CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

      of the

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

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                  October 29, 2008
                  Start: 10:20am
                  Recess: 12:45pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
                  City Hall

B E F O R E:
                  GALE A. BREWER
                  Chairperson

     COUNCIL MEMBERS:
                  G. Oliver Koppell
                  Leticia James
                  James Sanders, Jr.
                  Bill de Blasio

A P P E A R A N C E S

Paul Cosgrave
Commissioner
Department of Information Technology and
Telecommunications

Christopher Long
Director, Web Strategy and Operations
Department of Information Technology and
Telecommunications

Robert Feldman
President
Total Webcasting

Chris Rynders
Director, Eastern United States
Granicus, Inc.

Susan Lerner
Executive Director
Common Cause New York

Rachel Fauss
Policy and Research Associate
Citizen Union

Josh Breitbart
Policy Director
People's Production House

Joly MacFie

Kayza Kleinman
Director, The Nonprofit HelpDesk
Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island, Inc.

1

2   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm late. I'm

3   sorry. You're going to laugh. I was reading.

4   You're going to laugh. I was on the subway. And,

5   I thought I was on the C train. But, I was on the

6   B train. And, I was reading the Mayor's

7   Management Report on DoITT and I went by the

8   station.

9   MALE VOICE: That's interesting.

10   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Isn't that

11 interesting. Absolutely. I couldn't believe it.

12 I'm sorry. Anyway, I'm Gale Brewer, City Council

13 Member and Chair of the Committee on Technology in

14 Government. And, we're here today to talk about

15 Intro 533-A, which talks about webcasting;

16 something that I think is part of what government

17 is aiming for. So, webcasting is a distribution

18 of video and audio via the internet to any

19 personal computer or video-capable device

20 connected to the internet. Most webcasts make use

21 of streaming media technology to deliver video and

22 audio to the user with as little delay as

23 possible. Webcast can be either live or archived

24 online. And, it makes a great of deal of sense to

25 archive materials so you can find it later. And,

1

2   they're made available on demand and may even be

3   saved locally by personal computers for a playback

4   at a later time without the need for a connection.

5   The reason that we're talking about

6   this, one reason, obviously, is one reason is that

7   there are so many states and cities and

8   governments doing it; but, also because I teach at

9   Hunter College and the students decided one day

10 that instead of going to meetings, they would just

11 look online and they would cover their paper.

12 And, I said how in the world can you do that?

13 That's not possible. They said oh, yes, it is.

14   So, Executive Order Number 3,

15 January 1st, 2007, former Governor Spitzer,

16 promulgated Executive Order Number 3 in our state,

17 which requires all meetings of state agencies and

18 public authorities subject to the Open Meetings

19 Law to be broadcast on the Net through the use of

20 webcasting. And, that happened by July 1st, 2007.

21 Included in the definition of a state agency is

22 Department, Office, Board, Commission and any

23 other instrumentality of the state. One example

24 that I found particularly interesting was the

25 Hudson River Park Trust. So, I was able to see

discussions about my neighborhood online in the

Parks. On June 18th, 2008, Governor Paterson

signed Executive Order Number 9, which ordered the

continuation of the above-mentioned Order.

Advantages of webcasting;

webcasting increases public access to government

by permitting people who cannot attend a meeting

to stay informed about the actions of their local

government. Archival, video on-demand allows

people to have complete access to full government

meetings according to their own schedules and at

no cost, which may result in increased

transparency and community involvement.

Webcasting also enhances a city's image as open,

accountable and technologically forward.

Currently, there are over 400 cities in the United

States, and several cities around the world,

including London, Paris and Rotterdam, that offer

webcasting of meetings.

The Intro that we're talking about

today, 533-A, section one of this Intro amends

another section of the City Charter by adding a

new subdivision that requires all City agencies,

committees, Commission, Task Forces and the City

2   Council to record their open meetings in digital

3   video format and webcast their meetings live where

4   practical. Recording shall be made available to

5   the public on the City's website not more than 72

6   hours after the adjournment of that meeting. And,

7   another section provides that this law shall take

8   effect 90 days after enactment.

9   We're very excited about this

10   discussion today. I think what's also interesting

11   is that different states and legislatures are

12   doing the webcasting, sometimes in-house,

13   sometimes working with for-profit companies. And,

14   I think New York, as usual, will try to do it in

15   the best fashion possible. So, without further

16   ado, I'd like to thank, certainly, Jeff Baker, who

17   is counsel to the Committee and welcome Council

18   Member Oliver Koppell from the Bronx. And, we

19   look forward to your testimony, Commissioner.

20   Thank you very much for being here.

21   PAUL COSGRAVE: Thank you,

22   Chair Brewer, Council Member Koppell and other

23   members of the City Council Committee on

24   Technology in Government who, by the way, will be

25   able to watch this on video streaming that we'll

2   do after the meeting since we have our cameras

3   here today.

4   My name's Paul Cosgrave, as you

5   know. I'm the Commissioner of the Department of

6   Information Technology and Telecommunications,

7   DoITT, as we're referred. And, I also serve as

8   the CIO here for the City of New York. With me

9   today is Christopher Long, as you know, he's the

10   Director of Web Strategy and Operations for our

11   organization and he's New York City's Webmaster.

12   Thank you for this opportunity to testify today

13   regarding the proposed City Council Introduction

14   533, which would require the recording, archiving

15   and, where practicable, live webcasting on NYC.gov

16   of all City hearings and meetings.

17   In keeping with Mayor Bloomberg's

18   mandate to use technology to make New York City

19   government more accessible, transparent and

20   accountable, the Administration agrees with the

21   goal of enhancing current capabilities on NYC.gov

22   to webcast public hearings and meetings. However,

23   significant consideration must be given to the

24   cost associated with this endeavor, as well as the

25   size, scope and timeline for implementation.

2   While there are relatively moderately priced

3   technical solutions available today to achieve the

4   goal, there are both logistical and fiscal

5   challenges inherent in developing a Citywide

6   solution. Though not at all insurmountable, we

7   believe these issues should be fully considered

8   before deciding upon a viable solution,

9   legislative or otherwise, and timeline. And,

10   we're willing to keep the Council appraised of our

11   progress in these areas as we explore options for

12   moving forward.

13   Through NYC TV, which is here

14   today, DoITT covers more than 530 New York City

15   Council events each year and has done so back to

16   2005. This year already, we've covered more than

17   450 such meetings. Channel 74, on local

18   television, is dedicated to government coverage,

19   including 61 programming hours per week of Council

20   programming. So, on average, Council hearings

21   usually air seven to ten days after they occur,

22   though high-profile hearings are scheduled, in

23   many cases, the very next open air date. Channel

24   74 is streamed live today on NYC.gov, though the

25   programming itself airs on tape delay and is not

2   archived online.

3   Efforts to webcast these hearings

4   live are now underway by the City Council, and may

5   involve a capital investment in the infrastructure

6   of the Council chambers. Archiving these hearings

7   for on-demand access on NYC.gov would entail

8   digitizing each event for storage on a server and

9   assigned staff to manage the portfolio of

10   hearings, which are additional costs that would be

11   need to considered.

12   There is also logistical cost.

13   And, if you will, for example, take this room,

14   while we're able to have a cameraperson here today

15   to conduct the camera and move it, essentially, we

16   don't cover all the meetings in this room as you

17   know. So, logistically, there is a cost if we had

18   to do that because just having a single mounted

19   camera, let's say, would not, in any way, be

20   adequate for this room because you've got three

21   very different angles that you'd have to cover.

22   So, those are issues that logistically we have to

23   work out.

