

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

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November 25, 2008

Start: 1:13pm

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HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E: JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR.  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Melissa Mark-Viverito  
Robert Jackson

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

Thomas Patitucci  
Assistant Commissioner, Examinations  
Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Matthew Morrongiello  
Director of Computerized Examining Group  
Department of Citywide Administrative Services

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Good

afternoon, everyone. Welcome to today's hearing of Civil Service and Labor. My name is Joe Addabbo and I have the honor and the privilege of Chairing the Civil Service and Labor Committee, so good afternoon. Today the Committee will hold an oversight hearing to examine the progress of computer testing centers, or CTCs, initiated by DCAS, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, in an effort to increase the number of Civil Service exams and to reduce the number of provisional employees. In May of 2007, the Court of Appeals issued the Long Beach Decision, addressing the illegality of provisional employees serving beyond the regulated nine-month period. In conjunction with the Long Beach Decision, the New York State Civil Service Law was enacted in 2007 to bring New York City's large number of provisional employees into substantial compliance with the Civil Service Law. The law required DCAS to draft a plan, subject to approval by the New York State Civil Service Commission, to become compliant with the Civil Service Law within five years. On March 28th, 2008, the City released its

1  
2 Provisional Reduction Plan to comply with State  
3 law. A significant component of the plan is the  
4 proposal to increase the amount of competitive  
5 Civil Service exams. DCAS is developing CTCs to  
6 increase the availability of Civil Service exams.  
7 CTCs allow candidates to file for and take an exam  
8 and receive their scores immediately. An  
9 increased number of CTCs throughout the five  
10 boroughs will increase the amount of exams given,  
11 which would expedite the establishment of Civil  
12 Service lists and ultimately result in a reduction  
13 of provisional employments. This past June, this  
14 Committee, the Civil Service and Labor Committee,  
15 held a hearing on the DCAS plan and the issue of  
16 provisional employees. At that hearing it was  
17 stated that these CTCs would allow DCAS to  
18 administer multiple exams at the same time and  
19 provide for morning, afternoon and evening test  
20 sessions. The first CTC opened in Manhattan in  
21 December of 2007. In this hearing we'll discuss  
22 the timetable for future CTCs and the role that  
23 they will play for the future of our City  
24 workforce. I want to thank everyone who put this  
25 hearing together, namely to my right here, Tracy

1  
2 Udell, our Legal Counsel; Shauneequa Owusu, our  
3 Policy Analyst; Jeff Gottlieb, my Legislative  
4 Aide; I'd like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms for  
5 controlling this crowd; and again, I'd like to  
6 thank the administration for participating in this  
7 hearing. Our panel today, of two, Thomas  
8 Patitucci, Assistant Commissioner for Examination,  
9 from the Department of Citywide Administrative  
10 Services, and Matt Morrongiello. Matt is Director  
11 of Computerized Examining Group, also from DCAS.  
12 Gentlemen, I appreciate your time here today on  
13 the issue of CTCs, computerized testing centers,  
14 and please state your name for the record and give  
15 your testimony.

16 THOMAS PATITUCCI: My name is  
17 Thomas Patitucci.

18 MATTEW MORRONGIELLO: Matthew  
19 Morrongiello.

20 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Good afternoon,  
21 Chair Addabbo and members of the Civil Service and  
22 Labor Committee. I am Thomas Patitucci, Assistant  
23 Commissioner for Examinations for the New York  
24 City Department of Citywide Administrative  
25 Services, known as DCAS. I am joined by my

1  
2 colleague, Matthew Morrongiello, Director of the  
3 Computerized Examining Group. On behalf of the  
4 Commissioner Martha K. Hirst, I would like to  
5 thank you for this opportunity to discuss the  
6 progress of DCAS's Computerized Testing Center.  
7 Last week, we were pleased to give a tour of the  
8 Center to Civil Service and Labor Committee staff,  
9 and we welcome Committee members who are  
10 interested in touring the Center as well. In  
11 December 2007, DCAS opened its Manhattan  
12 Computerized Testing Center at 2 Lafayette Street.  
13 The Center provides exam candidates the  
14 opportunity to walk in unannounced and take exams  
15 at pre-arranged times throughout the day. The  
16 first examination offered at the Center was the  
17 open-competitive Police Officer examination. In  
18 May 2008, DCAS added the Correction Officer exam  
19 to the Center's exam schedule, and in September  
20 2008, an exam for Child Protective Specialist was  
21 also added. As of last Friday, November 21st, we  
22 have tested 7,563 candidates at the Center. The  
23 Center is designed to accommodate 50 test takers  
24 at one time and gives DCAS examiners the  
25 capability to administer either the same exam or

