$1.19 billion for Fiscal '22. What is the estimated  
17 cost of the COVID-19 pandemic on the University  
18 system and have CUNY measure this cost and does it  
19 account for the learning and achievement losses as  
20 well.

21 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So, so thank you  
22 for the question Chair Dromm. Um, let me take one  
23 part and allow our Chief Financial Officer to, to  
24 talk about the financial costs. We have a page in  
25 the CUNY website called a memorium in which we have

1 listed all the loss of lives that we have had for  
2 about, uh, faculty, staff, alumni, students, um, and  
3 always in consultation with the families for privacy  
4 of course for them to be included. And, um, so  
5 there's a loss there of talent. There is a loss  
6 there for vitality which is very difficult to  
7 quantify in, in any way and we hope to be able to us,  
8 we can gather together in person, find a way to also  
9 celebrate those lives. So, I mean that is one  
10 element of loss. Um, we are also working with the  
11 students that do not adapt as well to the online  
12 instruction to help them stay on course for  
13 graduation. Um, and let me now, turn to, uh, to Matt  
14 for the financial calculation of, of the loss.

16 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you Chancellor,  
17 thank you Chair Dromm. Um, so, in terms of the  
18 financial loss, we have three main funding sources at  
19 the University, State of New York, City of New York  
20 and tuition. So, I'll talk about all three. Um, and  
21 also point out that since the beginning of the  
22 pandemic, since the onset in March 2020, our colleges  
23 and central office have incurred about \$75 million in  
24 unclaimed expenses as a result of the pandemic. \$75  
25 million of things that weren't in our financial plan

1 prior to the pandemic that we have now, uh, that  
2 we've now extended since March 2020. In terms of the  
3 funding sources on the state side, um, in the current  
4 year, we had a \$38 million reduction, \$26 million at  
5 the senior colleges and \$12 million at the community  
6 colleges. We are very grateful that the state budget  
7 does not include those reductions for Fiscal '22 and  
8 just the one time reduction. On the City side, as  
9 the Chancellor mentioned in his testimony we had a  
10 \$20 million reduction in the last quarter of Fiscal  
11 '20 that we absorbed and a \$46 million reduction in  
12 the current year, that is proposed in the Mayor's  
13 Executive Budget has grown to \$67 million on the City  
14 side. And then lastly, tuition revenue, um, as the  
15 Chancellor mentioned in his testimony, our community  
16 college enrollment was down 14% as a result of the  
17 pandemic which resulted in a tuition revenue loss of  
18 \$42 million year to year from Fiscal '20 to Fiscal  
19 '21. Certainly an extremely negative impact in our  
20 community colleges. So, um, you know all three of our  
21 funding sources were significantly impacted by  
22 themselves with the pandemic and as well as we had  
23 unplanned expenses of \$75 million to, to incur.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Uh, just can  
3 you elaborate a little bit more on what the \$75  
4 million, I think you said it was, loss is due to the  
5 pandemic. What, where were those, where did that  
6 happen?

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, you know it's  
8 interesting very early on in the pandemic, um, when  
9 we were, um, finding out that students and faculty  
10 were infected with the virus before we went to  
11 distance learning. We were expending money on  
12 cleaning companies to come in and disinfect the  
13 buildings where these people had been and then once  
14 we went to Distance Learning, um, the costs were,  
15 various things like buying PPEs, buying hand  
16 sanitizer. One of the most significant, um,  
17 expenditures that we had that we were really grateful  
18 about, is we purchased, um, as the Chancellor  
19 mentioned 33,000 iPads and laptops that we gave out  
20 to students last spring semester to help them with  
21 the transition to Distance Learning. We bought about  
22 4000 personal hot spots for students as well, um, to  
23 help those students who, um, their Wi-Fi isn't, um,  
24 as strong as in other parts of the City. So, we were  
25 pleased about that and then one last thing that I'll

1  
2 mention is just a large category, is, um, we also  
3 incurred expenses for professional development for  
4 our faculty. A lot of which was run through our  
5 school professional studies again to help faculty be  
6 prepared, um, for the transition to distance  
7 learning, um, this past academic year.

8 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Let's just  
9 talk a little bit about the stimulus funding, Federal  
10 guidelines on the distribution of COVID-19 stimulus  
11 funds has been lifted, allowing for funding to be  
12 issued to un-documented students. What is the total  
13 amount in aid that was dispersed to CUNYs  
14 undocumented students and how will the funds be  
15 distributed?

16 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So, so you are  
17 absolutely correct in the first CARES Act,  
18 undocumented students were not included, um, in, you  
19 know in the previous administrations very narrow, um,  
20 definition and, uh, that's one of the reasons why we  
21 established the Chancellor's, uh, Fund because that  
22 allows to serve as a point of student with primary  
23 dollars. Um, so, allowing a significant amount of  
24 the funding, uh, of the first \$10 million that we  
25 raised went to undocumented international students

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1 that were not included, in, uh, in the CARES Act.

2 They, they were included as part of this last

3 allocation of \$118 billion that we got from CRRSAA.

4 Uh, we, we had planned for that, we had hoped that

5 the administration would change the policy and they

6 did. Um, so they are included in the funds that we

7 just, uh, began dispersing about two weeks ago and

8 that when, in the fall, we dispersed the funds from,

9 the, our fund, the last stimulus funding signed by

10 President Biden, um, they were being included too.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Do you have  
13 the amounts on that Chancellor?

14 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Matt, the,  
15 undocumented exclusively?

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes.

17 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We don't have that here  
18 Chair Dromm. We certainly were, you know, um, so  
19 pleased with the announcement last week from the US  
20 Department of Ed that these students were now going  
21 to be eligible and so we are now working toward  
22 getting them the awards as the Chancellor said. Um,  
23 so, we'll have beta data within the next couple of  
24 weeks, undocumented is always very tricky because um.

25 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes.



1  
2 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: It's not a question  
3 that we ask of students, are you undocumented, um,  
4 because we are, we are trying to be protective, you  
5 know of that group, um, but we are doing outreach and  
6 through our campuses and we will have some better  
7 data around that within the next several weeks.

8 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Do you have an  
9 estimate of how many undocumented students you might  
10 have, um, either in or, and, um, the junior colleges  
11 and in the senior colleges?

12 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So the, the, when  
13 we did the reach out campaign with the Chancellor's  
14 Emergency Fund, um, you know because it wasn't from  
15 the CARES Act, um, the, the, it was all 5,000  
16 students, um, roughly that, that responded.

17 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And thank you  
18 Chancellor. Uh, and what are you doing to reduce the  
19 learning loss experienced by, uh, students, what  
20 additional resources are being allocated to support  
21 your student's needs?

22 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So, um, let me,  
23 you know we are being very, very focused on that. I  
24 think that our University Provost has been, has been  
25 the point person there in, in collaborating with the

1  
2 DOE to get reach for the Students are Coming Away and  
3 to monitor the dress issue when we moved from, you  
4 know, the took almost totally in person to mostly,  
5 uh, online so let me allow University Provost Cruz to  
6 comment on that.

7 JOSE LUIS CRUZ: Thank you Chancellor.

8 Um, so as the Chancellor indicated, uh, CUNY hospital  
9 working with the Department of Education on the  
10 series of, um, summer bridge programs as we look  
11 toward the fall to ensure that we address some of  
12 that learning loss, uh, as well we have our campuses  
13 uh, getting ready preparing for the incoming class,  
14 um, to make sure that the usual orientations, um, and  
15 support services that are available, uh, recognize,  
16 uh, this reality.

17 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And thank you.

18 What is the university's plan for re-opening the  
19 campuses to in person learning this fall?

20 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So, thank you for  
21 that question, we are, um, and clearly the, the  
22 Governor's announcement on the, um, mandatory  
23 vaccination, um, for students away so getting ready  
24 to provide sort of the, the policy right after the  
25 Board voted a policy, um, allowing that, um, you know

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1 CUNY, uh, has, uh, you a lot of questions right  
2 before that as to whether we are going to be  
3 requiring or not, uh, uh, for, uh for students. What  
4 we are trying to do is to really, um, leave the  
5 students where they are. Um, we have students who  
6 are hungry, who are, that in person experience  
7 because they didn't have it at CUNY or at the DOE for  
8 the past year and a half or a more hybrid, kind of  
9 blended experience, uh, so we want to be able to have  
10 abundant courses for those students. Um, now that  
11 it's becoming, uh, clear that, uh, with the vaccine  
12 as well as other precautions, we can safely gather in  
13 our campuses. But we also learned that our students  
14 enjoyed the flexibility that online provided. Many  
15 of our working students have to balance, uh, work  
16 schedules. Many were student parents that have to  
17 balance taking care of their children. Um, like  
18 having the flexibility of, of online. So what we're  
19 trying to do is have a robust so that there are  
20 offerings that have all of that menu and then we meet  
21 you where you are. If you think you learn better and  
22 you are more comfortable with an online or hybrid to  
23 have those courses for you. If you are hungry for  
24 that in person we want to have those courses there,  
25

1  
2 um, for you, and and letting the, the demand from the  
3 student tell us where the courses need to be. The  
4 other thing that we have done, um, Chairman Dromm, is  
5 a really historic investment in the professional  
6 development of our faculty and I know that both you,  
7 and, Chair Barron, uh care about quality in teaching  
8 and we've, we have provided professional development  
9 for over 4,000 of the faculty members so they can  
10 each better online, right? So they can be, they are  
11 adapted to supporters to that modality. Um, we  
12 needed to do that due to this pandemic but we also  
13 figured as a great investment moving forward in terms  
14 of the improvement and dependability for the entire  
15 system moving forward.

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you  
17 Chancellor. Um, the University did not reappoint  
18 approximately 2,800 adjuncts and part-time workers at  
19 the start of Fiscal '21. Will the University re-hire  
20 these positions in the fall? And if so, how many  
21 teachers will be rehired?

22 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So again, that  
23 was, you know one of the, uh, very difficulty, uh  
24 decisions that we, uh, that we faced, you know last  
25 year when we were dealing with a number of decisions

1 that we never that we need to do given the Fiscal,  
2 uh, the Fiscal crisis. Uh, the reappointment of the  
3 adjuncts will be based on the final budget which we  
4 are going to take to our board for a vote in June and  
5 their role. Those are the two factors that, um, um,  
6 drive the, the, the reappointment of adjuncts. I  
7 will say that I am very proud that last year even  
8 with, with some of those difficult things, working  
9 with PSE, we protected about 80% of the adjuncts  
10 that, that had health insurance. Uh doing, our join  
11 effort and I personally went out and sought private  
12 donors thanks to the Mellon Foundation we are able to  
13 re-hire 653 of those adjuncts mostly in the  
14 humanities. So, we value the adjuncts, and, uh, the  
15 one thing that I will say is, that the best. I think  
16 that we all are looking forward for the university  
17 where we depend less on adjuncts and we have more  
18 full-time faculty. We all can embrace that. The  
19 best way to do that is to provide recurrent, uh,  
20 taxpayer's dollars to our university. They way that  
21 we can hire people full-time is if we know that they  
22 are part of our baseline budget, not on money that is  
23 one base and, and not recurrent. So, that would be,  
24 um, the best way to, to support that would be, uh,

1  
2 the best way to, to support that would be to help us  
3 with that \$67 billion, um, budget gap that we have  
4 that would allow us to hire more full-time faculty  
5 and therefore hopefully hire some of those adjuncts  
6 as full-timers.

7 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And just for  
8 my own clarification, what makes that determination?  
9 Um, about, um, the, I'm losing my thought here now,  
10 about?

11 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: The hiring?

12 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah. Is that  
13 baselining? Is that baselining?

14 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Excuse me about  
15 baselining, about baselining?

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Well, I mean,  
17 I was making a reference to recurrent funding coming  
18 from the City and the State, right? That would allow  
19 us to (crosstalk).

20 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, to, um,  
21 um, to, to bring more full-time folks in, uh, would  
22 require less, um, um, part-time adjuncts and  
23 hopefully have some of those adjuncts with teaching  
24 experience in those positions.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, I, I got  
3 it, thank you. Um, I want to talk about one of my  
4 favorite projects and that's the LGBTQ public history  
5 project at La Guardia Community College. Uh, Richard  
6 Yemmerman and the folks there have done an incredible  
7 job with it and with a little bit of funding. We  
8 don't know the amount of funding. In Fiscal '21, the  
9 LGBTQ public history project at La Guardia College  
10 was funding at \$250,000 providing students from the  
11 CUNY, Queens Campuses with its third year of LGBTQ  
12 plus focus programs, activities, and events. Are  
13 there any plans to replicate this model on the other  
14 CUNY campuses and if so, how much additional funding  
15 would be needed to expand this work in Fiscal 2022?

16 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So thank you,  
17 from a friend to a friend I was able to see how  
18 transforming that, those forms were, uh, to the  
19 students in the entire borough but particularly to  
20 the students when I was at Queens. Um, we have an  
21 exhibit in our, um, student union that you, you  
22 attended the, the opening, you were able to do CUNY  
23 priority events for the entire borough thanks to  
24 that. We, what we would like to do is be able to  
25 concrete and come back with a number, and, uh, see

1 first on the experience on how beneficial it was. I  
2 would like to be able to guide the staff as they  
3 think about what would this look like if we did  
4 something CUNY wide and what would the cost be and  
5 would be happy to come back to you with. It's, it's  
6 been really transformative, uh, for the campuses and  
7 the students and I comment you for being a driving  
8 force supporting that.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you  
11 Chancellor and I think you are absolutely right in  
12 terms of how transformative it's been, not just for  
13 students but for faculty members as well. The last  
14 exhibit that La Guardia did focused a lot on faculty  
15 members who shared their own, coming out stories.  
16 Many of whom had not even been out to their  
17 colleagues prior to that at the La Guardia campus  
18 and, um, it's been done on the other campuses as well  
19 and it has really been an uniting thing, unifying,  
20 um, thing across the Queens campuses and certainly, I  
21 would love to see it expanded. So, I appreciate you  
22 getting back to me with some figures on that and  
23 seeing what we can't do to get it to replicate that.  
24 Thank you. Okay, I'm going to turn it over to my Co-



1  
2 Chair, Council Member Barron. She needs to be  
3 unmuted, there we go.

4           INEZ BARRON: Thank you so much, uh,  
5 thank you, um, Mr. Chancellor and your team for  
6 coming to answer our questions. Um, I've got lots of  
7 questions, I'm going to start with ASA, so, in your  
8 testimony, you referenced the fact that it has been  
9 announced that ASA will be returning. What kind of  
10 commitment do we have that that will in fact happen  
11 and that question is based on the fact that we are  
12 very cautious about any outward agreement until we  
13 see it included in the budget. Because we know who  
14 last year it was, um, restored at adoption and it was  
15 included but an additional \$20 million cut for the  
16 Coun-, that the Council was not privy to was  
17 implemented. So, it was like a slight of hand, give  
18 them one hand, take even more on the other. Uh,  
19 that's, that's really disingenuous, I think it is  
20 very dishonest and what do we know, we can expect I  
21 in the realty without snitching or taking it from  
22 another part.

23           FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Well I, I  
24 couldn't agree more on the importance of ASA and  
25 keeping it whole, um, as you mentioned, it has shown

1  
2 incredible results, uh, in our community colleges,  
3 uh, in terms of graduation rates and retention, it  
4 also becomes a fear to our four-year institutions,  
5 right so, I'm always finding that ASA is a wonderful  
6 improvement tool. It's a great way to have students  
7 succeed and graduate, um, so when we made the  
8 argument to, to the Mayor's table he was like that  
9 \$10 million cut is a larger cut because you are  
10 cutting down our capacity to recruit. Um, you are  
11 hurting our enrollment which goes to the bottom line  
12 and by hitting a program that has such dramatic  
13 graduation results, you are also hitting enrollment  
14 in the four years schools in the future, right? So,  
15 they've got, it's a hit that multiplies. So, um, we,  
16 we are, um, hopeful that, that, uh, money will be  
17 restored and that there would be no other short fixed  
18 funds that we expect affect ASA.