24   So, we appreciate the work your

25   staff has done in compiling the list of examples

2   of other municipalities that have mandated

3   webcasting. However, most of the municipalities

4   listed, even the larger ones, such as Chicago,

5   which estimated the cost based only on webcasting

6   its City Council hearings, cannot compare with

7   what is being proposed in this bill. This is

8   illustrated by another municipality your staff's

9   researched, Vancouver, British Columbia. So, like

10   New York City, Vancouver uses a combination of

11   cable broadcasting and webcasting and, similar to

12   today's proposed bill, Vancouver requires access

13   to be made to an unlimited live audience and

14   archiving for three months. Total estimated cost

15   for their meetings is $495 per meeting.

16   Now, in New York City, a

17   conservative estimate finds that in any given

18   month, there may be more than 80 public hearings

19   and meetings conducted by the City's Mayoral

20   agencies, the City Council, and there I'm counting

21   only the stated meetings, and Borough President

22   Offices. So, this does not include another

23   approximate 40 City Council committee meetings,

24   such as this one, an average of three meetings per

25   month by each of the City's 59 Community Boards,

which includes both committee meetings and

subcommittees, or special events such as bill

signings or Citywide addresses. So, all told, we

have an estimate, which we believe is

conservative, that there would be more than 3,000

events per year to be webcast live, recorded,

captured and documented and archived at NYC.gov

for future access by the public.

So, if we just use Vancouver's

model as a rough baseline, which, frankly, may or

may not prove to be a replicable one for New York

City, and not counting the initial equipment

costs, this would mean nearly $1.6 million in

annual recurring cost in the proposed bill.

So, comparing this with the cost

New York State incurred when mandating webcasting

for all its agencies via Executive Order in 2007,

the State committed nearly two million to

implement its directive for 65 agencies in the

initial four months of the program and that does

not include staff expenses. The two million

figure consists of a one-time outlay of

approximately 1.1 million for equipment and

800,000 in recurring costs for captioning and

2   other services. One estimate simply for

3   captioning services for deaf and hard-hearing

4   individuals is $315 per hour. So, that's another

5   feature that needs to be considered in looking at

6   the full cost. So, while not explicitly required

7   as per Introduction 533, consistent with the

8   accessibility of City services, captioning is an

9   added consideration that should be assessed before

10   proceeding with a comprehensive webcasting effort.

11   So, it's clear to date that the

12   efforts of the State have required significant

13   funding. One primary contract for webcasting

14   services that State agencies can leverage includes

15   a cost of $1,500 per meeting, which does not, in

16   fact, include the captioning services described

17   above. So, for a typical meeting where there is

18   captioning at the state level, we're talking more

19   around $2,000. And, that's for a one-hour

20   meeting. As you may know, some of our meetings

21   here in the City, such as Landmarks Commission, go

22   on all day. So, this is for a one-hour meeting.

23   So, you start to get some large costs here.

24   So, what should be noted is that to

25   a large extent, the State webcasts consist of one

mounted, stationary camera, streaming live via

connection to a broadband-enabled PC. And so,

accordingly, there's little-to-no production

value, if you will, no multiple camera angles, no

lower-third graphics associated with the speaker,

their titles, the topic, the date of the event,

any of that. None of that is included in some of

the State broadcasts. Instead, the meetings

appear as they would to, if you would, silent

observer, so, think of a fly on the wall. Any

additional production elements required during the

live webcast or for the archived events, such as

zooming in on speakers, captioning, titling, all

those things, require significant increases in

staffing levels across the City, as they would

need to either attend every hearing or conduct

considerable post production work. Such we would

propose that the number of required webcast events

be limited, at least in the initial phases of

deployment.

A totally different challenge

presented by the bill, as what's currently

written, is the 90-day timeframe provided for

implementation. Returning to the New York State

example, consistent with the Executive Order

issued in January 2000, agencies were required to

present their plans for webcasting public events

within 90 days and, they were given an additional

three months thereafter to implement their plans,

for a total of 180 days. This compares to the 90

days total that's in the proposed legislation.

So, we believe a similar timeframe would be more

appropriate at the municipal level as well, taking

into account both the size of the City of New York

and the sheer volume of public hearings and

meetings its agencies, committees, commissions and

task forces would conduct regularly.

As part of statewide

implementation, which proceeded in an essentially

federated manner by each agency, the State Offices

for Technology and General Services offered policy

guidance and roundtable discussions. They set

minimum requirements for open meeting webcasts,

improved their procurement options and provided

technical assistance in equipping meeting

facilities. In developing a plan for phased

implementation here at the City, as well, DoITT

would explore similar measures.

A final consideration is retention

standards across the agencies, since not all

events will require similar archiving. A

Community Board meeting will likely appeal to a

much more limited audience than, let's say, City

Council Speaker Quinn's State of the City Address,

though each might require the same bandwidth for

storage if they are of similar duration. The

longer the retention schedule for such meetings,

the more storage is required, which in turn

results in a significant increase in cost.

Therefore the City, or individual agencies, should

webcasting proceed in a decentralized way as it

has at the State level, will also need to invest

in additional technical support staff, which will

also increase commensurate with the number of

public meetings and hearings included. That same

Community Board might decide that on a limited

budget, three months is adequate for archived

meetings and may not wish to, say, be tied to the

Council standard, which potentially could be twice

that length, for example.

So, therefore, while the

Administration certainly agrees with the spirit of

2   the proposed legislation, and the added dimension

3   of accessibility it would bring to the City's

4   numerous public proceedings, it is clear that more

5   consideration must be given to the timeline for

6   deployment, the scope and phasing of the program

7   and any proposed retention schedules.

8   While we do not support the Intro

9   533 in its current draft, the Administration is

10   open to exploring the use of cost-effective

11   measures to facilitate webcasting and archiving on

12   a pilot basis for agencies conducting public

13   hearings and other events on a regular basis.

14   And, we recommend that these be scheduled in

15   modern, broadband-equipped meeting rooms, such as

16   those that are across the street at City Hall.

17   We imagine these efforts would

18   begin by asking those agencies to submit plans

19   describing how each would implement its own

20   webcasting capability over the subsequent months,

21   developing from there a strategy for wider

22   implementation. And as part of this initial

23   phase, we would hope to include the City Council

24   hearings, which are now included as part of NYC

25   TV's Channel 74 programming.

2   As always, we are pleased to keep

3   the Council informed of our efforts, building on

4   the strides already made with streamlining the

5   City Council hearings through NYC.gov. Thank you.

6   I'm glad to take any questions.

7   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

8   much. I know you have a meeting at 11, so we will

9   make sure that you meet that time commitment.

10   PAUL COSGRAVE: Thank you.

11   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I want to also

12   thank Council Member Tish James for joining us

13   here today. One of the questions I had is when

14   you talk to the State of New York, and I thank you

15   for doing that research, the State, it's my

16   understanding, would have a similar number of

17   meetings and they would be Statewide. So, for

18   instance, when I was looking online at the Hudson

19   River Park Trust, I have no idea where they're

20   meeting, to be honest with you, but I don't know

21   if it's a modern room. And, it's also my

22   understanding that the State is using an outside

23   contractor and the State legislature is doing an

24   in-house video. So, I'm just wondering, when you

25   talk to the State, was that a Statewide Executive

1

2 Order? Are the meetings covered Statewide,

3 because they, obviously, have Statewide meetings?

4 PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah. The

5 Executive Order that the Governor issued was to

6 all the gubernatorial agencies. So, it does not

7 apply, actually, to the Assembly or to the

8 [crosstalk].

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right. No,

10 it's just for the agencies.

11 PAUL COSGRAVE: Correct.

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: There are two

13 different contracts, two different means.