1  
2 exams for different titles simultaneously. For  
3 example, during one test session, all 50 test  
4 takers could be taking an exam for Police Officer,  
5 and during the next test session, some test takers  
6 could be taking the Correction Officer exam, while  
7 several others could be taking exams for Police  
8 Officer or Child Protective Specialist. Although  
9 there are prearranged exam starting times, test  
10 takers are individually timed at their  
11 workstations and can begin at different times  
12 throughout the day if necessary. The  
13 administration schedule for each exam offered at  
14 the Center is publicized in the relevant Notice of  
15 Examination, on the DCAS website, and in local  
16 media advertisements by hiring agencies. Exam  
17 sessions are scheduled at the Center twice each  
18 weekday during regular work hours, several times  
19 each week at night, and twice during the day on  
20 Saturday. The actual combination of exams and  
21 sessions may vary from month to month and is  
22 subject to City agency hiring needs and the level  
23 of public turnout at the Center. When test takers  
24 arrive at the Computerized Testing Center, they  
25 are directed to the DCAS Application Center,

1 located on the same floor. These individuals are  
2 asked to complete an exam application and pay the  
3 appropriate application-processing fee, which can  
4 be done by credit card, debit card, bankcard or  
5 money order, if required. The test takers are  
6 then escorted into the exam processing area, where  
7 they are asked to complete several forms, such as  
8 an admission card, a fingerprint card, selective  
9 certification request if appropriate. They are  
10 fingerprinted and then are given instructions on  
11 what to expect when they take the exam. Following  
12 the completion of the pre-examination procedures,  
13 test takers are led to the assigned workstation in  
14 the examination room, adjacent to the processing  
15 room, and are seated in front of computer  
16 terminals. Test takers are given headphones that  
17 they can keep after the exam, which allows them to  
18 listen while watching a ten-minute video that  
19 describes how to take the exam on the computer.  
20 Prior to the start of the tutorial, test takers  
21 type in their social security numbers twice for  
22 verification. This is the only time that the  
23 keyboard is used, since the computers use touch  
24 sensitive screens, enabling test takers to use  
25

1  
2 their fingertips to navigate through the exam and  
3 respond to test questions. These screens operate  
4 in the same way as those used in MetroCard vending  
5 machines. With touch sensitive screens, test  
6 takers can easily change any of their answers  
7 during the exam, answer test questions in any  
8 order that they wish, and access a summary screen  
9 that indicates which questions have been answered  
10 and which questions are incomplete. In addition,  
11 a marquee at the top of the computer screen  
12 continuously displays the time remaining for the  
13 exam and the number of completed as well as  
14 outstanding questions. When test takers complete  
15 the exam or when the time allotted for the exam  
16 expires, printers located at each workstation  
17 automatically generate their tentative exam  
18 scores, their own individual record of answers,  
19 DCAS's proposed answer key, and instructions on  
20 how to protest the answer key. The core of the  
21 Computerized Testing Center is the electronic item  
22 bank that serves as the repository for test items  
23 and is the mechanism used to send examinations to  
24 the various computer terminals in the Center.  
25 Several thousand test items for each exam offered

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2 at the Center must be stored in the item bank in  
3 order to ensure that different versions of exams  
4 can be produced with an assorted combination of  
5 test questions and can be administered over a  
6 number of test sessions each day. At the command  
7 of an examiner at the Center, the electronic item  
8 bank automatically and randomly selects test items  
9 from among thousands according to a test plan that  
10 has been previously uploaded into the bank. The  
11 test plan, which is uploaded by an examiner,  
12 dictates how many items to select from each  
13 relative exam content area. A length of time  
14 needed to make a specific exam available at the  
15 Center depends on how long it takes to enter  
16 thousands of legacy test items into the bank.  
17 However, once the items have been entered into the  
18 bank along with a single test plan, hundreds of  
19 different versions of the exam can be produced  
20 with minimal overlapping of the same questions  
21 from exam to exam. The Computerized Testing  
22 Center provides a myriad of advantages to both the  
23 public and the City by both modernizing and  
24 centralizing the Civil Service examination  
25 process. Individuals seeking City employment can