19 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Great so that's,  
20 that's what we are looking to see also. We are going  
21 to be very, um, we are going to be looking at this  
22 budget very critically. Um, because it was,  
23 disingenuous and it was, um, I'll just leave it at  
24 that nicer word disingenuous to do that. Um, and now  
25 in terms of the remediation restoration, we wanted

1  
2 to baseline the program but we know how important  
3 that mediation program is because of the deficiencies  
4 that students have when they are graduating and we  
5 wanted to have it baseline. So, what has your  
6 conversation been with OMB about the restoration for  
7 Fiscal 2022 for the remediation program?

8 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: SO, Matthew one  
9 up, on the, on the OMB and I would be happy also to  
10 have, um, Provost 261 talk about the academic side.

11 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you and  
12 if I could ask if you could be succinct because we  
13 are a little behind schedule. It is very important  
14 but we can get the brunt of the answer on. Thank  
15 you.

16 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. Okay.  
17 Thank you Chair Barron and yeah, we, uh, we were, you  
18 know disappointed that the, um, the funding for the  
19 remediation was not included in the executive budget.  
20 Uh, one thing I want to point out about the  
21 remediation that is really important it is, um, it is  
22 funded in the current Fiscal year, Fiscal '21 at \$1.7  
23 million.

24 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Right.  
25

1  
2                   FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ:     But that was a  
3 reduction from prior years.   And prior years it was  
4 funded at \$2 million.   Um, so we, I am advocating for  
5 the restoration back at the original \$2 million  
6 amount.

7                   CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON:   Okay.

8                   FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ:   Um, and that's,  
9 that's what we are here to ask for your help with  
10 today.

11                  CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON:   Thank you and  
12 in my opening statement, I referenced Hunter College  
13 High School.   Why did the President of Hunter College  
14 Campus School, not because of the same policy as the  
15 CUNY System and suspend standardized testing, um, the  
16 SAT and the ACT for CUNY requirements for admission.  
17 And how do you believe that this not going to affect,  
18 the level of remediation for incoming freshman and  
19 also in terms of, uh, I was, a state goal trying to  
20 have "diversity."   How, how does this decision, on  
21 behalf of the President, made by the President, not  
22 on behalf of but made by the President, match up for  
23 our claims of wanting to be a diverse institution.

24                  FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ:   Oh, I mean, I  
25 want to say two things about that and, and um, I

1 think that I concur with you that we do have the  
2 results from, uh, the task for that I put together,  
3 uh, that has students, faculty and some of the  
4 community members, um, so speaking about, you know  
5 what should be the, the, admission criteria and how  
6 to make it operational moving forward and I agree  
7 recently that we've had that, that blue print, uh,  
8 earlier so that we could put it in, in place this  
9 year and uh, and one of the things that we say that  
10 that really needs to be done quickly so that you  
11 know, we don't waste time next year and we can have  
12 it, uh, analyze it, you know embrace it and then get  
13 it ready. For this year, uh, there is something very  
14 different in the way that, um, um, has been done in  
15 the past. Uh, the exam is being given in all, in all  
16 the outer boroughs not just in Manhattan so it will  
17 make it easier for many, many more students to  
18 participate. There has been a lot more recruitment,  
19 uh, directly in schools that have, um, large diverse  
20 corporations hoping that that might increase to and  
21 support in terms of exam preparation for, um, for  
22 individuals outside of, of the borough of Manhattan.  
23 So, we believe that those things would bring more  
24 diverse class, clearly, that is not the long term  
25

1  
2 answer and I'm looking forward to the solutions that  
3 come from this, from this group, which is immerse in  
4 the Hunter community. Uh, to bring us changes next  
5 year.

6 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you, with  
7 all due respect, Chancellor, this is not a new  
8 problem, it's been a long-standing problem. There's  
9 been a steady decline and to know at least 15 months  
10 ago, that now was an opportunity to seize this time,  
11 to resolve the issue and to not do that in a timely  
12 fashion I think is very revealing in terms of, of not  
13 taking advantage of the opportunity, the climate, the  
14 culture, to get a resolution so I want that to be  
15 very strongly reflected. It's not a new problem.  
16 It's not a new problem. It's been a steady, steady,  
17 steady decline in black and brown and now here at the  
18 same moment we don't, we don't come up with a plan.  
19 We are doing more of the same, we are doing wider  
20 population, we're going to do some test prep, we're  
21 going to increase the pool but you are using the same  
22 criteria, a standardized test which historically we  
23 know to have been racially discriminatory. So moving  
24 on to my next question. Um, we did not, when the,  
25 wait, we looked at the, uh, oh, in, in your testimony

1  
2 you referred to the laptops, the \$33,000 that was  
3 spent on laptops was that out of expense? Or was that  
4 out of Capital?

5 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: I will ask  
6 Matthew.

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Sorry, Chancellor.  
8 Yes that was fully expended out of the Capital  
9 Budget, Chair Barron.

10 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: It was out of  
11 the Capital Budget, okay. Um, when we last left CUNY  
12 at the Fiscal '22, preliminary budget hearing we had  
13 some outstanding questions which also pertained to  
14 the executive budget but CUNY had no new Federal  
15 stimulus aid added to its community college budget in  
16 that plan. We need CUNY to clearly walk us through  
17 the Federal stimulus aid received in the Community  
18 College budget in Fiscal 2021. Our records reflect  
19 that just \$39.3 million from the CARES Act grants has  
20 been allocated to the community college's budget, is  
21 that correct?

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's correct. \$39.3  
23 is the amount that has been allocated. Uh, we will  
24 probably use a little bit more in a current Fiscal  
25 year or the community colleges. We are projecting

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1 about \$43.9, um, so we will need about a \$4.5 million  
2 adjustment made either in the adopted budget or when  
3 we close. Um, but we are working through those  
4 numbers now but, um, but we expect a slight  
5 adjustment will be needed in the current year for,  
6 uh, to recognize Federal stimulus funds.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Why do we not  
9 see this funding included in the Executive Budget for  
10 the community colleges?

11 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, we, Chair Barron  
12 we have been talking to the Office of Management and  
13 Budget about this and about the need to, um, include  
14 an amount, um, for Federal stimulus funds in the  
15 Fiscal '22 adopted budget and so that's the plan  
16 right now is to include that.

17 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: In which plan?

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm sorry Chair  
19 Barron?

20 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: We expect to  
21 see that in?

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, in, in the Fiscal  
23 '22 adopted budget. Um, we are, we are working with  
24 the administration and with OMB to have the  
25 appropriate amount of federal stimulus funds that we



1  
2 are planning to use for community colleges in Fiscal  
3 '22 in the '22 City adopted budget.

4 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay and what is  
5 the \$12.6 million year to date expenses accounting  
6 for exactly?

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh, the \$12.6 in  
8 expenses are for the, the things that I mentioned  
9 earlier, PPEs, hand sanitizer, um, IT equipment for  
10 the students that were bought outside of the Capital  
11 Appropriation. Um, faculty development, professional  
12 development of our faculty for distance learning, um  
13 and also one of the things that I, I didn't mention  
14 earlier which, which, I would like to because it was  
15 a really, uh, important initiative and our Chancellor  
16 and our Provost, um, very strongly supported it,  
17 which is, we allocated funds for mental health  
18 support for our students as well. So, all of that  
19 is part of the year to date expenses and we can  
20 provide a, a detailed breakdown on the \$12.6 if you'd  
21 like.

22 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: So, yes I  
23 would, so thank you. And, so, now the table that  
24 you had shared with us and with this body, um, you  
25 had a categ-, a CARES category, HEERF2 and you had

1 student awards, year to date expenses, revenue losses  
2 and additional eligible expenses. Isn't that in fact  
3 to be, uh, reflected in the Cares Act for 2021?  
4

5 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well the, the HERF2,  
6 you, I'm sorry Chairman, the HERF2 refers to the  
7 second stimulus allocation when she was at the  
8 Chrisna, um, so those funds we, we will likely use  
9 some of those funds in Fiscal '21, um, but the bulk  
10 of those funds are going to be used in Fiscal '22  
11 and then HERF3 is the American Rescue plan act  
12 which was announced by, um, President Biden back in  
13 March and again those funds, a picture on those funds  
14 will be used in Fiscal '22 as well.

15 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And what is the  
16 \$800,000 in additional revenue and losses connected  
17 to exactly?

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We wanted to set aside  
19 a, an amount for the colleges because when we were  
20 putting those numbers together, we had a projection  
21 of what the, um, tuition revenue losses were from  
22 enrollment and we had a projection of what the,  
23 eligible expenses were that our colleges were, that  
24 our colleges were incurring but we wanted to make  
25 sure that we provided some additional funds there,

1  
2 um, in cases there was additional enrollment losses  
3 between now and where they were. Was it on  
4 unanticipated expense? So, that \$800,000 was  
5 really, um, a projected amount, what may be  
6 needed, um, and as we get closer to, the, the  
7 Fiscal rear end, um, we will have an accounting of  
8 that. Once they get past the, um, Federal stimulus  
9 funds.

10 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: I'm, I'm going  
11 to jump to the next question.

12 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Sure.

13 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you so  
14 much, I appreciate your understanding.

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I understand.

16 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Putting forth a  
17 proposal to its Board of Trustees on June 1, 2021 for  
18 its plan to spend down an additional \$176.7 million  
19 from CRRSAA. All of the stimulus funding well support  
20 the community colleges, is that correct? And if so  
21 how do you plan to distribute, allocate these funds?

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So all, all of our  
23 colleges, the four year colleges, the community  
24 colleges, are all receiving stimulus funds.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Right, we are  
3 talking about CRRSAA.

4 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah for CRRSAA, um,  
5 there were allocations to go to senior colleges in  
6 the community colleges, um, and as you said we have  
7 a, a board of trustees to school committee meeting on  
8 June 7<sup>th</sup>, at which we will be presenting our, uh,  
9 proposed budget allocations for next year and in  
10 included in that will be a proposal of the allocation  
11 of the, of the Federal Stimulus Funds.

12 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: So, that \$176  
13 million is that dedicated for community colleges?  
14 \$176.7 million?

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: \$176.7 million is the  
16 number for community colleges, from CRRSAA. But one  
17 very important thing that I just want to point out on  
18 that is, 39.5 of that is going for student emergency  
19 grants. Um, that's part of the funding that we've  
20 been giving out to students over the past couple of  
21 weeks. So.

22 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: For some of the  
23 community college students or for all?

24 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's, um, that's  
25 just for community college students. So, the

1 remainder, um, for institutional needs met of the  
2 Student Emergency Grants is more like, you know \$137  
3 million.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And will that  
6 be in the adopted budget for Fiscal 2022?

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Um, once we, once we  
8 made our allocation, um, present our proposal to the  
9 board of trustees and, um, and they hopefully will  
10 approve it, then we'll, we'll have a better sense of  
11 what the number is, but yes, it should be around that  
12 number. Um, and you know again, one of the concerns  
13 there is with the \$67 million cut we had from the  
14 City and the \$42 million we had in enrollment loss  
15 that's \$109 million right there. Um, so it's using  
16 up a good chunk of the CRRSAA funds and that's why we  
17 are looking for restoration of that \$67 million.

18 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay. In  
19 addition CUNY will be receiving, will receive funding  
20 from the American Rescue Plan as well. Is that  
21 correct?

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's correct.

23 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And what is  
24 CUNYs understanding or analysis of what this grant  
25

1 will total for the community colleges? And when do  
2 you expect to see the funding added to the budget?

3  
4 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So, um, this is, this  
5 is pretty recent information because within the last  
6 couple of weeks the, uh, the Federal US Department of  
7 Education has provided the numbers to colleges  
8 throughout the country. So, for our community  
9 colleges, um, they will be receiving about \$295  
10 million from the American Rescue Plan. About \$148  
11 million of that \$295 will go for student emergency  
12 grants. Um, that was a requirement of the US  
13 Department of ED. They gave every single college a  
14 number that has to be the minimum number of emergency  
15 grants so that leaves about \$147 million, in for  
16 institutional needs from the American Rescue Plan for  
17 the CUNY Community Colleges.

18 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay, um, the  
19 critica-.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Madam Chair can  
21 I?

22 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Just, just one  
24 element of the part of the money that is destined to  
25

1 the students, it goes directly to the students,  
2 right?

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: So we don't  
6 have no. And, but what I think is an important thing  
7 and I would hope that all of the Council Members  
8 present will let us know that, uh, funding for the  
9 student we will be providing it in the fall, right?  
10 So, if I'm a student thinking about my plans for the  
11 future, right? I think it is important to let people  
12 know that we will be getting additional stimulus  
13 grant in the fall semester in which new and  
14 continuing students who are eligible. Who meet the  
15 criteria will be able to receive those supports. So  
16 that, we are hoping is also another reason to  
17 encourage enrollment and we would love your support  
18 of the Council in letting people know about that.

19 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Great. Thank  
20 you. Uh, this Committee wants to understand clearly  
21 how and where CUNY might be restoring any cuts that  
22 the University received in the November and  
23 preliminary plan from stimulus aid. Some of these  
24 cuts are true efficiencies and pandemic related  
25 savings. So, while we want to see CUNY fully funded,

1  
2 on balance we want to ensure that the CTL is being  
3 allocated and spent down as precisely as possible to  
4 avoid waste. So efficiencies are good. So, of the  
5 cuts that were taken from both the November and  
6 preliminary plan which are CUNYs priorities to  
7 restore?

8 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: The biggest priority  
9 right now Chair Barron is the operating aid for the  
10 community colleges. We are very concerned about the  
11 community colleges. All of the programs that we  
12 mentioned earlier, remediation is so important, our  
13 childcare center funding is so important. They are  
14 all critical but we are very concerned about the  
15 community college, uh, operating budgets. Not only  
16 because of the \$67 million proposed reduction but  
17 also as we, as we mentioned the enrollment losses and  
18 obviously we are hoping to get students back in, uh,  
19 to our community colleges but um, the combination of  
20 both of those things is creating a situation at the  
21 community colleges that, um, again we don't want all  
22 of the Federal stimulus funds to go to plug a hole.  
23 We want those Federal stimulus funds to be used so we  
24 can invest in our students at the Community Colleges  
25 and invest in our, in our campuses.



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CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you. Um, additionally what is CUNY's plan to invest the stimulus funds into the univ-, into the university system? Specifically, the community colleges. We know that CUNY applied \$5 million from the CARES Act toward mental health resources and we understand the application and need for that. Is CUNY going to invest more funds for mental health services? And if so, how much will be invested across the community colleges?

MICHAEL SAPIENZA: Yeah, that's, that's the plan that we are working on now that we are putting together to present to our board of trustees in a couple of weeks and we, it is our intention to have additional supports for mental health services as part of that plan and also pleased in the state budget we received an additional \$1 million for, for mental health support. So, yes, it is our anticipation that that will be part of the plan. Um, we don't have the numbers worked out yet but mental health is an important initiative for us at all of our colleges including the community colleges.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Yes. Uh, at the Mayor's Briefing on the Fiscal 2022 Executive

1  
2 Budget on April 26<sup>th</sup>, the Mayor stated that CUNY is  
3 receiving \$800 million in Federal stimulus funding.  
4 Is that the same total that you are accounting for?

5 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, um, and the  
6 numbers we were talking about earlier for the  
7 community colleges are a subset of that total.

8 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay.

9 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: And the rest of it  
10 goes to our four year schools and our graduate and  
11 professional schools and as the Chancellor pointed  
12 out about half of that is going toward for our  
13 student emergency grants.

14 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you. So  
15 it's 500 in stimulus that is a part of a larger  
16 number? Or is that the \$500 million? Is that the  
17 total?

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Um, the total for the  
19 American Rescue Plan is a little under \$800 million,  
20 it's like \$798 million, something like that. Uh.

21 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: For the system.

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: For the whole system,  
23 for all of the colleges including the community  
24 colleges.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: For all  
3 including, okay.

4 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Uh, so recap  
6 how much Federal Stimulus Funding has CUNY received  
7 in its budget for the community colleges in Fiscal  
8 2021?