14 PAUL COSGRAVE: So, we talked to

15 the folks in the Governor's office about the

16 programs they have envisioned. One issue that

17 came up, I didn't mention it in the testimony, but

18 it's something to be considered here, is that it's

19 actually had an impact in where they can hold the

20 meetings. So, for example, if they want to go out

21 to the community and hold the meeting in the

22 community, it actually makes it more difficult in

23 some ways because that meeting room, then, has to

24 be equipped. So, they've actually had to hold

25 some meetings away from where they actually wanted

1

2   to hold the meetings because of this requirement.

3   So, that does play a factor in the physical

4   location of the meetings.

5   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I mean

6   it plays both ways because more people can see the

7   meetings that are webcast. And then, those that

8   aren't, I suppose, as time goes on, would become

9   more tech-savvy. I mean, that's something that

10   we're all-- when you say infrastructure, I know

11   you talked a little bit about you need a couple of

12   cameras. But, when we do the great work of NYC

13   TV, two things; one, because of the lack of

14   technology now, there's only one camera. And, to

15   the credit of the camera people and to NYC TV, it

16   looks good when you see it on Channel 74. We

17   don't have captions, to the best of my knowledge

18   and we never know who's speaking. But, it's still

19   something. So, I guess what I'm saying is maybe,

20   certainly we have to be, I assume, ADA compatible.

21   That's always something to think about. But, when

22   we say we can't do it because of X, Y and Z, I

23   mean, NYC T is doing the meetings without some of

24   the bells and whistles that you're describing.

25   PAUL COSGRAVE: True.

1

2   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So, I mean I

3   would like to see something moving even though

4   it's not perfect is what I'm saying.

5   PAUL COSGRAVE: Sure. Sure. So,

6   there's a couple different points that are worth

7   commenting on. Let me just take the accessibility

8   ADA-compliant type rules.

9   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Very

10 important.

11   PAUL COSGRAVE: It's not mentioned

12 in the bill. So, the bill is silent on that. The

13 Governor's Executive Order did require captioning.

14 So, that's an important issue because it does

15 involve a fair amount of production cost, in

16 addition to just having the camera in the room.

17 So, I just thought that out.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's a good

19 point.

20   PAUL COSGRAVE: It's an issue to be

21 considered. No position one way or the other,

22 just want to make it clear.

23   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Noted.

24   PAUL COSGRAVE: The other point, in

25 terms of infrastructure, and some of this gets

rather, you know, it's not visible as it might be

with the multiple cameras or whatever, but there's

cabling cost in some cases. So, one of the

restrictions we've had, just in being able to

handle meetings at City Hall, is the landmark

status of the building and the lack of cabling

infrastructure in that building. So, those are

the types of things that have to be considered

wherever we set these up.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: My

understanding from meeting with some of the

companies is that regarding the captions, it is

really expensive and almost impossible to do real

time, as one sees on NBC and ABC, with, you know,

grammatical spelling mistakes. But, if one does

it not in real time, and looks at the transcript

and goes back over it, it's not as expensive. So,

I'm just saying there are some cost saving

measures that are possible. It's my understanding

from talking to the companies. But, it's

obviously something that can be discussed.

PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah, we totally

agree. The only point we wanted to make in terms

of the comparisons we were giving to one of the

cities we're doing and what it was costing them is the labor aspect of these things were really not included in most of the estimates. So, they just need to be considered.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Archiving is an issue. What is the, I should know this, what's the law on-- there's obviously paper archiving done by Commissioner Anderson. And then, I don't know if there's video archiving in terms of NYC TV. What's the archiving policy for the City?

PAUL COSGRAVE: I'm going to let Chris handle that. You know that better than I do.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Introduce yourself, sir.

CHRISTOPHER LONG: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We love you, but it's business.

CHRISTOPHER LONG: Chris Long with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You got to push the button. It's low-tech.

 1

 2   CHRISTOPHER LONG: Low-tech.

 3   PAUL COSGRAVE: I think you're on.

 4   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

 5   CHRISTOPHER LONG: Okay. Right

 6   now, we have media servers at Metrotech where we

 7   archive our files. There's not an official

 8   policy. But, we haven't had to delete any files

 9   as of yet. But, we're getting to the point where

10   we might start blowing off some really dated

11   materials. But, I don't know that there is a

12   specific law in terms of retention with regard to

13   the video files that we have.

14   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. All

15   right. - - again, as more and more becomes online

16   and I guess that's something down the line to talk

17   about.

18   PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah, it's an issue

19   that's much broader than just video.

20   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes.

21   PAUL COSGRAVE: We're currently

22   discussing it with Law Department--

23   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good.

24   PAUL COSGRAVE: -- on all sorts of

25   records and things. That's--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Absolutely.

PAUL COSGRAVE: -- becoming a very cost-prohibitive issue.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Absolutely.

CHRISTOPHER LONG: And, one other thing is the vast majority of our video files now are relatively small in duration. So, they're not going on for hours and hours.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Can webcasts, if done, be offered at different bit rates to accommodate users who may be using dial up? That's something that obviously, when you're talking about government and want to be as accessible as possible. Obviously, is that something that has come up at all?

PAUL COSGRAVE: You know, generally speaking, video over, let's say, a 9600 board modem, which would be dial up, has not been very effective. There's ways of doing it; be very granular. It would not be very clear, probably not recommended, frankly. But, generally speaking, you're talking about someone with accessibility by broadband technology.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I know

you talked about, and I appreciate that, that

there are ways of looking at this and we could

talk about scaling down, changing, etcetera. One

of the issues is how would we think about, for

instance, I don't know that every single committee

of every single Community Board would be of

interest to anybody. So, there's certainly lots

of ways that one could look at this. Do you know

if, and maybe we should have researched this more,

if other cities or states or even the State of New

York have some cut-offs? In other words, does it

have to be every single? What would be some ideas

about how it could be scaled down from your

perspective, 'cause I agree with you? Every

single public meeting is not of interest to the

public.

PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah. So, first of

all, we'd recommend not referencing the Open

Meetings Law because that's--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

That's everything.

PAUL COSGRAVE: That's everything.

So, we would need to do this in a more segmented

way in terms of how we address it. I think our

1

2   recommendation, frankly, is that, as they did in

3   the State, permit a period of planning up front,

4   let's say 90 days, as they did in the State, and

5   then, we could come up with a timeline of how we

6   would do this and exactly what meetings it would

7   make sense to do this with.

8   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Now, what kind

9   of-- the State of New York was a $2 million start-

10   up cost, which seems, today, actually quite low,

11   but what kind of infrastructure would be necessary

12   in order to do webcasting? Would we have to

13   change 22 Reed Street? Would we have to change

14   other meeting rooms that are used frequently by

15   City agencies? Again, there are so many of them.

16   PAUL COSGRAVE: So, if you're

17   satisfied with the way it was done at the State, I

18   mean, you referenced the--

19   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

20   I've seen--

21   PAUL COSGRAVE: -- Hudson Parks

22   reservation--

23   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And, that--

24   PAUL COSGRAVE: -- and other

25   examples that we look [crosstalk]--

2   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

3   'Cause that's not in a fancy meeting room.

4   PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah.

5   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's why I

6   was referencing.

7   PAUL COSGRAVE: Other examples

8   we've referenced here and used is the Public

9   Service Commission, etcetera. So, if you're

10 satisfied with the way those meetings work, then I

11 think the New York State estimate is probably a

12 pretty good estimate, actually, for on a per unit

13 basis. But, the best way to do this would be to

14 confine it to some, you know, some set number of

15 rooms and not make it all open-ended. And, it's

16 Community Boards, frankly, that concern us because

17 the Community Boards, you know, some of those

18 meetings are sometimes conducted in people's homes

19 and stuff. I mean, so, you know, you really want

20 to be fairly constrained on the meeting rooms.