1  
2 stop in at various times during the day, night or  
3 weekend to apply for and take Civil service  
4 examinations as well as receive their tentative  
5 scores immediately upon completion of the exam,  
6 all in the same location. This means that Civil  
7 Service examinations are more even more accessible  
8 to even more New Yorkers. The Center allows for  
9 the administration of more frequent exams for  
10 specific titles as a result of an increased  
11 capacity to schedule additional testing sessions.  
12 Moreover, people who are in search of a City  
13 position can take exams for different titles at  
14 the Center during the course of a week if they  
15 choose to do so. The amount of time from exam  
16 administration to eligible list establishment is  
17 also significantly reduced, because the answer key  
18 for a particular exam is in effect posted when  
19 test takers immediately receive a copy of the  
20 proposed answer key upon exam completion. Thus,  
21 the Center's streamlined operations expedite the  
22 process of generating eligible lists from  
23 computerized exams, making these lists readily  
24 available to hiring agencies more quickly and more  
25 regularly. Beginning on December 1st of this

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2 year, DCAS will add to the Center's exam schedule  
3 the titles of Caseworker and Traffic Enforcement  
4 Agent. On January 2nd of 2009, the exam for  
5 Environmental Police Officer will be added as  
6 well. Exams for other titles are also currently  
7 under consideration to be added to the Center's  
8 schedule. The decision regarding which exams are  
9 selected for administration at the Center is  
10 contingent upon several factors, including a need  
11 to enhance a hiring agency's recruitment effort  
12 for a title, a high attrition rate within a  
13 targeted title, and the promptness with which DCAS  
14 staff can enter into the electronic item bank the  
15 thousands of test items necessary to produce  
16 multiple versions of an exam for numerous test  
17 sessions. At present, approximately 2,000 test  
18 takers are administered exams at the Center each  
19 month. With the addition of three exams to the  
20 schedule over the next few months, DCAS expects  
21 the number of test takers to reach the Center's  
22 present maximum capacity of 3,000 individuals per  
23 month. DCAS also plans during the next two months  
24 to add two more exam sessions to the Center's  
25 weekly schedule, resulting in an expected increase

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2 in total full capacity to 3,500 test takers each  
3 month. In the fall of 2009 DCAS plans to open the  
4 second computerized testing center located in the  
5 Brooklyn Municipal Building at 210 Joralemon  
6 Street, a location easily accessible by numerous  
7 subway lines and bus routes. The Brooklyn Center  
8 will accommodate 100 test takers, which is twice  
9 the testing capacity of the Manhattan Center.

10 With the opening of the Center in Brooklyn, DCAS  
11 will have even greater means to offer more  
12 examinations for more civil service titles,  
13 providing the public with increased flexibility  
14 and additional opportunities to take examinations.

15 Ultimately, DCAS's goal is to open Computerized  
16 Testing Centers citywide, with at least one Center  
17 in each borough. The use of technological  
18 advances through computerized testing effectively  
19 modernizes and improves the efficiency of the  
20 civil service system. Computerized Testing  
21 Centers are afforded added convenience to  
22 prospective City employees since individuals are  
23 able to apply for exams, take exams, receive  
24 immediate exam answers and learn how to protest  
25 answer keys all in the same location and within

1  
2 the same day. With this strategy, we hope to  
3 increase public awareness that obtaining permanent  
4 civil service status is essential for a City  
5 appointment, to enhance community access to the  
6 civil service examination process; and to  
7 facilitate civil service administration overall.  
8 Thank you again for this opportunity to testify  
9 about DCAS's Computerized Testing Center. We are  
10 pleased to answer any questions you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Mr.  
12 Patitucci, thank you very much for your testimony.  
13 We have been joined by Council Member Melissa  
14 Mark-Viverito, to my left, a Member of this  
15 Committee; and Council Member Robert Jackson.  
16 Thank you Council members for being here. And  
17 before I get to questions that they may I have, I  
18 do have a couple questions of my own. The cost of  
19 each CTC testing center; how much does each one  
20 cost? Is there a dollar or a price tag attached  
21 to each of them as they go to-- again, the plan is  
22 to put them in each borough. What would be the  
23 cost of each?

24 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well I don't  
25 have that cost. I could get that information for

1  
2 you. I will say that the electronic item bank,  
3 which is the core of the Computerized Testing  
4 Center, has already been designed to handle any  
5 additional satellite sites, any additional centers  
6 that we add to the system.