9 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Fiscal '21 right now,  
10 the, the revenue that's been recognized is \$39  
11 million for the community colleges and like I said  
12 we'll, we'll need a small uptick to that when the  
13 adopted budget is done for the current year, probably  
14 about \$4.5 million increase. Um, and then we will  
15 need an amount recognized for Fiscal '22 as we  
16 mentioned earlier.

17 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Right. How much  
18 more Federal Aid does CUNY know now that it will  
19 receive in Fiscal 2021 and also how much for Fiscal  
20 2022?

21 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Fiscal '21, um, you  
22 know, the, the first round of stimulus CARES Act, um,  
23 we are going to. For the community colleges we are  
24 going to fully utilize the CARES Act money by the end  
25 of the Fiscal year. That money will be fully

1  
2 expended. Um, we will use some of the CRRSAA money  
3 in Fiscal '21 for the community colleges. Um, and  
4 then the balance in Fiscal '22, and, um, we are  
5 beginning to develop a plan for the American Rescue  
6 Plan Act funds as well. So some of the will be  
7 expended in Fiscal '22 as well. So that's all part of  
8 the budget proposal that we are putting together for  
9 our board of trustees.

10 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And I'm almost  
11 finished. I have a few more questions, thank you for,  
12 uh, your answers. Your executive plan includes a  
13 large revenue adjustment totaling a reduction of  
14 \$56.5 million in Fiscal 2021. It would be good to  
15 hear more from CUNY and I know we began touching on  
16 this subject during our preliminary budget hearing  
17 and at that time we were discussing an approximate  
18 \$40 million drop. So, some of this total revenue  
19 adjustment is being rolled from the previous Fiscal  
20 year? Is that correct? And if so, please explain  
21 this to us?

22 MICHAEL SAPIENZA: Yes, um, yes Chair  
23 Barron, the \$56 million adjustment was an adjustment  
24 to the plan that, uh, existed in the City's Financial  
25 Plan for CUNY tuition revenues. So, we had to bring

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1 the plan down by \$56 million. The \$42 million, um,  
2 refers to just a year to year change in the total  
3 amount we collected in tuition revenue in Fiscal '20  
4 versus what we are projecting to collect in Fiscal  
5 '21. Um, so that's where the \$42 million. That's,  
6 that's what the \$42 million number represents. \$56  
7 million was the adjustment to the plan, so the plan  
8 was a little higher, um, than it should be, even if  
9 our enrollment had remained flat, we would have  
10 probably had to bring the plan down a little bit by  
11 \$14 million or so.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: So is CUNY  
14 self-funding the shortfall this year?

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: The, that \$42 million,  
16 um, the Federal Stimulus Funds are going to fill that  
17 shortfall for the current year. Um, which we are  
18 grateful for to have the Federal Stimulus Funds for  
19 that purpose but, um, we are certainly hoping that  
20 our enrollment bounces back so that we don't need to  
21 have, to use Federal Stimulus to fill that gap and  
22 instead can use it for investment.

23 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And what is the  
24 exact total tuition shortfall to CUNY for Fiscal 2021  
25 only?

1  
2 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: For the community  
3 college's Fiscal 2021 only the year to year decline  
4 in tuition revenues was \$42 million. And how many  
5 students were enrolled in the fall and then in the  
6 spring? I think um, my, try to.

7 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah I think,  
8 the, there was a, I think we can send you some of the  
9 numbers, um, um, so you can have the correct numbers,  
10 um, but there was a decline and a decline in the  
11 community core sector which is our biggest, our  
12 biggest concern.

13 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay great.  
14 And so to confirm, the state's enacted budget is  
15 holding the Community Colleges harmless from under  
16 enrollment and has increased a base aid support by  
17 \$50 per student generating an additional \$4.2 million  
18 in Fiscal 2022. Is that correct?

19 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That is correct and we  
20 are very grateful for that increase and for the hold  
21 harmless as well. Very helpful to our community  
22 colleges.

23 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: And were there  
24 any cuts imposed by the state to the community  
25 college's budget for Fiscal 2022?

1  
2 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: There were not for  
3 '22, for '21 yes. But no cuts for the community  
4 colleges for '22.

5 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay. And at  
6 least, well CUNY proposed to its board of trustees,  
7 um, any kind of increases? You know my position on  
8 increase is about tuition. You know it's my position  
9 that CUNY should be tuition free. It's my position  
10 that at least the first two years, um, post-secondary  
11 school should be a part of mandatory education  
12 provided by the state either at an institution or  
13 trade school. So, my position is that there should  
14 not be an increase. At, there should not be any  
15 tuition at all, but are you proposing that?

16 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: You'll be happy to  
17 hear there is no tuition increase, um, in the budget  
18 for next year.

19 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Okay, great.  
20 Thank you. Um, and I have more questions but I'm  
21 going to turn it back to the Chair, I know we  
22 have, and if there are other questions that I may  
23 not be able to present to you at this time, um, my  
24 staff will send them to you so that you can respond  
25 in writing.

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FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Delighted to.

The door is always open. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you. Mr.

Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you to

Chair Barron. We do have questions. We have one from Council Member, uh, Lander.

BRAD LANDER: Thank you very much.

Sorry, let me move to a location where I can ask my questions. Um, all right, thank you very much, uh, Chair Dromm and, uh, Chair Barron and Chancellor it's good to be here with you. Thank you. Um obviously CUNY at this moment coming out of the pandemic is just of extraordinary importance to New York City and we need to do everything we can to support and invest in it. So, I'm going to be very hard, excuse me to make sure that we increase the funding to CUNY. I was not happy to see in the executive budget that while we are increasing funding for the NYPD almost \$190 million that we are cutting some significant critical funds for CUNY so I will be joining both chairs and everyone in fighting to make sure, um, that we increase the budget, um, just this year. Last year we had a really interesting



1 conversation in this Committee under Chair Barron  
2 talking about the possibility of moving to some  
3 kind of pilot program where institutions like  
4 Columbia and NYU would providing funding where they  
5 don't have to pay their tax, their real estate  
6 taxes but could be a dedicated stream of revenue to  
7 CUNY. I'm not going to ask you about that today  
8 but I think as we come to the other side of the  
9 pandemic, um, Chair Barron, I know this is something  
10 that you've spoken about, I want to work hard and  
11 make sure we fight together for some long-term  
12 resources. Obviously the American Rescue Plan  
13 Funding is valuable but we need new long-term  
14 resources for CUNY if we are going to sustain it for  
15 the long-term and I think. I hope that that pilot  
16 idea could be a way of getting that done. But, I do  
17 want to follow up on Chair Barron's questions about  
18 Hunter College High School because I have to say I  
19 just was extremely distressed about this. I asked  
20 your representatives about it during the preliminary  
21 budget hearing and was promised answers sooner than  
22 they came and then when they did come, um, you know  
23 they were really unacceptable answers, both the way  
24 we found out and the idea that there wasn't enough  
25

1 time is just utterly false. All around the country,  
2 Boston Latin changed there. In almost every other  
3 place, selective high schools with a single test, one  
4 school, were able to exchange their approach for this  
5 pandemic here. It may not be the same thing that  
6 they are going to do for the long-term but that  
7 doesn't mean, this here was precisely the years to  
8 make those changes and to refuse to make them. I  
9 guess my first question is this, do you think the  
10 Hunter College High School test, the way it is  
11 consulted is consistent with the values of CUNY.

12  
13 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Well, than-,  
14 first thank you for your support regarding your  
15 budget, our budget needs and the sustained funding so  
16 appreciate, uh, appreciate that and, um, and, uh  
17 having to get any information and you did pilot and  
18 things, and things of that nature. Regarding your  
19 question about, uh, the Hunter coach, I think that we  
20 have that group that involves, students, faculty, you  
21 know, alumni, members of the, of the Hunter  
22 community, uh, uh, that I am going to provide to a  
23 new path forward and I would like either  
24 accommodations as they think about, uh, different  
25 options for the, uh, for the school.

1  
2           BRAD LANDER: So I hear you, I guess I  
3 want to start by saying the current approach to  
4 admissions at Hunter College High School is not  
5 consistent with the values of CUNY and that is an  
6 important starting point. Like setting up a long term  
7 working group is fine but then using it as cover to  
8 keep the test this year, and don't forget those  
9 other selective high schools around the country,  
10 they are not grounded in a public institution like  
11 CUNY that has values of equal inclusion and genuine  
12 social upward mobility. So, it is important and I  
13 believe that you should be saying to President Raab,  
14 your working group is good but your approach is  
15 inconsistent with CUNYs values, it must be changed.  
16 And I'm asking you to do that because I think you, I,  
17 you know, you got to be political too, but I think  
18 you know it is inconsistent with CUNY values and it  
19 is appropriate for you as Chancellor to tell  
20 President Raab and the Hunter Community they must  
21 make the change, so, but I want to ask two budget  
22 questions about the money we are giving Hunter  
23 College High School. So, these two questions,  
24 first, how much of the money that the City Council  
25 is providing for Hunter College High School is going

1  
2 to administer, develop, uh, you know provide outreach  
3 for the test? And second, I've been told that of the  
4 \$18.9 million that Hunter College High School is  
5 getting in your allocation that \$900,000 is not even  
6 for Hunter College High School, that it goes to other  
7 Hunter College elements that should not really be  
8 funded, you know through City funding. So, can you  
9 tell me about those two things?

10 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So, I'll have  
11 Matt take the second part of the question, I think  
12 the first one is, I don't think that we have the  
13 information available because that plan is being  
14 developed. But I'll get you the information about  
15 the cost of the, of the plan and therefore the second  
16 part, let me defer to, to Matt.

17 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thanks Chancellor and  
18 yeah Council Member Lander I'm not aware of any, you  
19 know amount of \$900,000 that's being diverted to  
20 other Hunter needs, perhaps what it could be is that  
21 Hunter College does provide services to the high  
22 schools for a security and IT and other things so, it  
23 could be part of that but we'll look further in that,  
24 uh, in to that and as far as we are aware the entire  
25

1  
2 city allocation is going to the Hunter campus  
3 schools.

4 BRAD LANDER: So, I'd like to you to get  
5 back to me about this because I'm told that some  
6 \$900,000 goes for some payroll administration and a  
7 range of things in Hunter college that are not  
8 connected to the high school and I really do want to  
9 know what that test is costing cause I've got to be  
10 honest and I'm going to talk to the Chair about this,  
11 I'm so angry about the way about the way that  
12 President Raab and Hunter College High School have  
13 approached this opportunity that I think the council  
14 should consider not, you know moving that \$900,000  
15 and the cost of the test to other CUNY elements. I  
16 don't want to cut CUNY. All of these things that we  
17 are talking about in this hearing need funding and if  
18 Hunter College High School is not going to move to an  
19 inclusive admission system when everyone else in this  
20 position is, then we should use those resources for  
21 the other critical CUNY needs that genuine provide  
22 inclusive education, real social uplift. So, I will  
23 appreciate you getting back to me and to the chair  
24 about those matters.

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CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you Council Member Lander.

BRAD LANDER: Thank you.

STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council Member Rosenthal.

SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much Chancellor, always great to see you and your staff. Thank you for being here and thank you Chairs Dromm and Barron for your terrific questions, there's not much left over, um, but I want to raise two points. One is, uh, and I may have missed this so my apologies, but where are you with opening up the childcare center? Uh, I understand the reduction in funding for this past year with the colleges closed but how about, how about for this year now that you are opening up?

FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So, let me ask our University Provost Jose Luis Cruz to answer that because I think he has some more updated info on the whole childcare scenario.

HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you. You're on mute.

JOSE LUIS CRUZ: Thank you and you have permission to unmute. So, thank you for your question.

1  
2 Um, all 16 childcare programs across the system are  
3 currently open for either remote service or, in person  
4 service depending on each of the campuses. Um, at the  
5 end of March we had about 629 children. Um, about a  
6 28% increase since January, so we are slowly coming  
7 back up.

8 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Good.

9 JOSE LUIS CRUZ: And, um, the childcare  
10 center in, uh, City College in particular that I know  
11 has been of interest will be opening up in August.

12 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Oh, that's great, that's  
13 great. But didn't, uh, the child centers take \$150,000  
14 hit in the budget, or am I mistaken about that?

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We are very thin, uh,  
16 I'm sorry, Council Member.

17 JOSE LUIS CRUZ: No go ahead Matt.

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm sorry yes we are  
19 looking for \$510,000 that the Council provided.

20 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Oh that's what it was a  
21 dyslexia thing. I'm sorry. Sorry.

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: There is a lot of  
23 numbers, \$510,000 that was provided in Fiscal 2021,  
24 um, is not included in the Mayor's Executive Budget  
25

1  
2 for '22 and so we are looking to the Council to begin  
3 restoring that.

4           HELEN ROSENTHAL: I, yeah. Thank you for  
5 that clarification and I'm glad to hear that the  
6 childcare centers are up and going. Um, my second  
7 question is more obvious and I'm sure Council Member  
8 Dromm got to this but, of the, you know the OMB has  
9 a line, right, in, in the CUNY Budget that says  
10 savings of whatever, \$67 million because they restored  
11 ASA from ASA. Um, how, what's your, did you already  
12 review the trial to your savings?

13           FELIX MATOS RODRIGUEZ: I did, I di-, my  
14 sense was, and, and I'll let Michael's the Budget  
15 person right? It was part of one of the questions  
16 that, um, Chair Barron included in her, in her question  
17 but I could be mixing apples and oranges, so Matt. I  
18 want to.

19           HELEN ROSENTHAL: Chair Barron. Thank  
20 you so much Chancellor and Chair Barron feel free to  
21 jump in, I guess my question specifically would be, I  
22 get making the cut, we're all going to fight to get  
23 that money back but were there any inefficiencies that  
24 you could take? And what are those?



1  
2 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah no there certainly  
3 was. Early on in the pandemic that Chancellor announced  
4 the University wide hiring freeze and so we've had  
5 saving from, from that, um.

6 HELEN ROSENTHAL: And by that you mean  
7 accruals but are they fully budgeted for the next year?  
8 Or did you take those positions out permanently?

9 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: The positions, will,  
10 will be, if the, if the cuts remain the positions will  
11 be coming out, um, so in, in the City's Plan, our  
12 intent is we are hoping that funds will be restored  
13 and then we can back fill a lot of these positions.  
14 Some of them are just vacant positions that haven't  
15 been, uh, filled so.

16 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Wait, if you could  
17 differentiate those two, uh, when you send follow up  
18 information.

19 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes.

20 HELEN ROSENTHAL: I'd like to know how  
21 many have been vacant for the last, I don't know, you  
22 tell me, 5 years? Um, and how many are, um, you know  
23 you are eager to hire to back fill the position, so,  
24 sort of those two categories. Number of people in  
25

1  
2 dollars would be helpful. Sorry that I interrupted  
3 you.

4 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: No, no, we will provide  
5 that, that breakdown.

6 HELEN ROSENTHAL: But I interrupted you.  
7 Other sa-.

8 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: No, other savings that  
9 we've had, um, certainly on the LCPS side, you know  
10 travel has been, was restricted as a result of the  
11 pandemic, you know, people going on conferences,  
12 professional development, other travel, um, and, and  
13 energy savings. We've had some significant energy  
14 (crosstalk).

15 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah, everybody else.

16 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm going to.

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

18 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you, two more  
19 questions Chair if it's okay? The, the actual savings  
20 from accruals and energy efficiencies and lack of  
21 travel, is, what's the dollar value of that?

22 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Um, we'll get you  
23 that, we'll get you that breakout. Um, you know the,  
24 the significant things are coming from not, um, back  
25

1 filling positions at this point. Um, and energy, um,  
2 with, moving away.  
3

4 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah it's hard.

5 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: From distance  
6 learning, that's going to go away, but, um, but we'll  
7 get you the breakdown of all of it, of all of the.

8 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah again I am more  
9 interested in, um, you know just sort of the things  
10 that, you can take that are no brainers. Right?

11 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Understood.