21   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And, do

22 you think that the City already has, and this is

23 what you would determine, I guess, from each

24 agency, have a lot of this capability? You'd have

25 to ask each agency to see what their meetings room

2   look like and what their capability is.

3   PAUL COSGRAVE: Exactly. And,

4   that's what they did at the State during that 90-

5   day period. Each agency had to come up with a

6   plan of how it was going to meet the Governor's

7   Executive Order. And, during that 90-day initial

8   period, they said how they would equip their

9   rooms, what it would cost. And, it also gave them

10   time to put in the procurement vehicles that

11   allowed the agencies to procure the services,

12   etcetera.

13   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And, how long,

14   do you think, again, maybe modeling with the State

15   of New York, it would take to-- how much time

16   would we give to agencies to come up with that

17   kind of plan?

18   PAUL COSGRAVE: Assuming, again,

19   that we limit it to a reasonable number, and not,

20   you know, excluding the Community Boards, as an

21   example, the State estimates' a reasonable

22   timeframe.

23   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Now, how would

24   this collaborate, coordinate with I guess NYC TV,

25   because, right now, to the credit of NYC T, a lot

of forums are covered, Council meetings, Mayoral,

etcetera? And so, would there be overlap? Would

we have a different scenario perhaps for NYC TV?

I think it's very important, personally, to

continue the great work that NYC does, because

it's a different audience.

PAUL COSGRAVE: We would work to

coordinate it. So, in effect, today, for example,

you've got NYC TV involved in providing the camera

work. You've got, in the case of the City

Council, it would be the City Council IT

organization, webmaster, that would probably do

the actual broadcasting. Chris would do it for

other Mayoral meetings. But, we can work the

three groups together to make it common. So, you

wouldn't want to duplicate the number of cameras

or things of that sort. You'd, obviously, want to

work that together.

Let me caveat my previous statement

in comparing us to the State. And, of course,

we're talking now, you know, roughly two years

later. We're in a much tougher economic

timeframe. So, I'd just caution you that, you

know, getting the funding today to do this is

2   going to be a lot tougher than it would have been

3   two years ago.

4   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I understand

5   that. I guess my point is thinking about

6   democracy is that it's the way that, as we're

7   making these tough decisions, if the public has

8   more information, then they're more likely to

9   understand why some of these decisions are being

10   made. Council Member Koppell.

11   PAUL COSGRAVE: We agree. I mean--

12   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

13   PAUL COSGRAVE: -- the Mayor's, you

14   know, goals of transparency and accessibility--

15   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right.

16   PAUL COSGRAVE: -- absolutely, we

17   agree with you on that.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I read them in

19   the Mayor's Management report today.

20   COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you.

21   I'm sorry I missed part of your testimony. But,

22   I've read it all. And, I gather you have concerns

23   about Community Boards. And, I appreciate the

24   cost concerns there. But, I'm wondering whether

25   there's some way perhaps, I know the Community

Boards have very constrained budgets as it is.

But, perhaps we could leave it up to Community

Boards whether they want to allocate money for

this purpose. And then, the City could give some

technical assistance in implementing it because I

know that some Community Boards, I think, would be

very interested in doing this; maybe not at every

meeting. But, I think there should be the ability

of Community Boards to access this. And, I don't

know, I'm not a technical person, so I don't know

how complex that would be.

PAUL COSGRAVE: We agree. The

Community Boards are at very different stages of

their technology savvy and how they do this. But,

and we--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL:

[Interposing] So, do some of them do it now?

PAUL COSGRAVE: Not to my

knowledge. Not to my knowledge.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: So, what I

would, I think that, and I recommend to the

Chairman some discussion on this, if the Community

Board has the money to allocate for it, then--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: They don't.

1

2   COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well, I

3 know my colleague says they don't. But, they have

4 a lot of discretion in their budget.

5   PAUL COSGRAVE: There's nothing to

6 stop them from doing this other than their

7 technology skill and then, our ability to support

8 them. As an example, though, right now we've been

9 doing a lot of work with Community Boards just

10 helping them get their websites up. Chris has got

11 a backlog of six Community Boards right now that

12 he's working on. And so, it's just a priority

13 question of, you know, we have limited resources.

14 We can help. And, we do help wherever we can.

15 But, the most important thing is they have to come

16 up with the funding. We don't have the funding.

17 So, that, again, the funding really is the

18 constraint.

19   COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Do you

20 know, in addition, do you know whether they have

21 the ability to raise private funds for this

22 purpose?

23   PAUL COSGRAVE: I have no knowledge

24 to that.

25   COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well,

that's something I think for us to look into. I

can tell you that in one of my Community Boards, I

think, number one, it would be of great interest.

Maybe in all my Community Boards, but, I know, at

least one and there might be some capability of

raising limited amounts of private funds to pay

for some or all of this.

PAUL COSGRAVE: The one--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: So, I

think that should be looked into.

PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah. The--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I'm sure

that in the Chair's district, private funds could

be raised for this.

PAUL COSGRAVE: Yeah. The only

different--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL:

[Interposing] We know different districts have

different populations. And, I said parts of mine.

I said, absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Maybe they

all could raise a lot.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: That's

true. Yeah, that's true.

PAUL COSGRAVE: One word of caution

there and certainly there's nothing that prohibits

anybody from doing this, whatever, on their own.

I mean, I think the only objection we have is that

it's a mandate. So, you just need to be careful

on the mandate. But, one thing I will caution you

is a number of people are looking to do this in a

public/private partnership type of way, such,

maybe, as you're suggesting. You have to be

careful because if we're doing this as a

government entity and we're using dot gov, we

cannot have any advertising. So, we have to be

very careful that there not be an advertised

model.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I think

that's a good caution. And, I'd be skeptical

about advertising. Although I think maybe that

isn't a bad idea. I don't know. But, in any

event, I do think-- I'm strongly supportive of

this effort, Madam Chair, and I do think a

considerable effort should be made to include

Community Boards to the extent that we can. Maybe

in consultation with their representatives, we

could work out a program. I'd be opposed to not

2   considering or encouraging that dimension because

3   my Community Boards, not only in Riverdale, but

4   they generate a great deal of attendance and

5   interest on [crosstalk]

6   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I think it's

7   good. The bill, right now, does not include

8   Community Boards, per se. Although if you talk

9   about open meetings, then everything is included.

10   So, I think that one of the discussions, thanks to

11   the Commissioner and DoITT, we have regular

12   meetings with the members of all 59 Community

13   Boards. In fact, we can even call in. It's very

14   exciting. But, the fact of the matter is maybe we

15   could, on their dime, sort of speak in some

16   innovative way, think of a way to help them figure

17   out how to do it, as opposed to putting it on the

18   City. I know that there's no funding, per se, but

19   maybe we get some outside funding for everybody,

20   as opposed to trying to do it through the City.

21   Go ahead, Council Member.

22   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: In downtown

23   Brooklyn, there's the Downtown Brooklyn

24   Development Corporation, which has been

25   responsible for all the development in downtown

1

2 Brooklyn. In two of my Community Boards, we have

3 created Friends of Community Board X and Friends

4 of Community Board Y for whatever projects we're

5 focusing on. And, we were able to raise quite a

6 bit of money for various projects. And so,

7 perhaps we can consider something like Friends of.

8 On your list is Community Board 2,

9 8 or 9 in Brooklyn?

10 CHRISTOPHER LONG: Community Board

11 2.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Community

13 Board 2 in downtown Brooklyn. I would think so.

14 Okay. And, where are they on the list? Are they

15 close to the top?

16 CHRISTOPHER LONG: We're just

17 waiting for their content and their site map. I

18 think we got their site map. And so, we're

19 waiting for the content.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay.