7 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: So the core  
8 cost has already been done by DCAS, so adding  
9 additional sites won't be as costly. The major  
10 cost has already been done.

11 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well for the  
12 application, the computer application, yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: You know, as  
14 we were preparing this hearing, obviously the  
15 budget cuts that the Mayor has proposed and  
16 obviously the economic crisis that the City is  
17 going through, how does this bad fiscal time  
18 effect at all, possibly, the idea of the expansion  
19 of the CTC throughout the boroughs?

20 THOMAS PATITUCCI: We haven't  
21 experienced any effect at present. We are  
22 continuing to work on the Brooklyn Center, which  
23 we've already indicated is scheduled to be opened  
24 in the fall of 2009. And DCAS continues to look  
25 for other sites in other boroughs for continued

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construction.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: So right now you're still going forward regardless, basically unaffected by the fiscal situation we're in, correct?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Does the fiscal situation have any impact on the amount of exams that will be given?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Not at this time.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: And I understand that DCAS had to hire additional staff for the CTCs and train them. Again, does the fiscal situation affect the hiring or more staff with regards as the CTCs expand throughout the City?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Again, at this time we don't see any impact.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Great. Timeline, borough of Brooklyn being next in the fall of '09, can we carry out the other boroughs at this point? Can we say when there will be one in the Bronx and Queens and Staten Island?

2 THOMAS PATITUCCI: We don't have a  
3 schedule at present because we're not sure where  
4 we're going to place these additional Centers.  
5 Once we've identified a Center, we'll be able to  
6 firm of the schedule a bit more.

7 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: And it's a  
8 good segue, Mr. Patitucci, to my next question  
9 regarding other sites. What is the criteria that  
10 you use when looking at other sites? You  
11 mentioned the one in Brooklyn is accessible,  
12 obviously, by mass transit. Is that obviously a  
13 criteria for other sites? What are the criteria  
14 that DCAS uses for these other sites?

15 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well clearly, as  
16 you mentioned, accessibility to mass  
17 transportation. We're also looking for sites that  
18 we can test at least 50 people. In order to have  
19 an impact, we feel that we need to have at least  
20 50 seats in each site. I think those are really  
21 the main criteria. Right now we're doing a study  
22 to see where most of our candidates come from to  
23 determine where would be the best locations to  
24 place these new Centers.

25 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: So mass

1  
2 transit, obviously; 50 people minim. Anything  
3 else other than--

4 THOMAS PATITUCCI: [Interposing]  
5 Well again, where are most of our candidates  
6 coming from? Who takes our-- where do the  
7 candidates who take our exams live? And that  
8 would help us indicate or decide where we should  
9 be placing these centers.

10 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Are you  
11 targeting any certain group of candidates, women,  
12 minorities; are there any target areas that you're  
13 looking to address and therefore possibly look for  
14 that location to be a site for a CTC? Are you  
15 targeting any specific group?

16 THOMAS PATITUCCI: We're not  
17 targeting specific groups at this time. We are  
18 targeting examinations, though, specific titles.

19 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: How are you  
20 doing the outreach? You currently have one in  
21 Manhattan; you'll have one in Brooklyn. How are  
22 you doing the outreach to those prospective  
23 candidates to have them know that there is a CTC  
24 in their Borough or which exams are given at this  
25 specific CTC site?

2 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well our notice  
3 of examination indicates not only where the site  
4 is located, but also the times of the day and the  
5 days of the week when the exams are being  
6 administered. Also our website has all the  
7 information about the Computerized Testing Center,  
8 our interactive voice response system, our  
9 telephone system, our IVR, also has information  
10 about the Center, and even will indicate if there  
11 is an issue or problem and we have to suspend  
12 testing for a particular exam; there's a hot box  
13 that will let people know we're not offering that  
14 test on that particular day.

15 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: So you have  
16 the website, the phone. Is DCAS planning to  
17 expand their outreach at all? Again, not to say  
18 that they're not doing a good job in the outreach,  
19 but obviously CTCs and the exams that are given  
20 are only as good as people who know about it. Are  
21 there other ways of outreach? You know, possibly  
22 using community boards or even elected officials,  
23 City Council Members, Officers, to again  
24 distributed the information throughout their  
25 district. Is that an idea that possibly DCAS can

1  
2 address?