12 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Okay. Um, thank you.  
13 Last question is about period poverty, um, just before  
14 the pandemic broke we were in good conversations I  
15 think with your office Chancellor about providing  
16 tampons at all campuses. And, um, I know there is a  
17 wonderful company, uh, I'm forgetting the name but it  
18 was, it's very clever but, um, um, where there are,  
19 you could have free, you know people could just get  
20 tampons. So, where are you in that as you open back  
21 up?

22 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So again, we had  
23 extra nests for some of those costs, um, which is also  
24 one of the things that was a high priority for our  
25 student leaders, right? It came out also from there,

1 um, and honestly with, many more presence of fault to  
2 the campuses some of those things are being derailed  
3 and, uh, and one of the things that we need to pick  
4 back up in terms of, uh, cost and operationalizing it.

5  
6 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah, that's what I'm  
7 asking.

8 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So again we, it's  
9 not something that we have picked up recently. We've  
10 been candidly, um, you know trying to get people  
11 vaccinated and, and getting campuses you know ready,  
12 but, uh, we are looking to re-active it.

13 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Okay. I'm not going to  
14 get graphic. I'm going to control myself but, uh, it's  
15 a priority for your female students, you should know  
16 that. There is a reason that the student leaders took  
17 that issue up, and, uh, I would really like that  
18 information, uh, rolling that out. Your time table?  
19 Cost? Where you are rolling it out? What you are  
20 doing? I, I think the Committee on Women and Gender  
21 Equity would be super interested in that. And, and  
22 just so the public knows, Darma Diaz, the Chair is  
23 nodding her head, interested, so, is that something.

24 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: Absolutely,  
25 absolutely, and no need to be graphic it is something

1 that we had on the, on the pipeline. I think that we  
2 can all agree that, that it's been a complicated year  
3 and a half and we are now sort of getting back to, uh,  
4 some of the things that we had on the pipeline and we  
5 certainly prioritized that. Absolutely.

7 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Last question, Chair  
8 Dromm, I feel it, this last, I promise, I promise,  
9 then have you been distributing tampons at food  
10 pantries?

11 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: I do not know the  
12 answer to that but we will find out because we have  
13 kept, we have kept the pantries you know my, my defense  
14 is that our student support teams in the campuses have  
15 been very creating in trying to meet the students where  
16 they are, so, I mean, I wouldn't be surprised that if  
17 it is, if it occurred to you and others that probably  
18 we have been doing some but we can check and clearly  
19 if something isn't with women because that is up and  
20 running now.

21 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Exactly and I think your  
22 Controller was shaking his head no that it's not done,  
23 but, um.

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1  
2 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: No, I, I'm shaking  
3 shaking my, my head and I don't know the answer, we  
4 will have to find out.

5 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Okay so 50%, 52% of your  
6 students need them. Thank you very much. Thank you  
7 Chairs for your indulgence.

8 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will  
9 now hear from Council Member Powers.

10 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

11 KEITH POWERS: Hi there everyone. Um, sorry  
12 I'm a late addition here but I'm going to keep it  
13 really quick. Um, first of all I just want to add in,  
14 I don't agree with the previous statement here to pull  
15 a million dollars from a high school in my district so  
16 I want to be clear and on the record that any attempt  
17 to try to pull funding, really, I agree with the goals  
18 but to pull funding from a, from a high school in my  
19 district I just don't agree with that and I want to be  
20 on the record about that. Um, I just had one quick  
21 question, I'm sorry if you guys touched upon this  
22 already and I'm sure you did but I just wanted to  
23 hear, uh, CUNYs plans for the fall when it comes to  
24 remote learning versus fully opened, um, in person  
25 learning? And I'm sorry if you already answered that

1 but just some of the schools in my district wanted to  
2 hear what the latest was when it comes to, um, uh,  
3 what CUNY will be doing for in person learning and  
4 remote learning in the fall?  
5

6 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So thank you for  
7 your question, so, the the plan is to have a robust  
8 menu of online, hybrid and in person courses to meet  
9 the student demand where the demand might be, so, we  
10 know that we are going to have students that are  
11 hungry for the, for the in person contact, right? So  
12 we want to be able to have courses that address that.  
13 We also know that, uh, many students uh, actually  
14 enjoyed the flexibility of the online, uh courses and,  
15 uh, and actually some students felt that they learned  
16 better there. So our plan moving forward is built.  
17 We actually had very little of a system online and  
18 hybrid before the pandemic, I think that this would  
19 allow us to sort of bring that up to maximize  
20 flexibility for those students who need it, uh, for  
21 students who might still feel in the fall, uh, funny  
22 about returning to, to campus or taking public  
23 transportation. So our plan is to have a very robust  
24 menu so that if you are a student and you feel that  
25 you want to take most of your courses in person that

1  
2 they are there for you. If you are a student and you  
3 think that you want to mix that will be some online  
4 that we have that, uh. So, I don't like to use the  
5 expression going back to normal because I felt that  
6 normal had, had very few offerings on the online. Uh,  
7 and I want that to be something that is, uh, if  
8 anything something that is positive coming out of the  
9 pandemic that, that we have more faculty who are  
10 comfortable there and we have a more balance there  
11 with the students.

12 KEITH POWERS: And I just wanted to follow  
13 the direction I think is will there be, will there be  
14 classes that are remote and classes that are in person,  
15 there won't be any hybrid? I would.

16 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: No, the three, the  
17 three, we are going to have online, hybrid and in  
18 person and we actually have an investment to, uh, what  
19 they call high flex classrooms which allows you to  
20 have the class with some students physically there and  
21 some online. Um, and to again, to add flexibility to  
22 the menu of options.

23 KEITH POWERS: And I, I, I was joking about  
24 my last question, this might be my last question, have



1  
2 you taken any polling or anything of students to figure  
3 out exactly where they might be in terms of preference.

4           FELIX MATES RODRIGUEZ: The, the, yes we  
5 have, the, the current thing is, that um, and I think  
6 many of you are facing this in the Council too. You  
7 know thing are changing every two weeks, right, so the  
8 last poll we took was open two days right before the  
9 governor said all those schools, all universities in  
10 the, in the State of New York, need to, uh, require  
11 students to be vaccinated, right? So that changes the  
12 whole set of questions. Um, so we are working on  
13 getting another poll after that to capture, um, both,  
14 but what we had basically is what I tell you. We had  
15 students that, uh, uh, really wanted to be in person,  
16 mostly in person and we have students who wanted to,  
17 um, even if they were vaccinated, they wanted the  
18 flexibility of online. So, I think our duty is to  
19 have a diverse menu for this fall and moving forward.

20           KEITH POWERS: Got it, all right thank you.  
21 Thanks for the answer to the questions.

22           CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Chair Dromm are  
23 you there?

24           CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah, I'm sorry.  
25 I thought Counsel was going to call you Chair Barron,

1  
2 um, and so Chair Barron why don't you? I know you  
3 have some questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Yes, thank you.  
5 I didn't want to just step in and, uh, and take over  
6 but I didn't see you or hear you so I just didn't.

7 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: No, you're,  
8 you're welcome to take over.

9 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you so much.  
10 Um, I'm going to be extremely brief and ask that you  
11 also be extremely brief in your answers. Um, first,  
12 responding to, this is not for you, but first  
13 responding to the comment by my colleague, Council  
14 Member Landers, yes, I think we do need to look at  
15 taking some action, um, regarding the reluctance,  
16 the resistance and the recalcitrant of making any  
17 subsequent change to increasing the black and brown  
18 student population at Hunter College High School and  
19 I'm excited about exploring what can be done but  
20 getting back to the budget question, the Committee  
21 requests a comprehensive excel break out including all  
22 of the Federal Funding by Aid package for a Fiscal  
23 year, cross walked by Community College and we would  
24 like to have that by the end of next week and it needs  
25 to be crystal clear for me and the body moving in to

1 negotiations so that we can support what it is that  
2 we want to have restored and clarified in the budget  
3 and make sure there is no slight of hand. So, we  
4 expect that, will you be able to do that for us by the  
5 end of next week?  
6

7 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Great, thank you  
9 so much and in your needs, there was, uh, a new  
10 initiative. The institute for state and local  
11 government, the National Network for Safe Communities  
12 to end gun violence and the people's police academy.  
13 Can you very succinctly tell us about these, uh, and  
14 which agency would be working with these, uh,  
15 initiatives and is there any relation to increasing  
16 any funding to the police department based in any of  
17 these initiatives.

18 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: If you have that  
19 information, I don't have it off hand so maybe we can  
20 provide that to you?

21 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, these are, uh, you  
22 know the funding for the institute for institute for  
23 government and, and both the people's police academy  
24 was added to CUNYs budget. Uh, the people's policy  
25 academy is part of Medgar Evers college and they are

1 providing services to various precincts throughout the  
2 City, um, and the ISB, the Institute for Stable Local  
3 Governance, the ISLG will be providing service and  
4 expertise, on, a the police on, at the police reform  
5 initiatives, um, that the, that the Mayor's Office is,  
6 is putting forth.

8 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Well, I certainly  
9 want to be a part of that and have some conversation  
10 about that because when we had the, uh, police report  
11 bill brought before us. It was a lot of discussion.  
12 People felt it was not grassroots based. They felt  
13 that there was not a respect for the ideas of how to  
14 really have a body that will be, in fact, held  
15 accountable for their misdeeds and misconduct and this  
16 tinkers around the edge and does not really get to the  
17 heart of that which is why I have introduced the Police  
18 Accountability Act which says that we should eliminate  
19 the CCRB, have an elected body to review police conduct  
20 and also have an independent prosecutor but that's a  
21 whole another heading and, uh, we will look for the  
22 answers that you give us for the questions in more  
23 detail. Particularly if there is any kind of  
24 additional funding that would go to the police from  
25 this project that's moving forward and lastly, uh,

1  
2 for, well, there's also a Medgar Evers College  
3 healthcare pipeline and how many full time staff will  
4 be hired in connection to this program and how many  
5 students will be involved and are they only students  
6 enrolled at Medgar so if you don't have that, you can  
7 send that to us, we would be happy to get that answer  
8 and finally here are 13 projects that are expected to  
9 be completed. And what would be the total value of  
10 all projects completed in Fiscal 2021?

11 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: So I, I think we  
12 will also come back to you, uh, and on the Me-, on the  
13 Medgar, uh, it would be Anchor and Medgar so mostly  
14 for those students but students can transfer anywhere  
15 in the system. So.

16 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Right. Thank  
17 you.

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: And, and Chair Barron,  
19 I, the, the, uh, the value of the 13 projects completed  
20 was \$124 million in the current Fiscal year.

21 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thank you so  
22 much. Um.

23 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: You're welcome.

24 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Um, thank you  
25 to the panel for indulging us and thank you to the

1 Chair for extending additional time. Um, thank you so  
2 much.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay thank you  
5 very much and, um, we are going to end it here. I  
6 really appreciate you coming and staying with us,  
7 Chancellor Rodriguez and I look forward to continuing  
8 to work with you. I want to say what a pleasure it  
9 has been working with you I guess almost for 12 years  
10 now if I'm not mistaken, uh, but, uh, I really look  
11 forward to continuing our last seven months, my seven  
12 months anyway in the Council with you and with CUNY,  
13 so we appreciate that and we thank you again for coming  
14 in.

15 FELIX MATAS RODRIGUEZ: The feeling is  
16 mutual. Thank you to both Chairs for your support and  
17 your commitment. You are awesome.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you.  
19 (SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE).

20 CHAIRPERSON INEZ BARRON: Thanks.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay and uh, uh,  
22 we are going to now move directly in to our hearing  
23 with the Board of Elections. Um, and so just give us  
24 a couple of minutes to get set up and then we will  
25

1 start but everybody should stay in this room. Sgt. I  
2 am ready whenever you are ready.  
3

4 SGT. BIONDO: Chair Cabrera?

5 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Ready sir.

6 SGT. BIONDO: Okay and the Board of  
7 Elections would you like to do a sound check before we  
8 get going?

9 DAWN SANDOW: Good afternoon.

10 SGT. POLITE: We hear you loud and clear,  
11 thank you very much. Okay, it looks like we are good  
12 to go.

13 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Thank you  
14 very much Sgt. Polite. Good afternoon and welcome to  
15 the City Council's eighth day of hearings. (Coughing).  
16 Excuse me, I'm sorry on the Mayor's Executive Budget  
17 for Fiscal '22. My name is Daniel Dromm and I Chair  
18 the Finance Committee. We just heard from CUNY and we  
19 will now hear from the Board of Elections. We are  
20 joined by the Committee on Governmental Operations,  
21 chaired by my colleague Council Member Fernando  
22 Cabrera. I understand that, um, in the interest of  
23 time he and I will both forego an opening statement  
24 and I believe that the Board of Elections also is not  
25 going to be making an opening statement so that will

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1 lead us right in to questions, um, but we do have  
2 to swear you in so I am going to ask, um, Counsel to  
3 swear in, Dawn Sandow, Deputy Director, Deputy  
4 Executive Director for the Board of Elections, uh,  
5 and Counsel will you do that now?  
6

7 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL:  
8 Absolutely. Just a few procedural items, um, this is  
9 a reminder that everyone will be muted until recognized  
10 to speak, at which time you will be unmuted by the  
11 Zoom host. If you mute yourself after you've been  
12 unmuted, you will need to be unmuted again by the host.  
13 Please be aware that there could be a delay with the  
14 muting and unmuting so please be patient. Now with  
15 the affirmation. Deputy Executive Director Sandow, do  
16 you affirm that your testimony will be truthful to the  
17 best of your knowledge, information and belief?

18 DAWN SANDOW: I do.

19 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
20 you. You may begin when ready.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. I don't  
22 think you are going to make an opening statement so  
23 let me just, um, jump right in to, um, I am going to  
24 announce who is here first and then I'll jump in to  
25 questions, um. We have been joined by Council Members



1  
2 Darma Diaz, Maisel, Yeger, Kallos, Powers, and  
3 Cornegy. And, um, let me also apologize for being  
4 behind. It's that time of year for us with Budgets  
5 and there is just so much we can do in such a little  
6 time, but anyway, I thank you for being here. My  
7 first question is around absentee ballot reforms. The  
8 state's Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget includes a  
9 proposal for absentee ballot reforms which aims to  
10 extend the time voters have to request an absentee  
11 ballot and ensures a quick turnaround of a request.  
12 What if any operational impacts would this proposal  
13 have on the DOE if enacted and do you anticipate this  
14 proposal having a financial impact on DOE? And if so,  
15 could you provide us with an estimate?

16 DAWN SANDOW: Um, we don't see it having any  
17 impact on the Board. Um, we already now deal with  
18 special elections and the deadline is 10 days prior to  
19 the election. And, it all comes down to the data files  
20 and the data being transferred over to our poll pads.  
21 We don't see any impact.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank you  
23 and let me compliment you. I think it was, it's your,  
24 your website if I'm not mistaken, um, about requesting  
25 an absentee ballot, um, which I did do and folks,

1  
2 folks should know that it is available just by going  
3 to the website or I think you have an app now. Can  
4 you give us a little advertisement on that?

5 DAWN SANDOW: Um, we have, uh, updated our  
6 website continuously as election changes, have, have  
7 evolved, and, uh, we have all information on RCB for  
8 this year's election in all required languages, two  
9 page ballot, all about deadlines, um, voter guides,  
10 uh, PSAs, um, as far as the absentee portal, if you  
11 are registered in the City of New York, you can go  
12 right in to absentee voting, put in your information.  
13 It gives you, once you have confirmed, it gives you a  
14 confirmation number which then you can use to track  
15 your ballot. It then tells you each process of where  
16 the ballot is, vendor, mailed and out to the voter.

17 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And, uh, can you  
18 give us the deadlines, uh, for the absentee ballot in  
19 particular?

20 DAWN SANDOW: The deadline is, to apply for  
21 an absentee ballot?

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes.

23 DAWN SANDOW: Seven days before the  
24 election.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: So, people have  
3 up until seven days before the election to apply?

4 DAWN SANDOW: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And they should  
6 get it in the mail and then how long do they have to  
7 return it? Obviously, it, how long would they have to  
8 return it?