21 CHRISTOPHER LONG: So, it should be

22 going soon.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay. Good,

24 thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I want to

thank you both very much. I think this is a good

beginning. And, we'll keep in touch in the near

future and figure out a way to make webcasting

happen. Thank you very much.

PAUL COSGRAVE: Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER LONG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. The

next panel is Robert Feldman, from Total

Webcasting and Chris Rynders, from Granicus.

Thank you both for being here.

ROBERT FELDMAN: Are we going

individually?

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You can come

together. You can sit together. I know you want

to [Crosstalk]

ROBERT FELDMAN: --speak

individually.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Do you want to

sit-- they like to sit… Thank you very much.

Whomever would like to begin should do so.

CHRIS RYNDERS: Go ahead.

ROBERT FELDMAN: Thank you for the

invitation to be here this morning. My name is

Robert Feldman. And, I'm President of Total

2   Webcasting. Total Webcasting is a small business

3   located in the lower Hudson Valley. I'm happy to

4   say that, even in this economy, we're flourishing

5   right now and growing. My son is my partner in

6   the company. So, it's not just a small New York

7   business, but it's a small family business that's

8   growing. We have been in business since 2000,

9   focused on delivering full service webcasting

10   solutions to both the public and private sectors.

11   We have extensive experience working with state

12   and local governments, along with primary and

13   secondary educational institutes and some small

14   and large private companies and corporations.

15   Our experience related specifically

16   to webcasting government proceedings began in 2002

17   when we webcasted the local village board meetings

18   in the community where I was serving as Deputy

19   Mayor. Although, at that point, webcasting was

20   relatively new, I, being in the webcasting

21   business, I just saw it immediately that this

22   would be a terrific thing for government, because

23   we face the problems that, I'm sure on a much,

24   much larger scale, the City faces. People tend

25   not to come to your meetings until they're mad at

2   you. They're usually too late, 'cause by the time

3   they come, you've already gone through all of the

4   legwork. And, of course, we're all always worried

5   about how the press interprets what we say.

6   Whereas, with webcasting, there's no doubt. You

7   can say let's go to the videotape, although we

8   don't use tape anymore, I suppose. We have

9   successfully now webcasted hundreds of municipal

10   meetings on behalf of New York State, County

11   governments as well as towns and villages, not

12   just in New York State, but also in New Jersey and

13   Connecticut.

14   In January, 2007, as we've heard

15   before, then-Governor Spitzer, on his first day in

16   office, issued Executive Order 3, which requires

17   all New York State agencies and authorities to

18   webcast their public meetings. Based on our

19   experience, this was initially met with some

20   resistance by various departments and agencies

21   that had to comply. But, we have now found that

22   webcasting is considered, by most, as a valuable

23   tool not only to the public, but also for the

24   staff of the respective agencies. Governor

25   Paterson, after a detailed analysis of the

2   benefits and costs, re-enforced New York State's

3   commitment to public access of government decision

4   making by continuing the Executive Order. Today

5   we webcast for many agencies including the

6   Department of Health, the DEC, Lower Manhattan

7   Development Corporation and, the one that was

8   mentioned, the Hudson River Park Trust, which is

9   at Reed Street, which is where they hold their

10   meetings. There really are no barriers for us, as

11   far as locations. Again, we go to Reed Street,

12   which certainly is not a technologically advanced

13   room by any means. And, you know, to our credit,

14   we've webcasted from the top of the bobsled run in

15   Lake Placid for ORDA, which is the Olympic

16   Regional Development Authority.

17   Also, one notable point here is

18   that even many communities that receive the open

19   access free channel from their local cable or

20   television franchise, still have decided to go

21   ahead with webcasting. There's a lot of barriers

22   with any of the cable, you know, hard wire cable

23   companies, satellite, there's so many of them.

24   Webcasting is truly agnostic. It

25   doesn't really care whose technology you're using,

whose service you're using, whether you're on a

MAC or a PC, whether you're on the internet. The

question about dial up, although we do see that it

is a very small number of viewers, there are still

some dial up viewers. And, technologically, when

done correctly with the right type of streaming

technology, we do what's called multiple bit rate

encoding, which means, at the same time for the

broadband, we're making a narrow band stream. I'm

hoping that the time will come soon that we don't

have to worry too much more about that.

Also, in some of the smaller

communities that we're working with, those that

have absolutely no money at all, they all find

some creative ways to pay for this. One is to

find underwriting, or using the term of public

television, not sponsorship, but underwriting and

like, local banks, local companies will, you know,

sponsor these types of things because it's a good

thing. And, the more people are aware of what's

going on, the more they may understand how and why

government reaches the decisions that they do.

Today we're here to discuss

specifically government webcasting and how it can

be implemented by New York City government. There

are two possible approaches to take; full service

or self service. Now, with full service, a

company like ours would come to the meeting

location with all of the equipment necessary to

conduct the webcast, and the administration needed

for the webcast to reach the unlimited audience

that it can. We have developed a comprehensive

mobile system, we call it the TW Mediacart, which

allows us to do a full service webcast with just

one technician using an unobtrusive approach with

remote control cameras.

I know from experience that when a

camera like that points to some people, it's quite

obvious when it does, it makes people nervous.

They're not always going to say maybe what's on

their mind or they might have difficulties. Our

system kind of blends into the room and people

really don't even realize that we're there most of

the time. The one person that has to go to the

meeting, sits off in a corner and just does his

thing. It's almost like a videogame with a

joystick.

We can control up to six cameras,

so that when we walk into a room like this, where

there was a column properly placed right in the

middle of the room, we can work around these

things. And, by doing this, we've reduced the

cost by going with one person. It makes a major

difference. Also, in the development of our

system and our car, we've made it so that you can

pack it into a Subaru Impreza-- that's my

benchmark-- the littlest car that I could get it

into that gets the best gas mileage. And then, lo

and behold, we do. And, the parking attendants in

Manhattan are always amazed when we pull in with

that little car and ultimately out comes this nice

big machine that we then roll down the street

with.

Now, full service isn't for

everyone. And, we also supply self service

webcasting to many organizations that do very,

very high volume, are typically in one location,

so it's better return on investment to install

something in the room. You know, you can get

carried away with all this sort of stuff. I do

webcasting at the Time, Inc. building for Time

Warner. And, their room, you know, I drool when I

1

2   walk in there at the gazillion dollars that was

3   spent fixing that room up. But, it doesn't really

4   have to be that way. And, it can be done in a

5   very cost-effective way. So, with self service,

6   we would rely on the installed system, either one

7   that was previously installed or one that can be

8   provided by us. And, we would then administer the

9   webcast as if it was a full service approach.

10   Regardless of whether the webcast

11   is full or self service, your webcasting company

12   should provide the necessary content distribution

13   so there is no impact on your network. All

14   bandwidth and archive storage is done outside of

15   your network and requires no support from your IT

16   department. And, that's actually a very important

17   fact in point for this to work well, you know, and

18   I work for some organizations that have very, very

19   deep resources when it comes to IT. But, when it

20   comes to this, they'd rather not and that's the

21   right decision because it takes the right kind of

22   network to distribute video, multimedia, over the

23   internet properly. And, there is a handful of

24   those networks that are built out and to do it

25   right, it's best to be using that type of network.

2   And, also in our administration,

3   without going into great detail, there's all sorts

4   of little bells and whistles that are added that

5   make this even better. Certainly, when it comes

6   to archiving, the on-demand aspect of this is

7   terrific. That, you know, if you can't make the

8   meeting live, at any time, you don't have to wait

9   for a scheduled time, you just go on and click.