3 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes. We're  
4 considering all those ideas, also we're asking  
5 agencies whose titles we're giving exams for to  
6 advertise. Some agencies are doing that already.  
7 The Police Department and the Department of  
8 Correction are advertising in the media about the  
9 Computerized Testing Center, so this helps us a  
10 great deal too.

11 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Okay. And  
12 you mentioned Police. And obviously the Mayor has  
13 made proposals regarding certain cutbacks of  
14 obviously certain classes. Again, this would not  
15 affect the exams that possibly in the future you  
16 might give?

17 THOMAS PATITUCCI: At present, no.  
18 We are still offering the Police Officer exam and  
19 we still have a lot of people showing up to take  
20 it. I believe it's our most popular exam so far.

21 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: You mentioned  
22 once a person gives a test they can get their test  
23 results immediately, correct?

24 THOMAS PATITUCCI: That's correct.

25 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: There is a

1  
2 protest button if a person has to either appeal a  
3 final decision or a question, or an answer to a  
4 question, there is a protest button?

5 THOMAS PATITUCCI: There are  
6 instructions on how to protest. Basically, when a  
7 candidate receives his or her test score, it's a  
8 tentative test score, pending the results of the  
9 protest period. What will happen is one of the  
10 pieces of information that's printed out on their  
11 personal printer is instructions on how to  
12 protest. Basically what happens is they have all  
13 the information in front of them and they could  
14 come back the following week, if they desire,  
15 without any appointment, and sit down and review  
16 the examination, their copy of the exam, their  
17 version of the examination, which is a personal  
18 version that they saw on their computer. And they  
19 have the same amount of time that they had while  
20 they were taking the test to review the test again  
21 and to submit protests either at that session or  
22 they have 30 days from that date to submit  
23 additional protests.

24 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: 30 days after  
25 they sit down with an individual from the City to

1  
2 review, correct?

3 THOMAS PATITUCCI: No. They can  
4 come in on the following week for one day for the  
5 amount of hours the exam was actually administered  
6 for, review a copy of the exam, bring their own  
7 materials that we gave them already, which would  
8 be the candidate record of answers, their own  
9 answers, the protest answer key. They can submit  
10 protests at that session, that three and a half  
11 hours session let's say, if it was a three and a  
12 half hour exam, or they have 30 days from that  
13 date to submit additional protests to us. That's  
14 basically the civil service law regarding test  
15 validation, the test validation board process.

16 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: And that  
17 would be the extent of the whole appeal process,  
18 correct?

19 THOMAS PATITUCCI: That's correct.

20 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Okay. Any  
21 questions, Council Member Jackson, Council Member  
22 Viverito, at this point? Council Member Jackson.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you,  
24 Mr. Chair. Good afternoon. Regarding this, I  
25 think the Chair asked you about the cost factor.

1  
2 What was the overall cost factor the overall cost  
3 factor to put this Center together with the  
4 mainframe and everything? What was the  
5 approximate cost?

6 THOMAS PATITUCCI: As I said to  
7 Chair Addabbo, I don't have those numbers, but if  
8 you'd like I can provide them to you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Was it a  
10 million? Two million?

11 THOMAS PATITUCCI: I really, I'm  
12 not exactly sure. I was more involved with the  
13 development of the software and the day-to-day  
14 development of the software. But as I said, if  
15 you would like that information we will get that  
16 for you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Because I  
18 guess the Chair had asked a question and  
19 appropriately so, this Center located, it's where?  
20 It's in Manhattan?

21 THOMAS PATITUCCI: The one that's  
22 currently operating is at 2 Lafayette Street,  
23 right across the street from 1 Centre Street.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Okay. So  
25 right downtown here, basically.

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And I was just curious as to the cost factor in ramping up to the one in Brooklyn and the other boroughs, and especially with these tough economic times whether or not-- and I can understand having a test location in each borough to make it convenient for people, but I guess as a legislature dealing with-- over all of these budget cuts, I'm looking at cost factors involved, whether or not it's cost-effective at this point in time, you know, when agencies are facing 2.5% and 5%, 2.5 this year and 5% next year. And everyone that I know, agencies and advocates, are crying at the proposed cuts that are impacting their programs. So, that's an extremely important, I guess, question. What is the cost factor involved? In an ideal situation, that that would be ideal. But considering the situation that we're in now, is it still necessary to go forward at this time, or should it be delayed one or two fiscal years?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Are you asking me a question about whether--

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:

[Interposing] Yeah.