9 DAWN SANDOW: They have up until Election  
10 Day. It has to be.

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: It has to be  
12 postmarked. Uh-huh, okay. What, uh, other preparation  
13 have you made for absentee ballots? Um, is there any  
14 other things that you could tell us about that?

15 DAWN SANDOW: Yes, um, well, since the,  
16 uh, since last year, actually, uh, during COVID for  
17 the Executive Orders, we basically in about a month  
18 and a half had our portal up and running. That's,  
19 that's one. Number two is the absentee ballot voting  
20 equipment that we procured which speeds up the process,  
21 especially since we had an enormous amount, uh, of  
22 absentees to deal with for the presidential. Um, we  
23 also have a cured department now where, uh, the  
24 absentee ballots if there is something that comes in  
25 and it can be cured, a voter receives three

1 communications from the Board, an email, a telephone  
2 call and a letter stating that, what the issue is with  
3 their, uh, absentee ballot and that they have a certain  
4 amount of time to be able to come in and cure that.  
5 Um, let me take a look at this. That's about, yeah, it  
6 has increased the amount of space that we need. We  
7 need clerical office, um, because the head counts had  
8 to increase, of course, for early voting and then  
9 absentee equipment in order to process all of these  
10 absentees. Not only did we hire, um, permanent  
11 employees for the early voting which was back in 2019,  
12 but now, with the increase of responsibility with the  
13 absentees and the amount, we have more seasonal workers  
14 as well and the equipment used also took up a  
15 tremendous amount of space. So, we are short  
16 on space in all five boroughs and the executive office  
17 as well.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: What type of  
20 space would you need? How large?

21 DAWN SANDOW: We would probably need,  
22 Jerry, it comes out to what?

23 JERRY: In terms of square footage?

24 DAWN SANDOW: Square footage. We are  
25 working with OMB on the square footage and DCAS and,

1 but it's been a while and, uh, I think I have it right  
2 here, just give me a minute. So, the Board is  
3 proposing 16,000 to 22,000 square feet added to the  
4 current borough offices, and 18,000 square feet in the  
5 Executive Office at 32 Broadway. Um, also because of  
6 COVID and all the Plexiglas partitions that have been  
7 installed in all the borough offices to keep our staff  
8 safe, that also took up a tremendous amount of  
9 room.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Let me talk  
12 a little bit around Rank Choice Voting. Can you  
13 describe the work that the DOE, uh, has done with the  
14 campaign finance board to ensure that voters are aware  
15 of the Rank Choice. Uh, what it is? And, uh, what  
16 voters will expect to see on the ballot?

17 DAWN SANDOW: Um, we've worked closely with  
18 the Campaign Finance Board to make sure that the  
19 message is consistent, although we were not mandated,  
20 we did a PSAs on our videos and a very diligent public  
21 education campaign, um, we did a mailing booklet to  
22 all registered voters, uh, and it levered space in our  
23 legally required information notice, um, to serve as  
24 educational and instructional on RCB, print and  
25 digital. The Board has taken out print and digital

1  
2 advertisements in local newspapers, citywide  
3 publications and all required newspapers in all five  
4 boroughs. The Board has amplified all our messages  
5 on our social media channels, um, like I previously  
6 said, the Board created PSAs in all five languages and  
7 placed them on our website and promoted said videos.  
8 Phone bank availability, the board had trained staff  
9 uh, to be able to answers FAQs on our CB. Voters can  
10 call 866-VOTENYC and a representative in all languages  
11 will be able to answer that question. Out of home  
12 advertisements, we have used digital ads, using  
13 linknycts across all five boroughs. Palm card  
14 distribution will be at all early vot-, uh, early  
15 voting sites and Election Day sites. We used them  
16 during the special election and the feedback that we  
17 received the palm card has all the information a voter  
18 needs and we received very good feedback on that. So,  
19 we are continuing with that. We also used the design  
20 of the palm card and created a 5 foot popup poster  
21 that will be prominently displayed at all sites which  
22 serves as an instructional tool for not only RCB but  
23 also an educational text on the two sheets, where it's  
24 applicable. Um, our privacy leads so when the voter  
25 comes and get bala-. It gets put into a privacy

1 sleeve, when they go over to the, um, all right. The  
2 privacy and they open up their, their sleeve. The  
3 instructions for RDC is right on the inside for them  
4 to follow. We also put a message on our scanners so  
5 that when the voters go to vote it's going to tell  
6 them to put in one ballot at a time so that they're  
7 not doing it too quickly. To decrease any kind of  
8 jams, and, um, I think that's about it. That's how  
9 public education.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Just to be sure,  
12 the, it's two pages, the ballot. Right?

13 DAWN SANDOW: In some places, yes. I think  
14 it only, I think in all.

15 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: You know, okay,  
16 so, uh they, they don't separate it, the pages. Am I  
17 right?

18 DAWN SANDOW: The way we are packaging the  
19 pages for our poll workers because we want to ensure  
20 that the poll workers are giving out two pages.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Right.

22 DAWN SANDOW: This will be packaged, they  
23 are not going to be connected because we don't want to  
24 have any issues. We see that when.

25 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Uh-huh.

1  
2 DAWN SANDOW: We don't use the, um,  
3 preparation, ballot jams go down. So, what we did it,  
4 they're not connected but there is page one, page two  
5 and then there's a division of blank page. So the,  
6 he poll workers know, first two pages, go to the  
7 voter, in to the privacy suite and the blank page  
8 gets put in to a recycling envelope. And then you  
9 are on to your next ballot packet.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: When you go to  
11 the scanner, you put in one, you put in one page at a  
12 time, is that how it works?

13 DAWN SANDOW: Yes and they will be, when  
14 you lift up the scanner there's going to be a message  
15 and it's going to say please put in sheet one and  
16 then it will say please wait and then please put in  
17 sheet two and then it will say thank you for voting.

18 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank you.  
19 Um, let me just go to, um, some questions now about  
20 early voting. How would the voting voters are aware  
21 of the early voting hours for the June primaries.

22 DAWN SANDOW: They're on our website and  
23 they are in all our advertisements.



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: And, do the  
3 hours differ at the different sites or how does that  
4 work?

5 DAWN SANDOW: No, the hours are the same  
6 across the board and the commissioners have voted to  
7 increase the hours by 10 so voters will have more of  
8 an opportunity, um, to vote, um, more hours. We  
9 also increased our early voting sites to 104 across  
10 the City.

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. I hope  
12 you'll add one more in Elmhurst. I think we are  
13 working on getting a letter to you for that because  
14 the only one at Elmhurst is at the Elk Lodge and it  
15 is kind of hard to get there but I'll talk with you  
16 more about that offline. I don't know if you've  
17 received anything on that yet?

18 DAWN SANDOW: No I haven't.

19 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Um, and  
20 so, so just to go back to the hours. I do want to do  
21 one of the standard hours from 9:00 to 5:00 or how  
22 does that work?

23 DAWN SANDOW: No. The hours differ. They  
24 are different on the weekends. I don't have, so I  
25 could read them at some point before we are done here.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON  
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Um, we have two late nights during the week, um, which  
is mandated.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay so, so how  
many days?

DAWN SANDOW: Hello. I'm going to read  
this to you, Saturday and Sunday is 8:00 a.m. to 5:00  
p.m. Monday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday 10:00  
a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Wednesday is 10:00 a.m. to 8:00  
p.m. Thursday is 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Friday is  
7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00  
p.m. Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00. A 10-hour increase  
from 2020.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, great.  
Now, um, I know that in the 2020 election, the General  
Election, many New Yorkers waited in line for hours.  
Um, are there any steps that you've taken to decrease  
the waiting time and, um, reduce it to less than 30  
minutes to vote?

DAWN SANDOW: Yes, so we added the extra  
hours of voting. We added more poll sites, 104 across  
the City.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: That's for the,  
I'm sorry that's for the General, the, um, the regular  
Election Day sites?

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1  
2 DAWN SANDOW: Yes. Well Election Day  
3 sites, the hours are the same, the hours are 6:00 a.m.  
4 to 9:00 p.m.

5 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: No, but I mean,  
6 the, um, do you have?

7 DAWN SANDOW: Do you have over 12 for  
8 Election Day?

9 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: You said you  
10 added more sites?

11 DAWN SANDOW: For early voting.

12 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay.

13 DAWN SANDOW: Are you talking about just  
14 Election Day?

15 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, just for  
16 Election Day, I was wondering about that?

17 DAWN SANDOW: There are, there are added  
18 sites for Election Day more than in the general  
19 election, we actually have line management workers  
20 which we used in 2020, which was a positive. Line  
21 management will be directing voters that come in with  
22 an absentee ballot to go directly to an absentee ballot  
23 box that's located strategically in the poll site. We  
24 will also be helping, um, voters online if they are.  
25 We are hoping they are not but if they are, helping

2 them to go to their specific ED if they don't know it.  
3 An information notice that is sent out to the voter is  
4 with a Fast Pass Tag and they are able to take that  
5 tag to the voting site. It's contactless voting but  
6 it speeds up the process. Here's a picture of what  
7 one looks like.

8 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: It's hard to  
9 see. Yeah.

10 DAWN SANDOW: Okay there's a code here and  
11 when the voter goes to the ED table, this card gets  
12 placed into a square box on a mat right underneath the  
13 call pad and the voter's information immediately comes  
14 up so they don't have to touch anything.

15 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay.

16 DAWN SANDOW: Um, we will be using, the,  
17 um, pens that also have, and it's a stylus and a pen  
18 and they will be able to keep those pens so they don't,  
19 you know, so there's no using other people's pens, um,  
20 so we've speeded up the process that way. Line  
21 management.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Good, good.

23 DAWN SANDOW: Fast Pass Tag, um, having  
24 people work the lines for the poll pad. Um, we have  
25 people inside as well that will be directing people

1 where to go. We've added quite a, an enormous amount  
2 of li-, line management workers, um, in each site.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Thank  
5 you. I am going to turn it over to my, my Co-Chair  
6 Cabrera.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you  
8 so much, uh, Chair Dro-, first let me thank you Chair  
9 Dromm, I don't think people realize for those that are  
10 just tuning in how many hours. You're literally in  
11 every Executive Budget hearing and not just for this  
12 year, you've done it every year you've been the Chair  
13 so I salute you and great job. Um, you're such a  
14 gentleman and I'll honor you today.

15 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Uh, it's,  
17 it's my joy. Uh, Deputy Director, I have a few  
18 questions here. Welcome and I want to thank your team.  
19 You guys did an, under the circumstances last year, a  
20 phenomenal job dealing, um, with, uh, elections under  
21 the context of the pandemic. So, I salute you and all  
22 the staff, uh, amazing job. All right I want to start,  
23 uh, with Rank Choice Voting Software. Um, for a quick  
24 question I'm going to put them all together for the  
25 sake of time because I know we have to get you out

1 here before 6:00 and we apologize again for the late  
2 start, but to your knowledge has the State Board  
3 identify any significant technique or issues with the  
4 software? When do you anticipate the Board to complete  
5 the certification process? How will, how will the BOE  
6 proceed if the State Board do not certify this software  
7 in time for the joint primaries? And what type of  
8 Cybersecurity measures are in place to ensure the  
9 security of the RCB tabulation software?  
10

11 DAWN SANDOW: Uh, first the New York City  
12 Board and the New York State Board have been working  
13 very closely. Um, we are not aware of any of technical  
14 difficulties or significant technical issues with the  
15 software. Um, it is our understanding and belief that  
16 the State Board expects to take action on approving,  
17 because it's not a certification, it's an approval,  
18 they will be approving the process of the RCV software  
19 at their next meeting on Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Uh-huh.

21 DAWN SANDOW: As mandated by the City  
22 Charter if we don't have, which I am, I don't even  
23 want to say it because it looks like everything was  
24 moving smoothly but if we don't have the software as  
25 mandated by the City Charter we will move forward as

1 we have in the past by, uh, doing a manual canvas as  
2 we did with all the specials.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: And  
5 Cybersecurity measures?

6 DAWN SANDOW: Cybersecurity, we, we work  
7 closely with Do It and also Byte Right Amandine. We  
8 are looking to, um, increase a head count here at the  
9 Board, for, not just RCVs but for all of the changes  
10 to elections. It's important to note that as  
11 technology increases, also the threat of Cybersecurity  
12 increases. So, um, we are replacing staff because we  
13 would like to have a, uh, Cybersecurity Unit here in  
14 the general office and also units in each borough.  
15 Um, I can send you, I don't know if I have it, I  
16 believe I do. But, um, the actual amount I think we've  
17 requested 16, uh, new employees for that specific unit  
18 its Cybersecurity Unit working with Early Voting.  
19 There is going to be, well, they say there is a Bill  
20 that's going to have some day Voter Registration  
21 which means our, our, um, firewall things have to be  
22 protected because that's going to be in real time data  
23 files that will be uploaded. Um, so there needs to  
24 be, uh, a Cybersecurity Unit here in order to protect  
25 the agency. Um, it would be, 6 positions would be

1 embedded within the EDS Unit which is our early voting  
2 system, our MIS Department, um, for our general office  
3 operations, uh, Senior Security Analysis and engineers  
4 and network implementation engineers. The remaining 10  
5 positions we would deploy to the five boroughs as  
6 supervisors of the newly created borough canvassing  
7 units dedicated to conducting daily routine  
8 Cybersecurity checks and implementing necessary  
9 upgrades as new technology evolves.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Well, I  
12 appreciate that answer in light of what we just say  
13 happen, uh, down south with the, with the pipeline and  
14 the last thing that we need in this very important  
15 election, um, to have a nightmare situation. I wanted  
16 to ask you this anyway to use the software, if the  
17 State Board does not approve it, uh, hand counting of  
18 this, that would take I would imagine a month at  
19 least. Uh, so, is there any way to use it without their  
20 approval? Or is that something that you have to have  
21 the approval?

22 DAWN SANDOW: We have to have their  
23 approval.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: All right,  
25 some, some people have been saying that it may take up



2 to 10 rounds to determine a winner in the RCV  
3 elections? Can you clarify that is true or not? I,  
4 I think I know the answer to that, but just so we can  
5 have it on the record. And also, uh, has ESS met, met  
6 its contractual obligations?

7 DAWN SANDOW: Yes ESS has met its  
8 contractual obligations, yes, and it can take up to 10  
9 rounds for RCV.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: It could.

11 DAWN SANDOW: Yes it could.

12 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: It could and  
13 what's, what's the implication of that?

14 DAWN SANDOW: Well, the implication is  
15 timing. You know, it takes time. I mean everybody has  
16 to remember that it's going to be the same process on  
17 Election night. You're going to get your unofficial  
18 results, which we always do. And then there's the  
19 seven day which is normal. We get, you know have to  
20 wait for our absentee ballots to come back. Um, it  
21 proceeds from there, that's where the change takes  
22 place a little bit. Um, absentees are due back. The  
23 election is the 22<sup>nd</sup>, so I think absentees are due back  
24 the 29<sup>th</sup>. Um, if there is any absentee that comes back  
25 that needs a cure letter, of course, they're going

1  
2 to get a letter, they're going to get a telephone  
3 call, they're going to get an email, we have to wait  
4 for that to come back. The voter, we have to wait  
5 seven days for the voter to respond which then takes  
6 us to July 9<sup>th</sup> and let's hope that there are no cure  
7 letters that have to go out but it would take us until  
8 July 9<sup>th</sup> and its seven business days that we have to  
9 wait, it's not seven days. So, considering we have a  
10 Federal Holiday, also the 4<sup>th</sup> of July that falls on the  
11 5<sup>th</sup>. It would take us to start running the rounds the  
12 week of July 12.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: The week of  
14 July 12<sup>th</sup>, but if, help me understand if just for  
15 clarification, since this is.

16 DAWN SANDOW: Once, once all the rounds,  
17 once all the data is received, uh, the software will  
18 make the rounds go very quickly. It will flow very  
19 quickly.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: That's what  
21 I was going to ask.