10   We do indexing of the agenda, which is very, very

11   helpful, especially for a meeting that might run

12   for eight hours, even. We just did a public

13   hearing for the Health Department that went almost

14   eight hours. And, what we do is we index the

15   agenda so that you can click on the spot that

16   you're interested in and go straight to that and

17   not have to kind of weed your way through the

18   whole video to find what you're looking for.

19   Another thing that was mentioned is

20   the captioning. And, certainly, Assemblyperson--

21   I'm sorry legislator--

22   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Gale, I like

23   Gale.

24   ROBERT FELDMAN: You like Gale.

25   Thank you. That's easier to say. I go to so many

governments, I'm forgetting which structure of

government I'm sitting at sometimes.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Gale is fine.

ROBERT FELDMAN: The issue of

captioning, when it started out, and the Executive

Order certainly put a lot out there for us to

consider, the prices were pretty high. And, I

know I've dropped my prices throughout the year as

we adjusted to this. So now, the cost of close

captioning, post-production, which is very, very

highly accurate, isn't very high. And, one of the

benefits is is you get a verbatim transcript,

along with the meeting. So, from an archival and

from a historical standpoint, from a documentation

standpoint, you really have things very well

covered at that moment. You have a video that

corresponds to a transcript. And, it's all there.

So from a cost perspective, 'cause

that's always the bottom line in it all, the full

service, obviously, will have a higher price per

meeting but does not require any capital

investment. Installing and maintaining your own

system does lower the per webcast cost but it does

require some portion of a technician to operate

2   the system during a meeting. And, the cost of

3   FTEs certainly have to be considered in any effort

4   that you do.

5   So, for general informational

6   purposes, I don't mind throwing numbers out,

7   'cause I am on the New York State contract and,

8   you know, our prices are all right out there for

9   everyone to see. Let's say we were doing this

10   meeting and it went for three hours, that would

11   cost approximately $1,100. And, that's full

12   service where the City has no involvement

13   whatsoever. That's, you know, external network

14   and so on.

15   The cost for the self service, if

16   let's say, there had been a camera installed and

17   so on, and let's say it could be a fixed camera,

18   so that there was no need for staff, the cost for

19   that is $250. So, certainly, in those situations,

20   the costs are much less. And, real quick, going

21   back to the Community Boards, you know, one way to

22   save money is just have somebody use camcorder,

23   like this gentleman is using. And, it's easy

24   enough to then take that and properly encode the

25   video so that it works properly on the web for

2   everyone. And, it's a way to save, you know, a

3   whole lot of money.

4   As far as the captioning goes, our

5   price now is down to $295 per hour of actual

6   meeting. So, if the meeting is, and long gaps,

7   like an Executive Session or something, doesn't

8   count, so if a meeting goes for two hours and 22

9   minutes, you're actually just paying for two hours

10   and 22 minutes. Our captioning company, as aside,

11   is actually a woman-owned business located right

12   here in Manhattan. And, we're happy to be working

13   with them. We give them a lot of work and they

14   were just thrilled recently when we started with

15   them, because it's really helping them maintain

16   their operation here in Manhattan.

17   And, from a hardware standpoint,

18   we've installed simple systems in rooms from

19   anywhere from six to $10,000 for a room and our

20   Mediacart, that I described that we take around

21   all sorts of places, costs about $12,000 to own.

22   So, thank you for the invitation to

23   come here. I'm usually on the camera side or

24   doing these meeting. And, you know, it was nice

25   to come down here and hear what you're doing.

2   And, I hope it all works out.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

4   much. I really appreciate your input and for

5   allowing us to come and see your amazing

6   operation.

7   ROBERT FELDMAN: Thank you.

8   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Next. Thank

9   you.

10   CHRIS RYNDERS: Can I use the

11   computer to - - ?

12   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Absolutely.

13   ROBERT FELDMAN: Should I stay up

14   here? Are you going to ask questions?

15   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Oh, yeah.

16   ROBERT FELDMAN: Okay.

17   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Off-mic],

18   yeah. Thank you.

19   CHRIS RYNDERS: That's fine. Yeah,

20   whatever's easiest. Thanks. Yeah, let's try it.

21   There it goes. All right.

22   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Great.

23   CHRIS RYNDERS: Good morning,

24   Council Member Brewer--

25   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good morning.

1

2   CHRIS RYNDERS: -- and fellow

3   Council Members. Thank you for having me this

4   morning. My name is Chris Rynders, Director for

5   the Eastern United States for Granicus. Granicus

6   was founded in the late '90s as a webstreaming

7   company with a very unique focus, in that we only

8   work with local and state governments. So, all

9   450 plus of our clients are cities, towns,

10   counties, villages and state organizations

11   throughout the United States. We are the leading

12   provider for webcasting for governments in the

13   U.S. We currently provide a little under 100,000

14   webcasts for governments across the country.

15   And, what we want to do is

16   basically look at a few examples of how our

17   clients use the webstreaming technology. So, I

18   know Mr. Cosgrave referenced a lot about cost,

19   which obviously is extremely important. And, we

20   give you basically the ability to modularize how

21   many meetings that you want to stream and from

22   what locations. So, a lot of our clients, like

23   Council Member Brewer referenced, you can start at

24   a point where you want maybe particular committees

25   or certain Council sessions that are streamed or,

2   potentially, all of them, like the open records

3   request.

4   So, basically you do have some

5   options. We do have kind of an unlimited model

6   that allows you to stream as many public meetings

7   to the web as you want. We do not charge you per

8   hour or per meeting or anything like that. So,

9   Mr. Cosgrave also referenced the potential of

10   3,000 public meetings. It's obviously quite a bit

11   here in the City of New York. So, you'll see

12   here, if you can see on the presentation here,

13   that currently we work with the City of Los

14   Angeles, San Francisco, City of Dallas, City of

15   Miami, City of Indianapolis, a number of large

16   cities that currently have over 2,000 webcasts per

17   each city that we do webcast and archive for them

18   currently today.

19   So, as we got started with this

20   unique focus on government, we saw that a couple

21   things were very important in the minds of our

22   cities and counties in that they wanted to improve

23   transparency, as we talked a lot about today. And

24   then, also to create what we call an integrated

25   public record, where the audio and video becomes

1

2   cross-linked, indexed and searchable with all

3   legislation and all legislative documents. So,

4   this could reference agendas, minutes, bills,

5   whatever type of legislation that's created here

6   within the City, whether at the committee level or

7   actually at a regular Council session level.

8   So, we want to take a few examples

9   here to kind of show you what I'm referencing with

10   that integrated public record. This is our

11   website, granicus.com. And, we actually have all

12   of our clients listed, the little over 450 that I

13   referenced earlier. And, the idea, too, is that

14   we found that a lot of staff time is utilized to

15   fulfill public information requests, not only for

16   citizens, for your constituents, but also for

17   internal staff.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Lobbyists.

19   CHRIS RYNDERS: Lobbyists.

20   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: They want to

21   know what's going on.

22   CHRIS RYNDERS: Attorneys. Sure.

23   So, we wanted to be able to integrate everything

24   together where, rather than having to work with

25   actual staff or to call the New York City staff, I

2   can actually just retrieve all this information on

3   my own, on your website.

4   So, you'll see here, this is the

5   list of cities and counties that we do work with

6   throughout the country. I have pulled up a few

7   examples. One thing that was important, that

8   Mr. Cosgrave referenced also, was really

9   enveloping within Christopher and his design of

10   the City's website and maintaining that look and

11   feel. So, the presentation of everything that NYC

12   TV produces, it maintains the look and feel of the

13   City's website. So, something I want to show you

14   here with the City and County of San Francisco.

15   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We've heard of

16   them.

17   CHRIS RYNDERS: You've heard of

18   them.