THOMAS PATITUCCI: I don't think it should be delayed at all. This provides the public, residents of this City, with opportunities, more opportunities to get jobs in this City. And the City will always be hiring. I know we're going through tough economic times--

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: It provides them the opportunity to take the exam at an easier location.

THOMAS PATITUCCI: To take the exam, making it easier to get jobs in the end, because you have to take an exam first in order to get the job. Okay? And it also speeds up the process of the establishment of the eligible list, which then leads to agencies choosing people from those lists and giving them jobs.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I see.

THOMAS PATITUCCI: So, the answer to your question, from my point of view, is yes, we should move forward. This is providing a tremendous increase in services to the residents of this City.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Because

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2 prior, what was it prior to this computerized  
3 center? What was the process?

4 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well the process  
5 was that you take a multiple choice-- you take a  
6 written test. Okay? And then the five weeks  
7 later we post the proposed key. Okay? And then  
8 that starts of a protest process of 30 days. So  
9 we've already saved five weeks by giving the test  
10 at the Center. And also, we find that we're  
11 getting less protests for some reason by people  
12 actually seeing the test on the screen. It seems  
13 to be easier to take it. So it's making a  
14 difference there. But I think also the way that  
15 we're scheduling, let's say Police Officer for  
16 instance, Police Officer we offer once a month.  
17 To a candidate it looks like we're offering it all  
18 the time. But every month we change the exam  
19 number to a new exam number. And everybody who  
20 passed the exam that month gets put on an eligible  
21 list. We establish that list about a month later.  
22 So within two months we have the capability of  
23 establishing an eligible list, making those  
24 individuals eligible for appointments to Police  
25 Officer.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Whereas  
3 before it was all manual, it took such a long  
4 time. Is that correct?

5 THOMAS PATITUCCI: It was much more  
6 manual. It took more time, and that's the reason  
7 why I think we should continue to move forward.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: But we  
9 just don't know what the cost factors involved.

10 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well I don't  
11 have the exact costs on me right now. I'm sure  
12 there's somebody in DCAS that has those costs, and  
13 as I said, I will provide--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:  
15 [Interposing] Because I'm all in favor of having  
16 Centers at, even more than one in each borough.  
17 The only question is what is the cost factor  
18 involved and whether or not it's a legitimate cost  
19 factor all things considered. So I guess that was  
20 my question. Now, it's my understanding, and  
21 correct me if I'm wrong, that each time an  
22 individual takes an exam, there's a fee involved.  
23 Is that correct?

24 THOMAS PATITUCCI: With the  
25 exception of Police Officer, yes.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: With the  
3 exception of Police Officer. Okay.

4 THOMAS PATITUCCI: And also there  
5 are fee waivers for people who are on public  
6 assistance.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Okay.

8 THOMAS PATITUCCI: And also for  
9 people who are unemployed.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And why is  
11 it for all other exams except Police Officer, that  
12 there is a fee?

13 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Police Officer  
14 as you know, it's been in the media quite a bit,  
15 has difficulty recruiting individuals. And they  
16 asked us to waive the filing fee for that purpose.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: But even  
18 now, when the minimum salary for Police Officers  
19 has gone up? I mean, I can understand waiving the  
20 fee when the minimum salary of a Police Officer  
21 was, you know, \$25,000; and it was ridiculous in  
22 my opinion, and I've expressed that, even when the  
23 Commissioner was testifying in the budget  
24 hearings. And that's why the primary-- the salary  
25 was the primary reason they couldn't recruit the

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2 number of individuals in order to fill a class,  
3 because of salaries. But now the minimum salary  
4 has gone up. So whose decision is it to restore a  
5 fee and was there ever a fee for police officers?

6 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes. There was  
7 a fee for Police Officer and the decision would be  
8 a decision made by Commissioner Hirst.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:  
10 Commissioner Hirst.

11 THOMAS PATITUCCI: yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Okay. Do  
13 you know what the current salary, beginning salary  
14 for Police Officers are?

15 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Offhand, I  
16 wouldn't want to say. I don't have the salaries  
17 memorized unfortunately.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: So from a  
19 numbers point of view, if in fact the numbers of  
20 individuals taking the exams for Police Officers  
21 are back to where it was prior to the salary going  
22 down to \$25,000, do you think it would be  
23 appropriate, especially if there's no problem in  
24 filling a recruitment class, do you think it would  
25 be appropriate to go back up to a fee schedule?