22 DAWN SANDOW: It will flow very quickly.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: So, really  
24 it's not.

25 DAWN SANDOW: I mean that's the software.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: You know the  
3 day, it's not really about the software, uh, the delay  
4 at all is all about, and you know waiting for the  
5 absentee ballots, etc. everything else that you have  
6 mentioned.

7 DAWN SANDOW: Correct

8 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: But the  
9 software it's just a matter of.

10 DAWN SANDOW: Right.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Pushing a  
12 button and then you go it?

13 DAWN SANDOW: Rights. Its statutory  
14 requirements, that's what it is.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Got it, let  
16 me move quickly here because I want to let my  
17 colleagues, uh, be able to jump in. Uh, can you share  
18 with us how much has been spent on Early Voting in  
19 Fiscal 2021 to date, how much you are anticipating  
20 will be spent on Early, Early Voting fully during the  
21 2021 citywide primary election? Does BOE believe that  
22 the funding allocated in Fiscal 2022 is enough to cover  
23 the cost associated with the 2021 and 2022 election  
24 cycle? And do you estimate you will require additional  
25 in Fiscal 2022?

1  
2 DAWN SANDOW: Um, so for early voting in  
3 Fiscal year 2021 to date, an estimated \$18.5 million  
4 has been spent on early voting. Um, the November  
5 General Election was roughly \$16 million for early  
6 voting. The Board also conducted five special  
7 elections in Fiscal year 2021, the Bronx City Districts  
8 11, 12, and 15, Queens City Council 24 and 31. The  
9 cost for each of these events for early voting is an  
10 estimated \$500,000 for a total of \$2.5 million. Um,  
11 we anticipate to spend early voting solely during the  
12 June 2021 citywide primary, um, between \$9 and \$11  
13 million, that's an estimate. Uh, that's on poll  
14 worker, public education, training, ballots,  
15 equipment, election supplies, PPE and RCV. Um, as far  
16 as the funding that's been allocated to us, um, do we  
17 have enough to cover? We most certainly do and we would  
18 definitely, um, as we are sitting here today, I would  
19 be remiss not to mention, uh, and to state that the  
20 Board is very thankful for the Budget that we received.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you  
22 Deputy Director for the straight to the point answers.  
23 I have two more categories but I want to let my  
24 colleagues uh, be able to ask their questions and if,  
25 hopefully I'll have time for this last little question,

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2 if not, I will definitely submit it. Uh, so with  
3 that I'll turn it over to Chair Dromm for questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Actually, I'm  
5 just going to ask Counsel to call, the Council Members  
6 who have questions.

7 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure.  
8 If any Council Member has questions, please use the  
9 Zoom Raise Hand Function. Council Members please keep  
10 your questions to five minutes including answers.  
11 Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to let you know  
12 when your time begins. The Sergeant will then let you  
13 know when your time is up. We will now hear from  
14 Council Member Powers.

15 SGT. PILOT: Time starts now.

16 KEITH POWERS: Hello. Sorry about that,  
17 thank you Chair, thank you everyone. Uh, thank you  
18 Board of Elections. Um, I wanted to talk about how  
19 Rank Choice Voting for a second as we are on the, uh,  
20 verge of a very, very big election and not the first  
21 time but obviously, one of the biggest time that we  
22 are going to be use Rank Choice Voting and it's going  
23 to be a big learning experience, I think for a lot of  
24 folks in the future about how it works and how voting,  
25 behavior, works. What I am kind of curious about that

1  
2 is how we are going to see the results after an  
3 election day. And maybe you can just start by walking  
4 me through. I want to get the status of the small  
5 flare being approved for, to make this work rapidly  
6 and I think you guys have done timing a little bit but  
7 I am really kind of most interested of exactly how we  
8 are going to see the different iterations on voting  
9 rounds happening and what will be released to the  
10 public. So, can you just give me A and I couple up  
11 questions but Addy just to step out against on the  
12 software being used here and second is, uh, how New  
13 Yorkers will see the different rounds take place and  
14 whether we will get round by round information or we  
15 will see just the final results.

16           DAWN SANDOW: Um, well there have been  
17 alternative, um, plans put together and I think that  
18 once we receive approval on Tuesday, discussions of  
19 course will be made in public as to how we are going  
20 to proceed, um, as far as what the public is going to  
21 be able to see. Like I said to, um, Chair Cabrera you  
22 will see unofficial results and that is for early  
23 voting and Election Day results as we normally have  
24 seen. As far as the alternatives, uh, that's something  
25 the Commissioners will have to improve, I believe that

1  
2 in the next coming week or so they will be discussing  
3 that in public.

4 KEITH POWERS: Discussing, what, what in  
5 public?

6 DAWN SANDOW: The alternatives of what, of  
7 what is going to be released, the timing of the  
8 release, that will be discussed as soon as the approval  
9 on Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>.

10 KEITH POWERS: And of, and one of the  
11 questions that I had, um, about this election and then  
12 others have asked me is whether you release the capital  
13 record here of, um, um, which shows like how each  
14 ballot ranked each, uh, choice, whether you will be  
15 releasing that?

16 DAWN SANDOW: That hasn't been determined  
17 yet but I do think that will be part of the discussion.

18 KEITH POWERS: Okay, so you when, and when  
19 does that decision get made?

20 DAWN SANDOW: Uh, in the next few weeks.

21 KEITH POWERS: Okay, then next few weeks is  
22 the elections, so what do we have a time?

23 DAWN SANDOW: I, I believe that the  
24 commissioners are waiting for Tuesday for the approval  
25 and then the discussion will start regarding the

1  
2 alternatives to releasing information and what  
3 information will be released.

4 KEITH POWERS: And what is the deadline to  
5 make a decision on that?

6 DAWN SANDOW: I would think in the next  
7 coming week we would probably have a, have a decision.  
8 I believe this will be discussed on Tuesday; however,  
9 I don't want to set an exact date to it. I know that  
10 their, their meeting is before ours. Their meeting,  
11 the State Board is meeting at 12 noon and we should  
12 have our answers before we go in to our public session  
13 at 1:30, so I'm hoping for a discussion regarding the  
14 alternatives on Tuesday.

15 KEITH POWERS: Okay and then the, this was  
16 not released, the primary, I mean, sorry the Special  
17 Election, today. Is that correct?

18 DAWN SANDOW: I'm sorry, can you repeat  
19 that?

20 KEITH POWERS: I said that data was not  
21 released for the special elections that have been taken  
22 place to date, is that correct?

23 DAWN SANDOW: Correct.  
24  
25



1  
2 KEITH POWERS: Okay, so, but there is a  
3 potential possibility it would be available for this  
4 June's election, depending on what happens next week?

5 DAWN SANDOW: Correct.

6 KEITH POWERS: Is that correct? Okay.  
7 Um, and um, what, do you see other constraints or  
8 concerns ahead? I mean I'm concerned about the timing  
9 here, exactly a month away from Primary Day. Do you  
10 see other constraints or concerns right now in terms  
11 of timing or resources to, um, um, implement  
12 successfully Rank Choice Voting?

13 DAWN SANDOW: No, no, I'm confident, I'm  
14 confident in the board. Um, we did wait and we had  
15 reasons for waiting to start out public campaign and  
16 it started in January. The reason why we waited was  
17 because we had a special election that was not Rank  
18 Choice Voting in December. We did not want to confuse  
19 voters but since January, we hit the ground running,  
20 um, and we've worked closely with the administration,  
21 we've worked closely with CFP, we've worked with the  
22 governing groups. Um, 2 and 4. Excuse me?

23 KEITH POWERS: I said my times expired, you  
24 can keep going.

1  
2           DAWN SANDOW: I'm sorry. To ensure that  
3 the RCV information gets out there and we've worked  
4 very hard on keeping the message consistent and making  
5 sure that the voters for early voting and election day  
6 are going to walk in to the poll site, they will see  
7 a 5 foot poster which gives direction for RCV, they  
8 will be handed a ballot and a palm card with the same  
9 information and they will also receive the privacy  
10 sleeve with their ballot so that when they do go to  
11 the privacy booth they have all the information right  
12 there. We are going to have people at the sites that  
13 are going to be able to go and direct them to our PSA,  
14 some people do better with watching visually which is  
15 why they did the PSAs in all the required languages  
16 than they do reading something. So we will have people  
17 at the sites with tablets for that if anyone comes  
18 over and has any questions.

19           KEITH POWERS: And can I just do one more  
20 question, sorry to take more time but why, why does it  
21 take 20 days after the primary to start counting the  
22 votes from Ranked Choice Voting.

23           DAWN SANDOW: Can you repeat the question,  
24 I'm sorry.

1  
2 KEITH POWERS: As I understand it would take  
3 20 days after Ranked, after Election Day to start  
4 counting the Ranked Choice Voting, is that correct?

5 DAWN SANDOW: Well, that all depends. Um,  
6 because of the statutory requirement with the  
7 absentees, it depends if we receive an absentee ballot  
8 that needs to be cured. We have to wait for that to  
9 be returned. Like I, I previously said the election  
10 is the 22<sup>nd</sup> and voters and the public will receive  
11 unofficial results but we have to wait the second days  
12 for absentee ballots to be returned also, we may  
13 receive the following day an absentee ballot  
14 postmarked on Election Day. Every vote has to count.  
15 We must keep the privacy of the voter, intact as well,  
16 and that's when we start going over all absentee, that  
17 whole week that process affidavits are done. All of  
18 these are done preliminary before the actual canvas  
19 starts. So, if we receive on the 29<sup>th</sup> or the 30<sup>th</sup> an  
20 absentee ballot that needs a Cure it's going to have  
21 to, the voter will receive a phone call, the voter  
22 will receive an email, the voter will receive a letter  
23 as well stating that we can cure and fix their ballot.  
24 We then have seven days for that voter to respond to  
25 us, so that can be immediately or that can be seven

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1 days later, and it's seven business days, it does not  
2 include weekends which can take us to the 9<sup>th</sup> of July.

3  
4 KEITH POWERS: So now it's July 12, we have  
5 everything you need.

6 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: I'm sorry,  
7 uh, Council Member we are going to have to move  
8 forward. It's my last question I just want fair  
9 timing. They have to leave by, they have to leave by  
10 3 o'clock and I still have another Council Members  
11 that wanting to.

12 KEITH POWERS: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: I'm so sorry.

14 DAWN SANDOW: I can answer your questions  
15 offline if you have any just, we are always available.

16 KEITH POWERS: I appreciate that. Thank  
17 you so much.

18 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will  
19 now hear from Council Member Adams.

20 SGT. POLITE: Time starts now.

21 ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very much, uh  
22 Chairs Dromm, marathon, my marathon hero here, my  
23 Finance Chair Dromm and Chair Cabrera, Co-Chair  
24 Cabrera, it's so great to see you as well. Thank you  
25 so much for the representatives from the BOE for being

1 here today and providing us your insight, uh, in your  
2 testimony today. My questions are, are very brief.  
3 Um, we, first of all I'd like to compliment all of  
4 the, um, all of the folks that have given training. I  
5 think the training has been exceptional, uh, regarding  
6 Rank Choice Voting, uh I think the training, the  
7 presenters have all been fantastic and still  
8 continuing to wrap up the training, um, in southeast  
9 Queens in my district as well as been on several of  
10 them. Um, even though I probably still can't give one  
11 by myself. But, um, I would like to compliment the  
12 trainers, um, for doing a great job. My concern still  
13 is, however, the, the timeliness of the training, um,  
14 the feedback that comes to people still feeling  
15 comfortable, um, with Rank Choice Voting and because  
16 Queens we had several, at least two or three elections  
17 already and looking at the feedback and the results  
18 from the recent election in Queens. Um, I'm still not  
19 getting a great feeling as far as the Voter's feelings,  
20 um, around utilizing Rank Choice Voting. Um, so I  
21 guess I just want to know how you feel. How confident  
22 are you, um, in the comfort of the voters? Um, in  
23 using Rank Choice Voting? Um, particularly since we've  
24 had a few trials with it. Um, I've seen the feedback  
25

1 in the press, um, and spoken to, you know, some of the  
2 candidates as well. It's been interesting. Um, I  
3 haven't seen anybody jumping up and down saying this  
4 is the greatest thing since sliced bread which is  
5 really what I wanted to hear. You know given my, my,  
6 um, very vocal apprehension around it, but, um, we are  
7 looking right now at a tremendous election coming up  
8 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and, uh, I'm worried for you, I'm worried  
9 for us, I'm worried for the office. How confident are  
10 you in voter's comfort with Rank Choice Voting? And  
11 I think that will be my only question. Thank you.

12  
13 DAWN SANDOW: Well, I'd, I'd like to go  
14 back to the special elections that took place in  
15 Queens, and, uh, I mean I feel that the canvas process,  
16 the transparency, um, was, we got nothing but  
17 complimented for it. Um, we didn't have any issues in  
18 Queens, nor did we have any in the Bronx with their  
19 Rank Choice Voting. I know it was a very small area,  
20 we are not talking citywide. Um, I think that between  
21 CFP, the Board of Election, the Mayor's Office, um,  
22 and other good governing groups, um, the message is  
23 out there and um, listen I think with change, change  
24 is very hard for people and it's scary. Um, you know  
25 a young generation will take to it with no problem.

1 We know that, we've seen that with the rollout in 2010  
2 of the scanners. You've seen, you know the generation  
3 of differences. Um, the young people were able to  
4 come and didn't have any issues, our issues were more  
5 seniors. We are trying to hit as many senior centers,  
6 I mean there's a lot of virtual, um, and webinars that  
7 are going on that we are partaking in. We are also  
8 partaking in webinars with the disability groups to  
9 reach out to those voters. Um, I'm confident; however,  
10 um, the reason why we have the five foot posters in  
11 every poll site, the reason why we are handing out  
12 palm cards, the reason why we are putting instructions  
13 inside the privacy suite is because we never hit 5.5  
14 million people with our message and we know that. So,  
15 we're preparing and that's our preparation. Whoever we  
16 didn't it is going to get hit when they come into the  
17 poll site with that information. whether they are  
18 going to read it on the five foot poster, whether they  
19 are going to get it from the palm card, it's going to  
20 be inside the privacy sleeve, or they're going to go  
21 over to our information clerk who does and will, you  
22 know not only the information clerk, line management,  
23 they will have tablets like I said. Not everybody can  
24 pick up by reading something so we will have the PSA  
25

1  
2 where we will be able to play a video for someone and  
3 actually they will be able to watch it and go through  
4 the whole process.

5 SGT. POLITE: Time expired.

6 DAWN SANDOW: So I think we're trying our  
7 best at all different angles to ensure that we hit all  
8 voters with our message for Rank Choice Voting and two  
9 page ballot.

10 ADRIENNE ADAMS: I appreciate your  
11 response. And I will just, um, reiterate the fact  
12 that I think the training is really good.

13 DAWN SANDOW: Thank you so much.

14 ADRIENNE ADAMS: And also I'm going to  
15 reiterate. You're welcome but I'm also going to  
16 reiterate my concern with the magnitude of what we are  
17 looking at right now on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. And, um, my hope is  
18 that we all get through this as painlessly as possible.  
19 Thank you for your testimony.

20 DAWN SANDOW: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
22 much. Chair Cabrera, do you want to wrap it up and.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Yes, I, I  
24 just want to thank you, um, um, Deputy Director for  
25 your information. We're going to be submitting, um,



1 the questions, I know you have to go to another meeting  
2 and, um, time has eluded us here. Um, but thank you  
3 again, um, for giving us an update and looking forward  
4 to Tuesday's response from, from the State to finally,  
5 hopefully we get this software approved. And so with  
6 that, thank you and I am turning it back to the  
7 Chair as we move now to CFB.

9 DAWN SANDOW: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you Chair  
11 Cabrera. Thank you very much Chair Cabrera. Um, this  
12 is going to end our sessions with the BOE. Let me  
13 just read this statement. Bear with me a moment. This  
14 will conclude this portion of today's hearing, thank  
15 you BOE for being here. We will now move on to the  
16 Campaign Finance Board. I ask my colleagues who will  
17 be joining us for the CFB portion of the hearing to  
18 remove in this r-, in this Zoom, um, and this might  
19 take a five minute break if I can, uh, and then we  
20 will come back. Okay? And give everybody time to get  
21 set up but in five minutes we will be back. Sergeants  
22 I'm back.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: We're ready.