19   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We've heard of

20   San Francisco.

21   CHRIS RYNDERS: All right. So,

22   you'll see here that their website is embedded

23   here. And, what we do is integrate with your

24   website, as I referenced. So, you'll see here all

25   the regular Board meetings, every commission

meeting and committee meeting that exists, all

Mayor's related content and then, additional

programming, which we know is on different

channels with NYC TV. So, what's really nice is

that I can pull up maybe Board of Supervisor

meetings and all related committees associated

with the Board of Supervisors. So, you'll see

here some different committees including Budget

and Finance, City and School Districts, Public

Safety committees. Then, I also have all their

other boards and commissions. So, you reference,

I do believe there's 43 committees. Is that

correct?

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: They grow or--

CHRIS RYNDERS: Roughly.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: -- whatever,

something like that. Close enough.

CHRIS RYNDERS: Got you. So,

you'll see here, they have currently approximately

35 boards and commissions that they do stream to

the web through our system. So, we can take a

look at those. All right. So, here are some of

those other commissions and every single one of

their commissions and committees is once again

1

2   archived, integrated with your website,

3   categorized appropriately. And then, most

4   importantly, we have some functionality that's

5   included with our most basic service that we

6   provide to every organization that we work with.

7   So, I'm going to go to one of their

8   regular board meetings. And, this goes back to

9   the reference of what we call the integrated

10   public record. So, you'll see all those meetings

11   indicated by date, duration and done typically in

12   some sort of order according to year and when it

13   was actually recorded. What you'll also notice is

14   that all of the content is searchable and

15   searchable by key word.

16   So, what's really nice is we did,

17   you also referenced earlier about ADA compliance,

18   obviously for the hearing-impaired. So, we do

19   have the ability to integrate the search with both

20   all of your legislation and your bill tracking

21   system, which is what we do at the state level at

22   lot for state legislature. So, we do this for the

23   Arizona State Legislature, the Colorado State

24   Legislature, the Tennessee State Legislature,

25   where we actually can integrate your bill tracking

2   system with the video. Then, also we can

3   integrate with the close captioning search as

4   well. So, we'll just look at here in just a

5   moment.

6   So, what's opening up here is the

7   actual video, of course, from the meeting. We

8   typically will encode in Windows Media

9   Silverlight, which means that basically it is a

10   cross-platform player, where I can view with any

11   type of browser. And, what you'll also see is the

12   documents associated with this meeting are

13   presented to the right. So, in this case, this

14   could be your agenda. This could be your list of

15   bills. It could be your minutes or your journal.

16   Whatever type of legislative document that you

17   want to present with the actual video itself.

18   What you'll also see is there's

19   hyperlinks, too, within the document itself. And,

20   there's also a list of every agenda item and

21   resolution and bill that's existed. So, I can

22   jump directly to that discussion. Also, you are

23   able to view the close captioning, as well, that's

24   associated with the video. Now, let's see if we

25   can get that coming up here. And, Mr. Cosgrave

did reference a higher speed connection that you

do need sometimes. And, there it goes. So,

there's my video.

You'll also see, too, that there's-

- I can download this to audio directly. So, we

do podcasting as well. So, what's really nice is

we'll transcode any of the files that we encode

directly to MP3 or MP4 formats. So, this is

really nice for an attorney that wants a portable

version of maybe a specific clip from your meeting

or the entire meeting or whatever it may be. So,

I can do that.

Also wanted to show you the

ability, too, here with the City of Los Angeles,

another city that we work with, is that you'll see

here with every public meeting they have here,

I've got the agenda, the journal, the video and

the MP3 audio for every single meeting. The

journal and the agenda are all cross-linked,

indexed and searchable with the video and audio

itself.

I'm going to also show you an

example of a search. So, if I search this

content, you're going to see basically two

results; one a search of the actual legislation,

second, the actual search from close captioning,

which is what I referenced earlier. So, if the

funding did include moving for close captioning

with your different committee meetings, you could

incorporate that functionality. We do work with

some organizations, of course, here in the State

of New York, small organizations, including the

Village of Rye Brook, as well as the Long Island

Power Authority and some other state agencies.

So, here's my results of the

search. So, what's really nice is that in the

purple as a result of searching the actual

legislative documentation. In the green is the

search of close captioning. So, whenever my

particular search word was said, Bill Number 533

or whatever it may be, I can pull up all the

results from when that was actually discussed.

So, it's essentially integrating your audio/video

to your legislative history and legislative

tracking, which is this is where we find to become

really the public access tool and the power of

that that your constituents and staff will have

access to. And then, from there, I can jump

2   directly to that meeting and directly to that

3   discussion.

4   Now, what's nice is if you do end

5   up, you could start at a scale, as we talked

6   about, where you have certain committees or

7   certain commissions and Council meetings that you

8   do want to stream. The power, obviously, of once

9   that you integrate all of the meetings, they are

10 all cross-platform searchable, which is really

11 powerful. Okay.

12   So, those are a few examples I just

13 wanted to show you. And, be happy to answer any

14 questions.

15   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

16 That's very helpful.

17   CHRIS RYNDERS: Okay.

18   FEMALE VOICE: Just a question.

19   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure.

20   FEMALE VOICE: Did I see public

21 comment that you have the comment from the public

22 incorporated [off-mic]?

23   CHRIS RYNDERS: Yes. So, basically

24 if the public comment, which could be an agenda

25 item for some of our clients, yes, there would be

1

2 a direct link to when an individual or a

3 constituent actually spoke on an item. That's

4 correct, exactly.

5   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you

6 both.

7   FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

8   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right. I

9 have a question, just to start with. How do you

10 deal with archive in the State of New York? Do

11 they have policies on that or is that something

12 that you're working with them on? It's on.

13   ROBERT FELDMAN: It's on. The

14 Executive Order clearly states that the archives

15 have to be maintained for two months online and

16 then, after that, they have to be turned in on a

17 disk, which is what-- it's very interesting.

18 There are some of the smaller authorities that

19 really aren't into this, so to speak. And,

20 they're very quick to want to have theirs off

21 there as soon as they're allowed to and not have

22 any meetings up there that don't have to be up

23 there. But then, there are those that, you know,

24 see it for being a benefit. And, we maintain

25 their archives for them as long as they want. So,

1

2   it's really up to them.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And,

4   Chris, does each city have like a bid process? I

5   mean, how does each city-- I guess you're working

6   with some of the legislatures. I know in the

7   State of New York, as Robert has explained to me,

8   that State Legislature is doing their in-house and

9   then, the State of New York is done on a contract

10   basis.

11   CHRIS RYNDERS: Exactly.

12   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So, do you

13   find that's across the country, as similar?

14   Sometimes the legislature is doing one way and the

15   government, city government, may be doing

16   something else? Or, are they more integrated?

17   Or, does it just depend?

18   CHRIS RYNDERS: It depends. They

19   can be integrated. The typical method we see of

20   purchase, in this case, we're obviously on the EO

21   3 contract. So, any state or any agency within

22   the State of New York can purchase our solution.

23   So, that's typically an intergovernmental

24   agreement, which is about 20-- a method about 25%

25   of our clients, that's how they purchase our

2   solution. Fifty percent of our clients purchase

3   via sole source. The remaining percentage do go

4   to RFP and do a formal bid process.

5   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We're a RFP

6   nation, just so you know. There is no other way.

7   The head of contracts is sitting to my left here.

8   So, she would tell you that for sure. There's no

9   sole sourcing. The other question I have is do

10   you find that the agencies tell you that there's

11   more public input as the result of webcasting and

12   streaming? In other words, do the agencies give

13   you any anecdotal stories about the result of your

14   work and the way in which it integrates with

15   public discussion?