2 THOMAS PATITUCCI: I think it is  
3 certainly something that would need to be looked  
4 at. I think it's a little too early to say. The  
5 salary was just increased. I think we've held one  
6 major citywide exam since--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:

8 [Interposing] For Police Officer?

9 THOMAS PATITUCCI: For Police  
10 Officer since that time. We saw a slight increase  
11 in the number of candidates who applied and took  
12 the test. But I think time will tell. I think we  
13 need to administer the exam a few more times to  
14 see what the impact of the salary increase is.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And  
16 currently through the computerized centers, they  
17 can take the Police Officer examination, is that  
18 correct?

19 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes. That was  
20 the first one that we offered.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And how  
22 long is the eligible list for? I mean it used to  
23 be for four years, Civil Service. Is that still  
24 the same?

25 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yes, that's

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still the case.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Unless--

THOMAS PATITUCCI: [Interposing]

The civil service last to last a minimum of one year--

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:

[Interposing] Minimum of one year.

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Minimum of one year, up to a maximum of four years.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Because I know the Commissioner was here, I think yesterday, I believe it was yesterday or the day before, in which they've cancelled, I guess, one of the classes in the Academy. And somebody was saying that the eligible list for several exams had just been closed out. So I was just curious, so. You said minimum one year though, is that correct?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: It has to be in existence for a minimum of one year, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: But

overall you've seen that the number of individuals taking examinations via the computerized examination center has increased versus the old school way?

2 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well, the number  
3 of people taking the test, taking a test, any  
4 examination, at the Computerized Testing Center  
5 has doubled in the past two months.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Doubled.

7 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Yeah. And it's  
8 going to go up even more, because we're adding--  
9 as I mentioned in my testimony, we're adding  
10 traffic enforcement agents and caseworker to the  
11 December 1st schedule.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Now  
13 caseworker, what agency is that?

14 THOMAS PATITUCCI: HRA.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: HRA.  
16 Okay.

17 THOMAS PATITUCCI: And then January  
18 2nd we're adding environmental police officer to  
19 the schedule. So we're going to see another large  
20 leap in the number of people who show up at the  
21 centers to take our examinations.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: What has  
23 the unions representing City employees had to say  
24 regarding this particular matter? Has there been  
25 any complaints from the unions about this at all?

2 THOMAS PATITUCCI: None that I know  
3 of.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: None that  
5 you know of. Okay. All right. Thank you, Mr.  
6 Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Thank you.  
8 Thank you, Council Member Jackson. Just to follow  
9 up on a couple things Council Member Jackson  
10 started to question on. The processing fee for  
11 candidates; aside from those who are on public  
12 assistance or where they have been waived, can you  
13 give me a range in which the lowest fee and the  
14 highest fee that the candidate may encounter?

15 THOMAS PATITUCCI: It's somewhere  
16 in the area of \$30 to \$60 and it's based upon the  
17 starting salary for that particular title,  
18 approximately.

19 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: How many  
20 provisional employees have taken exams up to date?  
21 Do you know the number?

22 THOMAS PATITUCCI: At the  
23 Computerized Testing Center?

24 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Right.

25 THOMAS PATITUCCI: 7,000, I

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mentioned it--

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: [Interposing]

That was that number?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: 7,563

individuals; now not all of these individuals are provisionals. We would not know. You know, this is a walk-in center. People can walk in off the street, at prearranged times, and take our exams. We won't know whether they're serving provisionally in a City position or whether they're just looking for a City job.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: And the

reason I had asked about provisionals is because obviously these CTCs are part of a bigger picture about increasing the amount of exams that the City wants to do in compliance with the idea of reducing the number of provisional employees. So it's a question of how many provisionals, actual provisionals, are taking these exams in an effort to reduce the amount of provisional employees. You also in your discussion with Council Member Jackson about titles that are currently given through the CTC centers; how frequently will titles be added in the future? And how do you

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determine which titles?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well let me answer the second question first. Up to this point, the titles that we've been earmarking for administration at the Center have been titles for which there has been a difficulty recruiting people into those titles. Also, titles that have high attrition rates, where there's a great deal of hiring. In the future that could change to include not only those titles, but other considerations too.

CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: And how frequently do you consider those criteria or factors and add titles?