24 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Chair.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: All systems  
3 said go.

4 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: All right. This  
5 is why I get a sergeant test their mics.

6 SGT. BIONDO: Yes, um, folks from CFB if  
7 we can test your audio.

8 AMY LOPREST: Okay. Do you want me to go  
9 first?

10 SGT. BIONDO: It's up to you. We hear you  
11 loud and clear. Thank you.

12 FREDRICK SCHAFFER: Fredrick Schaffer.

13 SGT. BIONDO: Yes Fredrick, we hear you  
14 load and clear, thank you very much. Is that all,  
15 the two of you? Okay, Chairs, it looks like we are  
16 ready to go.

17 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Chair Dromm,  
18 I'll, for the sake of time because I know we are way  
19 behind here, I'll, I'll forfeit my, uh, intro.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Very good  
21 and so will I. Let me get through this introduction  
22 here. Good afternoon and welcome to the City  
23 Council's Eighth day of hearings on the Mayor's  
24 Executive Budget for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel  
25 Dromm and I chair the Finance Committee. We previously

1  
2 heard from the Board of Elections and now we will hear  
3 from the Campaign Finance Board. We are joined by the  
4 Committee on Governmental Operations, Chaired by my  
5 esteem colleague, Council Member Fernando Cabrera,  
6 Cabrera. Let me just see if I have the names of those  
7 who have joined us, yes. Um, we have Council Member  
8 Adams, Ampry-Samuel, Ayala, Barron, Darma Diaz,  
9 Gibson, Koslowitz, and I'm sorry, Koslowitz was with  
10 us also for the Board of Elections, Louis, Riley,  
11 Rosenthal, Yeger and Minority Leader Matteo with us.  
12 And, um, now we are going to hear testimony from the  
13 Campaign Finance Board. We are going by Fredrick  
14 Schaffer, Chair of the CFB and Amy Loprest, CFB  
15 Executive Director. Um, but before we begin I'm going  
16 to turn it over to the Committee Counsel to go over  
17 some procedural items and to swear in the witness.

18                   STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
19 you Chair. I want to re-, remind everyone that you  
20 will muted until you are recognized to speak at which  
21 time you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you  
22 mute yourself after you've been unmuted, you will need  
23 to be unmuted again by the host. Please be aware that  
24 there could be a delay in muting and unmuting. I will  
25 now administer the affirmation. Do you affirm that

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1 your testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
2 knowledge, information and belief? Executive  
3 Director Amy Loprest?  
4

5 AMY LOPREST: Yes.

6 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And  
7 Chair Rick Schaffer?

8 FREDRICK SCHAFFER: Yes.

9 STEPHANIE RUIZ, COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank  
10 you. Ms. Loprest you may begin when ready.

11 AMY LOPREST: Thank you very much. Good  
12 afternoon Chair Cabrera, Chair Dromm and members of  
13 the Committee on Governmental Operations and Finance.  
14 I'm Amy Loprest, Executive Director of the New York  
15 City Campaign Finance Board with me today is Board  
16 Chair Fredrick Schaffer. Thank you for the opportunity  
17 to provide testimony on our Budget for Fiscal Year  
18 2022 and answer any questions you may have. CFBs  
19 Fiscal Year Budget request is \$72,422,974.00. It  
20 reflects a slight decrease in the personnel services  
21 and a slight increase in personal services. Please  
22 note that the budget includes approximately \$10.275  
23 million for printing and mailing a citywide voter guide  
24 for the 2021 General Election. The budget also  
25 includes \$40.8 million for public funds for the General

1 Election. Like other parts of the government, we were  
2 forced to rethink how we conduct our work during the  
3 COVID pandemic. Most of our staff was forced to adopt  
4 to remote work to conduct Voter Outreach for a crucial  
5 presidential election and administer the biggest  
6 election in the history of the matching program.  
7 Despite these challenges, CFB staff to abnormally  
8 perform their jobs at a high level and should be  
9 commended. In addition to the difficulties brought  
10 on by the COVID pandemic, 2021 was the first election  
11 cycle to fully incorporate changes from the Mayor's  
12 2018 Charter Vision Commission, will go on 01/28/2019  
13 and the Council's 2019 Charter Revision Commission.  
14 Some of the most significant changes include early  
15 disbursement of public funds and increase in the  
16 matching rate from 6:1 to 8:1 while also allowing  
17 candidates to run under the 6:1 system. An increase  
18 in public funds cap with larger payments and the  
19 mandate to implement a robust public education  
20 campaign providing choice voting. The 2021 election  
21 has been the largest in history of the matching funds  
22 program. At one point as many as 579 active candidates  
23 were registered with the CFB which is an all-time high.  
24 For reference, the previous high was 390 candidates in  
25

2001. With so many candidates running for office this year, work has increased substantially across the agency, particularly for on a candidate guidance and policy teams. To date, the CFB has paid out almost \$76 million to 250 candidates participating in the elections. That's another all-time high. To date, 104 candidates running for office in 2021 have received the maximum payment available under the law and 194 first-time candidates have received a public funds payment. There are two additional payment dates left before the June 22<sup>nd</sup> primary with an allocated total of \$96.5 million for public matching fund payments in the current Fiscal year. This year we have also rolled out technology improvements that handles the candidate with care and experience. As many of you know, we have recently launched the CFB portal to make it simpler for candidates, treasurers and campaign staff to keep track of campaign tasks and communication with the agency. The portal will make it easier for campaigns to update their registration information and to respond to compliance or an audit request. For future elections, it will all candidates in political committees to register online eliminating any paper forms. This is part of the first phase of a larger

1 project to overhaul our legacy database and update its  
2 technical infrastructure. Further we have made  
3 improvement to our NYC Let's Contribute Fundraising  
4 Platform including a new feature that allows campaigns  
5 to organize and report fundraising events using the  
6 system. At a time when in-person fundraising was nearly  
7 impossible we aimed to make online fundraising as  
8 seamless as possible. Between January 12, 2018 and  
9 April 30, 2021, 470 campaigns used NYC Let's  
10 Contribute. Over that same period, a total of \$14.5  
11 million was raised from almost \$224 contributions. We  
12 will continue to make enhancements to the platform  
13 throughout the Fiscal Year of 2022. An increase in  
14 the number of candidates running also calls for more  
15 expansion photo guide and debates program. As you know,  
16 the Federal Guidance mailed to every household with  
17 the registered voter in New York City. We have  
18 invested significant time and resources in re-  
19 designing the Federal Guide to engage as many New  
20 Yorkers as possible and to prominently feature  
21 information on Rank Choice Voting. Rank Choice Voting  
22 is featured on the cover of the Primary Election Voter  
23 Guide and includes tools that prompt voters to consider  
24 their rankings. We have also successfully completed  
25

1 work on our Video Voter Guide which includes America's'  
2 Sign Language Interpretations and was filmed,  
3 produced, and scheduled entirely remotely for the  
4 first time. Our debate program kicked off this month  
5 with the first Democratic Mayoral Debate on Thursday,  
6 May 13. The first Republican Mayoral Debate is  
7 scheduled for Wednesday May 26. With a diverse and  
8 expansive field of mayoral candidates, we added a third  
9 debate to the official schedule. Our Debate Partners  
10 have done a phenomenal job balancing the safety of  
11 candidates and their presumptive staff, while also  
12 making sure New Yorkers are presented with a meaningful  
13 discussion of the issues at stake in this year's  
14 election. In addition to incorporating RCV into our  
15 Voter Guide and debate program, the CFE has also  
16 conducted a carefully planned Voter Education Campaign  
17 to inform voters about Rank Choice Voting. To date,  
18 staff has conducted well over 100 training sessions  
19 with community groups, religious organizations, senior  
20 centers and elected officials training over 7,000 New  
21 Yorkers so far. Early returns suggest that our outreach  
22 is effective. According to surveys conducted by Common  
23 Cause New York and Rank the Vote NYC after special  
24 elections in Council Districts 24, 31, 11 and 15, the  
25



1 first to use Rank Choice Voting. 95% of respondents  
2 found the ballot simple and easy to use remaining true  
3 across gender and education levels. Further, over 75%  
4 of respondents was very, or somewhat familiar with  
5 Rank Choice Voting prior to casting a ballot. An  
6 additional 61% of respondents also ranked more than  
7 one candidate. As mentioned earlier, Rank Choice  
8 Voting will be featured permanently in our primary  
9 election Voter Guide. What do the \$2 million we are  
10 spending Rank Choice Voting will be dedicated to our  
11 advertising campaign which recent went in to full  
12 effect. Our ad campaign prominently displays Rank  
13 Choice Voting in public spaces like bus shelters,  
14 television and streaming services, radio, social media  
15 and community and ethnic print media. Before early  
16 voting begins, we will also kick off our volunteer led  
17 banks which will directly inform New Yorkers about  
18 Rank Choice Voting. To compliment this work, we have  
19 recently unveiled branding website updates to  
20 Voting.NYC website. The new design elements and  
21 digital tools are grounded in the needs, questions and  
22 issues that matter to New York City Voters which were  
23 identified and validated in research in early 2021.  
24 We are thrilled that the Mayor's Office has dedicated  
25

1  
2 an additional \$15 million in Rank Choice Voting  
3 Education Funding. Will help take from all levels of  
4 government to ensure New Yorkers know how to cast a  
5 Rank Choice ballot and we look forward to continuing  
6 our partnerships with Democracy NYC, the Civic  
7 Engagement Commission and the Board of Elections in  
8 the City of New York to get this important work done.  
9 The 2021 elections represent the first instance in our  
10 experience where the primary general elections are  
11 split across two Fiscal years. As we move ahead into  
12 Fiscal year 2021 our work administering the Public  
13 Matching Funds Program overseeing the Debate Program,  
14 General Election and produce the General Election  
15 Voter Guide which will include matter on at least two  
16 constitutional amendments. Our budget contains a  
17 slight increase in personal services and an increase  
18 in the cost of the Voter Guide. Overall, the Fiscal  
19 year 2022s Budget Request is over \$34 million lower  
20 than Fiscal Year 2021 primarily due to the anticipated  
21 decrease in the anticipated public funds  
22 dispersesment. Thank you again for the opportunity to  
23 testify and I am happy to answer any questions that  
24 you may have.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
3 much Executive Director Loprest. Let me start off by  
4 saying this is the, uh, final budget hearings that I  
5 will conduct as Chair of Finance Committee and I am  
6 term loaded out at the end of the year. However, I  
7 do want to thank the CFB for providing the funding as,  
8 in 2009 when I first ran as a participating member. I  
9 don't believe that I ever would have been able to have  
10 run if it were not for the, um, New York City Campaign  
11 Finance Funding that has been provided. So, I do  
12 want to thank you even though sometimes I was annoyed  
13 by your rules, but, uh, I don't think I would be where  
14 I am at if it wasn't for this fantastic program so  
15 thank you, thank you for your leadership and your  
16 direction as well.

17 AMY LOPREST: Well, thank you so much for  
18 your service over the past years. It's been really  
19 admirable.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very,  
21 very much, yeah, I wish it could be longer, but, uh,  
22 I'm in favor of, you know, of term limits, so, uh, I  
23 gotta move on. In view of the Executive Budget, uh,  
24 \$39.8 million more was allocated through the public  
25 funds matching program for Fiscal '22. Bringing the

1  
2 total budget for next year to \$40.8 million. According  
3 to checkbook New York City, the Board's current year  
4 commitment for the program total \$96.5 million and get  
5 its 2021 budget still only includes \$65.5 for the  
6 program. How much funding will be added to CFBs Fiscal  
7 2021 Budget for the public matching funds program and  
8 when will it be added.

9           AMY LOPREST: So, the, um, to, uh, very,  
10 the, the additional, I'm not going to do math in my  
11 head but if I can get to that \$20 million that has  
12 already been added to the CFBs Budget for the public  
13 fund, the final two public funds payments that will  
14 occur in Fiscal Year 2021. Anticipated a total of  
15 \$96.5 million in payments for the Fiscal 2021 for the  
16 primary election but also that included the payments  
17 for all of the special elections that occurred earlier  
18 this year.

19           CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, great and  
20 how does this relate to the Board's vote to raise the  
21 spending limit for participating Mayoral candidates in  
22 April 2021?

23           AMY LOPREST: Um, the increase in the  
24 spending limit, uh, does not, uh, does not come with  
25 an increase in public funds payments because, uh, the

1 Supreme Court's decisions, um, prevented you giving  
2 any additional public funds for, uh, increased  
3 spending so we can increase spending but we can't give  
4 any additional public funds, so, so there's no change  
5 in the maximum.  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Really no  
8 change. Okay. Okay

9 AMY LOPREST: The long and the short answer.

10 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Thank  
11 you. How does the funding for this program compare to  
12 the amount of independent spending in the election  
13 cycle so far?

14 AMY LOPREST: Well, you know again, the  
15 independent spending you know we will see is a filing  
16 day so we will see, um, you know the spending reported  
17 but. Um, I defer it if our chair has anything else to  
18 add, to you know to the answer but again we are  
19 expecting the disclosure today.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: I, I'm hearing  
21 there is going to be a lot of money so I'm looking  
22 forward to see what that looks like, um, later on  
23 once you can compile those figures. Chair, did you  
24 have anything? Chair Schaffer?

1  
2 FREDRICK SCHAFFER: No, just to point out  
3 the obvious which is that this is the first citywide  
4 campaign particularly for Mayor where we've seen very  
5 large amounts of independence. And it is also the  
6 first in which we've seen a prevalence of single  
7 candidate packs which raises some interesting  
8 questions that we will have to look at after the  
9 election cycle is over in terms of, um, how we may  
10 want to modify either the law or our agreements.

11 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes, I agree  
12 yeah. Some of the news stories that I was reading on  
13 that topic as well seemed to indicate the same thing,  
14 so, thank you.

15 AMY LOPREST: Of course, you know just  
16 point out that so far to date the Board has paid out  
17 \$24.5 million to 7 mayoral candidates, um, so that  
18 certainly will help combat the influence of that,  
19 those large independent spenders.

20 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah,  
21 absolutely. Um, does the Board have an opinion on  
22 whether the spending limit should be raised in  
23 instances where there a significant amount of  
24 independent spending in a race.

1  
2           AMY LOPREST: Um, again I think that that's  
3 an interesting question. I think it was looked at,  
4 in, you know previous years. I think that as Chair  
5 Schaffer said, this is the first year where we have  
6 seen you know really this increase and certainly the  
7 increase in single candidate, um, super packs. So, I  
8 think it is definitely one of the interesting factors  
9 that we will look at af-, at the end of the election.

10           CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay but not a  
11 definite opinion at this point?

12           AMY LOPREST: Um, not, I mean again I would  
13 like to make databased decisions and recommendations  
14 and I think that city council wise, when, when they  
15 passed the law and a provision that we review the  
16 program after every election and so I think that  
17 comprehensive review will be a place to really look at  
18 the spending and see if that, kind of change is  
19 warranted.

20           CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you.  
21 Okay. Can you provide us with a breakdown of the  
22 current Fiscal year, following the matching funds  
23 program budget in the local races?

24           AMY LOPREST: Okay, so um, I can, we have  
25 paid out so far, as I've said, we've paid out about

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\$20., \$23.5 million to, in the mayoral race. Um, we have paid out \$12.5, almost \$12.6 million in controller race, \$12 million in the, \$12.2 million in the borough president races and about \$27.6 million in the City Council races for a total of about \$76 million.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, thank you and what is the Board's estimated anticipated expenses with the matching funds program in Fiscal 2022? And is it different than the \$40.8 million that is already in the budget? Um, when, when do you expect that to be reconciled?

AMY LOPREST: So we, the \$40.8 million is what we anticipate paying out for the general election. So.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Oh.