THOMAS PATITUCCI: As often as necessary. We're open to hear requests from agencies. If an agency informs us that they need an exam opened on a regular basis because they need to do a lot of hiring or there's a lot of attrition, we'll work with them and we'll schedule people that they're interviewing to come down and take the test right after the interview, which in itself is a major change. Someone could walk into a-- after seeing an ad in the newspaper, walk into

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2 ACS, okay, apply for a job as a Child Protective  
3 Specialist, they interview that person, they like  
4 the individual; they could send the individual  
5 down to the center to take a test. That will  
6 drastically reduce the amount of time that  
7 somebody serves as a provisional.

8 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Right. No  
9 question. And you mentioned that you now, to your  
10 estimation, are saving about five weeks when you  
11 compare the CTC process to the preexisting  
12 process--

13 THOMAS PATITUCCI: [Interposing] At  
14 least that.

15 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: That's great.  
16 As I mentioned earlier, the-- obviously expansion  
17 of CTCs to offer an increased amount of exams  
18 every year is an effort to reduce provisionals as  
19 part of the plan. We had had the hearing  
20 previously through this Committee about the plan.  
21 Since that time though, the New York State Civil  
22 Service Commission has approved the plan that DCAS  
23 has submitted. Correct?

24 THOMAS PATITUCCI: That's correct.

25 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: With changes,

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2 or with suggestions. Can we talk about those  
3 changes or suggestions generally speaking at this  
4 point?

5 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Well, I'm not  
6 really prepared to do that. I would not-- I don't  
7 have memorized all of the changes that they wanted  
8 to make.

9 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: Mr.  
10 Patitucci, how about some of the changes? How's  
11 that?

12 THOMAS PATITUCCI: I'm not even  
13 prepared to discuss some of the changes.

14 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: What we'll do  
15 is, I'd definitely like to follow up with  
16 Commissioner Hirst regarding the changes. We are  
17 very concerned, obviously, about the Commission's  
18 suggestions on this plan. It is a five-year plan  
19 to reduce the number of provisionals, and there's  
20 quite a number of provisionals, as I remember  
21 correctly. And I remember of the last hearing,  
22 the idea of changing Competitive Class to non-  
23 competitive titles obviously was an issue, a major  
24 issue, one of the most major issues of the four-  
25 point plan that the Commissioner had submitted.

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2 So we are going to write to the Commissioner  
3 regarding her feedback about the changes that the  
4 Civil Service Commission has suggested. We are  
5 concerned with that, obviously. But it seems that  
6 DCAS is moving in the right direction with the  
7 CTCs. I'm very concerned about, obviously, you  
8 know the fiscal situation we're in, and the effect  
9 it has on the expansion of CTCs. I'm glad to hear  
10 that you feel you're optimistic about continuing  
11 the expansion and that the fiscal situation is not  
12 going to jeopardize that. But just given the  
13 proposed cutbacks the Mayor has suggested, and  
14 also the, for instance, NYPD class that has been  
15 taken back; I'm just, again, I hope I can join  
16 your optimism as we go forward in expanding CTC.  
17 Any last minute comments, gentlemen?

18 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Nothing; but  
19 thank you for this opportunity to talk about the  
20 Computerized Testing Center.

21 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: It's a  
22 situation that we're going to have to take up, you  
23 know, maybe six months from now we'll get an  
24 update. And, like I said, make sure that the plan  
25 is being implemented well as we address the

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2 provisional issue, and CTC, the expansion of these  
3 testing centers being a part of that plan. I  
4 think, you know, every six months or so to have an  
5 update on this issue is not a bad idea. And so I  
6 will suggest it to the Speaker's Office. Any  
7 comments from Council Member Jackson? Again, I  
8 appreciate DCAS being a part of this hearing and  
9 cooperating. And we'll follow up on the costs.  
10 I'm very curious about the future costs for the  
11 Computerized Testing Centers, and obviously some  
12 of the issues regarding the Civil Service  
13 Commission's suggestions to DCAS on their plan.

14 THOMAS PATITUCCI: Okay.

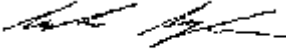
15 CHAIRPERSON ADDABBO: But thank you  
16 very much for your time and testimony. Gentlemen,  
17 I appreciate you being here. There being no other  
18 individuals who want to give testimony, this is a  
19 situation that we will follow up with, like I  
20 said, over the next couple of months. And I do  
21 appreciate the administration's cooperation on  
22 this issue, and with this Committee. So thank you  
23 very much. Meeting adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Erika Swyler, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

Date December 9, 2008 \_\_\_\_\_