AMY LOPREST: Um, so thank you for that, it does reflect our, our budget.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yeah so.

AMY LOPREST: Estimate for the general election.

CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay, alright thank you. Um, let's just say on April 28<sup>th</sup> Mayor de Blasio and Democracy New York City announced the \$15 million voter education campaign to inform New Yorkers



1 of Rank Choice Voting ahead of the June primaries. The  
2 funding will go to a citywide media campaign where  
3 language access and accessibility resources and direct  
4 outreach. Is Democracy New York City, City  
5 coordinating this campaign with what CFB is already  
6 doing?  
7

8 AMY LOPREST: So, yes, we have been working  
9 directly with Democracy NYC and will continue doing  
10 so, um, doing, you know working with them throughout  
11 the election year and we, um, we will continue to work  
12 with them to work with them to coordinate our messaging  
13 about Rank Choice Voting. I, and what has been spent.

14 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Um, thank you,  
15 do you expect to see any of that \$15 million?

16 AMY LOPREST: So, they have already spent  
17 about \$400,000 to amplify our advertising campaign.  
18 Um, you know why we have not, we haven't received any  
19 of that money directly we will, they will be amplifying  
20 our, our messages.

21 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Okay. Alright,  
22 thank you very much. I am going to turn it over to my  
23 Co-Chair, Chair Cabrera for other questions.

24 FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you so much, Chair  
25 Dromm and I share your sentiment, my especially someone

1 that was not familiar much with politics in 2009, the  
2 matching program, uh, really was a big reason why I am  
3 here especially in a district like mine, um, where it  
4 is very hard to raise funds. And so I, I'm a believer  
5 in the matching and I'm an even more believer in the  
6 8:1.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Um, Chair  
9 Cabrera, if I may say also we came in together and  
10 we've had a great tenure together. We were, uh, we  
11 were, uh, you know newbies together so.

12 FERNANDO CABRERA: It was fun. It's been  
13 a really good ride, Chair, it's been a really good  
14 ride, it's an honor, um, to be one of the only 51 New  
15 York City Council Member. I, I sometime, I still  
16 standing off of that privilege in the greatest nation  
17 on the planet earth and the pleasure of working with  
18 you. Um, and thank you for your leadership and my  
19 colleagues as well. I, I want to say, uh, Executive  
20 Director. Uh, first let me just, uh, commend you, on  
21 the RCV commercial. I saw it the other day. Uh, it was  
22 very good. I tell you a teenager, a younger person  
23 can really understand it and that was my biggest  
24 concern and when we had a hearing before I talked a  
25 lot about the marketing piece and television and I had

1 to salute you and your team, uh, not only that you  
2 have the commercial but how you put forth the  
3 commercial and so it, it leaves no doubt that anybody  
4 could really understand how it works and using  
5 television is a great way. And, and let me ask you a  
6 question, um, related to, the funding that we have  
7 received. Are we now and I'm basing this on the last  
8 hearing, now we are, we are putting more funds towards  
9 RCV education than any other municipality in the United  
10 States. I imagine that this is \$10 million that we  
11 are, but I would not want to say definitively, I'm,  
12 I'm not sure but I, I think probably you know with  
13 that addition the \$15 million I think is likely. I  
14 think that we are, around \$2.7 before and so my  
15 colleagues were concerned about that and I did the  
16 math when we were comparing to Oakland and San  
17 Francisco that we needed at least 6.7 to be able to  
18 match what they were doing and now we are 15. It leaves  
19 no doubt at least in my mind that at least we have the  
20 resources to utilize and I'm looking forward to seeing  
21 more of it, receive literature at home. I was going to  
22 ask you how much has the CFB spent to, spent to date?  
23 I don't know if you mentioned that before. If you did,  
24 I apologize.  
25

1  
2           AMY LOPREST: How much we sp-, I don't think  
3 we, I did mention how much we spent to date. I mean,  
4 I think that its, you know, we are starting our  
5 advertising and voter guide campaign, it's just, you  
6 know, it's just starting so, um, we will be spending,  
7 you know, aside from the amount that is spending from  
8 voter guide which you know include a lot of information  
9 about Rank Choice Voting. Um, we will be spending  
10 about \$2 million in outreach, which, uh, includes you  
11 know paid media campaign. Again as I mentioned on bus  
12 shelters, on social medial, on college and radio  
13 including the community and ethnic media, print media,  
14 and also that includes the amount that we are spending  
15 for our postcard mailing and out get out to vote text  
16 banks. So, I know, I know that I received, my RCV  
17 postcard in the mail yesterday and so I mentioned some  
18 of you have received yours. Again, that postcard and  
19 thanks to Legislation passed by the City Council has  
20 gone to every, um, every voter in the City of New York.

21           CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: I certainly  
22 received mine and, and I loved it. When do you  
23 anticipate, um, when do I, when shall we anticipate  
24 receiving the Voter's Guide.

1  
2           AMY LOPREST: Um, it should be going to the  
3 mail, towards the end of May and then arriving in  
4 people's mailboxes, you know, around the beginning of  
5 June. The online Voter Guide will be appearing, you  
6 know, beginning, uh, the beginning of June, so if you  
7 haven't received an online Voter Guide, which will,  
8 in addition to Voting.NYC which has some additional  
9 technical uh, enhancements to show you how Rank Choice  
10 Voting works. You can now look at that, it's live now  
11 and you can look at it and do a mock election, um, and  
12 practice Rank Choice Voting. When the online Voter  
13 Guide appears, you'll be able to look at your  
14 candidates and, and kind of keep track of ranking them  
15 the same ways there'll be tools for ranking your  
16 choices in the print Voter Guide.

17           CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: I know this  
18 is short notice but I was thinking about we literally  
19 run out of time and the, talking with BOE and no fault  
20 of, of their own at all. But I was thinking about is  
21 there, is there going to be a video to show you what  
22 to do when you get to the voting site. So, for example,  
23 the questions that we've been asking here today, we  
24 are elected officials, some of us are running. Uh, I  
25 can't imagine the public at large, right? Is it going

1 to be perforated? Is it you know, it's, a, if I bring  
2 the, the ID that was given to me. How do I used it?  
3 Do I use it at all? Is it possible to do a quick video  
4 that shows this is what, you know, each stage, uh,  
5 once they go to the voting site?  
6

7 AMY LOPREST: I did in addition to the  
8 portion that we have that you referenced. We also  
9 have a video that tells people exactly how to, to make,  
10 work their ballot. So it has, you know step by step.  
11 I understood and again I'm not going to speak for the  
12 Board of Election but I understood from what, um,  
13 Deputy Executive Sandow said is that they are going  
14 to, they have a video also that tells, and that they  
15 are going to have the facility to play that for people  
16 who, that it's more helpful than the printed materials  
17 that they are going to have available.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you for  
19 that. And the, the last special elections that we had  
20 here in the Bronx was at Queens Brooklyn. What  
21 percentage of people, Rank Choice?

22 AMY LOPREST: Well let me look. I have to  
23 look that up again. I think that, uh, I think it is,  
24 that's 61% of the voters ranked more than one  
25 candidate.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: What would  
3 you see as a win in this coming election, primary?  
4 What percent?

5 AMY LOPREST: You know I think that, um,  
6 you know I mean what, one thing is, is to make sure  
7 that people have a familiarity and again its hard to  
8 know. I mean it depends on the race, um, you know,  
9 obviously people should vote for the candidates that  
10 they want so if they, if they only, you know, like one  
11 candidate and they can vote for one single candidate  
12 in the race, but I think you know having people, you  
13 know having the utilization, you know that that 61%  
14 was very heartening to see that 61% of voters actually  
15 ranked more than one candidate. So, and I think that's  
16 great.

17 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Two quick  
18 question, you mentioned there is two more payment days,  
19 what are those days?

20 AMY LOPREST: Um, one is next Thursday. If  
21 I could look at my calendar, if you indulge me. If I  
22 can find the day, it's next Thursday, May, uh, 27<sup>th</sup> and  
23 the final payment is on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Um, and my  
25 last question is, you received \$15 million, if, uh,

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1 are you anticipating that you are going to use it all?  
2 Or are you just going to, just strategically move and  
3 see as the need arises, what do you anticipate?  
4

5 AMY LOPREST: No, I, again, this is \$2  
6 million in the Mayor's O-, the Democracy NYC's Budget  
7 and from what I've understood and I certainly what the  
8 plans are is to use the vast majority of that \$15  
9 million to do a robust advertising campaign about Rank  
10 Choice Voting.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Great. Thank  
12 you so much. Um, I think I am done with my questions,  
13 let me turn it back, uh, to the Chair. I know we have  
14 colleagues that have questions, thank you so much,  
15 Executive Director.

16 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: We are going to  
17 go to Council Member Rosenthal.

18 SGT. POLITE: Time starts now.

19 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Chair Cabrera you asked  
20 my question. So, I'm, I'm looking to see if I, I need.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: You always  
22 have one, hold on, you always have an extra inside  
23 higher level of question.

24 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah, it's the last  
25 budget hearing, I'm out. Right, um, no I just want to



1  
2 thank you for all of your work. I mean this is  
3 critical, I think, you know, I, I, think what Chair  
4 Cabrera was getting at is, you know, and I share his  
5 frustration, \$15 million came a little late and I hope  
6 we're, we're going to get \$15 million worth of good,  
7 good media. Um, and really get in to additional  
8 communities, um, and I think that that is the plan and  
9 again to use a lot, you know, money for translation  
10 and for you know outreach, outreach to, you know  
11 ethnic and community newspapers and make sure that  
12 everyone in and across the City nearly understands  
13 that this is happening.

14 AMY LOPREST: Yeah, I mean, my, uh, my two  
15 sons is that I don't quite understand why you're doing  
16 education and the there's the Mayor's Office that's  
17 doing education. I'm just hoping that there is some  
18 sort of coordination and that, you know, if each of  
19 you have limitations that the other is picking up It's  
20 just so, important and polls have shown, you know,  
21 how few people really understand what grape joist  
22 voting is. I definitely get questions in my, on my  
23 office, so, so I know the big push in time, and, and  
24 good luck. I wish you hadn't so many ...

1  
2 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah, just I, you know  
3 just so that you know over the past year we have  
4 developed, developed a really strong collaboration  
5 with Democracy NYC, with the Board of Elections, with,  
6 uh, uh, other people working in the community on  
7 election day issues and it was absolutely necessary.  
8 I mean you know, in the screen when the things were  
9 changing about the election every week but again it  
10 was incredible vital to make sure that she has some  
11 strong collaboration partnership and work that we've  
12 done, you know, that foundation that we built, would  
13 definitely brought it forward into the, the Rank Choice  
14 Voting education. Do you happen to know if anyone is  
15 going to use the space in the Sumuzas? The, the gas  
16 shelters that we can put in huge posters. We actually  
17 did that for Student Voter Registration day and it  
18 would be amazing to have a huge poster showing the  
19 ballot and you know 1, 2, 3 and demonstrating you know  
20 some sort of infographic.

21 AMY LOPREST: Our advertising campaign  
22 includes bus shelters, uh, the bus shelters, also there  
23 is some plans to work with the, uh, just went out of  
24 my head.

1  
2 HELEN ROSENTHAL: The digital password Link  
3 NYC.

4 AMY LOPREST: Link NYC. You would see  
5 chaos across the City too.

6 HELEN ROSENTHAL: And so have those already  
7 rolled out. I mean that I'm don't see it in my  
8 district means my district is not targeted? Or that  
9 it hasn't been rolled out yet?

10 AMY LOPREST: I think it's beginning to be  
11 rolled out. So I think you know probably in the next  
12 week or so, you, I mean again they are targeting, they  
13 are targeting campaigns. So, I again, can't be in  
14 every bus shelter in every districts but many of them  
15 will be targeted campaigns, so, I, but they should be  
16 rolling out soon.

17 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I just want to make  
18 sure we are putting enough money to it.

19 AMY LOPREST: Yeah.

20 HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much. Thank  
21 you Chairs.

22 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Thank you very  
23 much, uh, Chair Cabrera, anything else?

24 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: No I'll make  
25 it, is this a good time for a closing remark?

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DANIEL DROMM: Yes and I want  
3 to make a closing remark but go right ahead sir.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERNANDO CABRERA: Thank you,  
5 thank you so much. Uh, Chair Dromm, uh, this is my  
6 last executive budget with you. I get emotional  
7 because, uh, this has been a good ride. We've, we've  
8 done well and, uh, so proud of the work that you have  
9 done. You have done an amazing job and you've done it  
10 with integrity, you've done it with honor, you've done  
11 it with respect to all the members and, and in  
12 consideration. I, so I thank you. I thank you, uh,  
13 for all the word. You've made us all better, uh,  
14 through the budget and through, through the coalition  
15 that is required to do this level of work. So, I,  
16 again I salute you. I can't, I can't say enough. I,  
17 I, also in closing, uh, I want to say, I am and Chair  
18 Dromm help me with this. Right now, and I didn't  
19 mention at the beginning because we were trying to  
20 save time, Community Boards, right now, they have been  
21 cut between the initiatives that we lost year for \$45.5  
22 dollars. Between the \$5000+ that was cut already this  
23 year and another \$8000 in this budget. We are talking  
24 about a 20% cut and the, and they're a governmental  
25 institution. We are talking about less than

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1  
2 \$700,000.00 to restore, this \$8000 and so, from the,  
3 I, really, really need help and I'm calling the  
4 administration to restore every single penny. Not  
5 just the \$8000 or so from the, the last Fiscal Year,  
6 the \$5000. They need to be restored. Right now, where  
7 else are they going cut? And some of them do not  
8 service an area larger than Council Members do. We  
9 limit our resources and billing with thrifty  
10 communicatory (they have to serve better. They had  
11 little resources as, and they don't also let me just  
12 say serving in, in this committee and my last executive  
13 budgeting hears. They've been noting but amazing. They  
14 have truly that Amy, Council Member could have asked  
15 for and I salute every single one of them, um, for  
16 making, my job and an enjoyable one. And when I'm  
17 done, done yet, to, other thing but in terms of this  
18 Executive Budget. I want to thank y'all so much. It  
19 in your own chair (SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE) And I  
20 want to say thank you, um, Chair Cabrera, he's done an  
21 amazing job and its been such a pleasure and honor to  
22 be able to work with you and, I, I'm very, very proud  
23 of what you've done while we've been together and I  
24 look forward to continuing that and hope. We will  
25 still have seven months left and thank you Chair

1  
2 Cabrera if everything you did. We still have seven  
3 months left so we can still do a lot of good left.  
4 And thank you Chair Cabrera for everything you said  
5 about me as well. And to CFB I just want to say thank  
6 you also for coming in. I went ahead, I mentioned  
7 the, the pasty rolls that you have but you actually  
8 never got a fine, no fine three elections. So I'm  
9 happy camper. And I thank you for all the work that  
10 you've done as well. Thank you to, uh, Chair Schaffer  
11 and I feel close to Executive Director Amy Loprest.  
12 We appreciate you coming in and giving us information  
13 today. So this will conclude today's hearing, thank  
14 you CFB for being here. Before we close, I would like  
15 to remind the finance committee member that we will be  
16 meeting remotely again on Monday, May 24th at 10:00  
17 a.m. and we will hear from the Office of Management  
18 and Budget, the Controller and the Independent Budget  
19 Office and as a reminder to the public will be holding  
20 a remote hearing for public testimony on the Executive  
21 Budget on Tuesday May 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. If you would  
22 like to testify at that hearing, please register at  
23 [www.council.nyc.gov/testify](http://www.council.nyc.gov/testify) and information about how  
24 to access the Zoom meeting will be emailed to you. You  
25 may also submit written testimony through that

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registration website or by email

[testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Thank you again to

everyone. Thank you to our Sergeants again. Thank

you to all of the finance team members, to my council,

to Stephanie Ruiz, to Regina Baretta O’Ryan, to Latonia

McKinley. Thank you CFB. We are done. This meeting

is, just let me see the time. This meeting is

adjourned at 3:43 in the afternoon. (gavel pounding)

Thank you very much.

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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 July 30, 2021