16   CHRIS RYNDERS: Yes, I can give

17   some specific examples. The first thing we do is

18   we do give you reporting tools to show you how

19   many hits or how many views you get on all your

20   content. We can differentiate it, whether it's a

21   New York City employee versus someone outside the

22   City's network. So, you know where that usage is

23   coming from, also the quantity. So, for instance,

24   like an organization like San Francisco, since we

25   already looked at them, obviously, they're much

2   smaller in size compared to the City of New York.

3   But, they typically will see roughly five to 6,000

4   hits a month on average. So, we definitely see

5   that the amount of-- once the constituents are

6   aware of these services, the amount of viewership

7   increases immensely.

8   What we also see is a huge

9   reduction in staff time to provide information to

10 the public. So, one example, City of Gainesville,

11 Florida, they actually reduced their public

12 information requests by 85%, according to their

13 City Clerk, which is, obviously, pretty dramatic.

14 They do publish every commission meeting, every

15 Council meeting that exists.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: They have

17 three of them?

18   CHRIS RYNDERS: They definitely

19 don't have 43. I think they have around 12 to 13.

20   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Crosstalk]

21   CHRIS RYNDERS: So, we also saw, in

22 City of Stockton, California, what they did is

23 their City Clerk staff time was greatly reduced by

24 about 50%, according to them. So, what they did

25 is they took that staff time and they applied it

1

2 to a passport certification program, where they

3 actually generated revenue for the city. So,

4 we've seen across the board for all of our

5 clients, basically, the two main goals of one,

6 improving public transparency, public access and

7 creating tools for the citizens and staff, as well

8 as reducing internal staff time to get information

9 to those individuals.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's good.

11 Robert?

12 ROBERT FELDMAN: Yeah, a couple of

13 interesting scenarios and the stats that can be

14 provided are terrific. Unlike television, where,

15 you know, it's kind of more of an analysis. You

16 don't really know. We can drill down, right down

17 to the zip code of where somebody is sitting while

18 they're watching. So, that's a good powerful tool

19 to know if you're reaching, who you're reaching

20 and so on.

21 One interesting kind of a cute

22 story. We webcast for the Duchess County

23 Legislature and it's a rather contentious group,

24 to say the least. And, we were webcasting a

25 meeting a few months ago. And, one of the

legislators announces that one of the other

legislators, who was absent from the meeting, is

watching in Italy and he's saying you can't do

what you're doing. You've got to wait until he's

back. So, it was, you know, kind of funny and--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

ROBERT FELDMAN: -- everyone really

did get a kick out if. But, on a serious note,

travel being what it is, the time involved, the

issues related to, you know, fossil fuel

consumption and so on, all of those things, this

is without a doubt going to help all of that.

And, a great example that I have is is we do all

of the Department of Health webcasting on the

road. And, we hear so often from physicians and

attorneys that are part of all these different

commissions and councils that don't always have to

be there, that it just saved them tremendously.

And, you know, this is, whether it's Granicus,

whether it's us or whether it's anyone else, this

is a really strong consideration is that not

everyone has to come to these meetings. And, if

we don't stop thinking that way that everyone does

and we don't give people an opportunity for the

2   few minutes that they really need to be involved

3   to do that in a remote way, I think would be

4   foolish not to use it that way.

5   Last year, the Putnam County

6   Executive decided to do his State of the County

7   address as a webcast only; only invited a handful

8   of people to the actual location. And, we made it

9   interactive so that the public was able to submit

10   their questions while he was speaking. And, you

11   know, going into it, I was a little concerned

12   whether he was going to get any questions. So, I

13   made sure that we had, you know, a bunch of them

14   in a can so that just in case he didn't get

15   embarrassed. But, frankly, it was just the

16   opposite. It was overwhelming how many people

17   watched it, commented; how they appreciated the

18   fact that they didn't have to drag, in this case

19   it's rural, so they didn't have to drive over to

20   the location. But, you know, I would have to

21   think in the City, transportation being what it is

22   is if you can give some people that option of not

23   having to take the subway, take the train or the

24   bus or whatever it might be, it's a good thing.

25   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I've always

2   wished that when we are having hearings like this,

3   just like the call on New York One or even

4   something like Larry King, I don't know that he

5   knows exactly what he's doing, but he certainly

6   reads the teleprompter, whatever, that you could,

7   in fact, have call-in or web-in people--

8   ROBERT FELDMAN: [Interposing] And,

9   you can. It's really quite simple.

10   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Exactly. But,

11   that's where I would like to go with some of the

12   streaming. Go ahead.

13   CHRIS RYNDERS: Just one reference

14   to Mr. Cosgrave, obviously, referenced a lot about

15   cost and funding, of course, which--

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

17   Cost and cost, yes.

18   CHRIS RYNDERS: Absolutely. So,

19   just to give a little bit of perspective for the

20   Committee here, for an organization your size,

21   typically our hosting fees, which basically what

22   that means is unlimited video content regardless

23   if you have 3,000 meetings or 6,000 meetings,

24   unlimited content, unlimited meetings, unlimited

25   viewership by the public and unlimited bandwidth,

2   would typically range for a client your size from

3   about 250,000 to about 500,000 a year--

4   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

5   CHRIS RYNDERS: -- which is,

6   obviously, quite a bit less than the 1.6 million

7   which I think Vancouver was utilizing. So, just a

8   perspective. And then, also our upfront costs

9   would usually range somewhere in the same

10   vicinity--

11   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

12   CHRIS RYNDERS: -- about 250 to

13   500.

14   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We've been

15   joined by Council Member James Sanders, Jr. and I

16   think that his constituents, in Far Rockaway,

17   would very much like to have webcasting and

18   streaming so that they wouldn't have to travel all

19   the way in.

20   COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Well put.

21   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I have one

22   final question, which is that when you are-- the

23   Commissioner also issued, or discussed the issue

24   of space and rooms. And, I know you mentioned,

25   Robert, that if even on the Lake Placid, you could

2   handle State Commission. But, what is reality?

3   Obviously, in this City, we have many different

4   rooms, just as you do in the State or even in Los

5   Angeles. How many of them end up being fixed?

6   How many of them end up being more mobile? What

7   is the issue regarding this room problem? Or, is

8   it a problem? Maybe it's not. That came up a lot

9   in the Commissioner's testimony.

10   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure.

11   ROBERT FELDMAN: Well, from our

12   perspective, it's not a problem. And, we have

13   government customers, as well as corporate and

14   educational customers, that sometimes it's a

15   hybrid, it's a blend depending on the location.

16   If it's a room where there's going to be constant

17   meetings going on, then by all means it pays to

18   adapt the room so that it doesn't require a

19   company to come in with their equipment and then,

20   that can reduce the cost. But, on the other hand,

21   even a large organization like the Department of

22   Health, would just as soon have a reliable

23   contractor that they can rely on to be where they

24   have to be. They don't have to hire any FTEs and

25   then, have the backup to the FTEs, as well as, you

2   know, it's a technology that's changing very

3   quickly. We're constantly doing the next best

4   thing because we're all trying to achieve a higher

5   level of quality so that it's a lot closer to

6   television quality video.

7   So, you know, for some, it just

8   makes sense to go ahead with the full service.

9   So, it's kind of a mix. And, our goal is to get

10   the webcasting done. It isn't really about

11   selling any boxes whatsoever. So, we really will

12   work with any client in any fashion that they

13   need. And, again, it may be a hybrid combination.

14   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Chris, you

15   want to answer also about the room issue. And

16   then--

17   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: -- Council

19   Member James has a question.

20   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure, absolutely.

21   So, what we see, actually, a lot of our clients in

22   rooms like this--

23   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

24   With columns right in the middle.

25   CHRIS RYNDERS: Oftentimes, because

2   of the size of the room, one camera actually will

3   suffice a lot of times. Basically, the one thing

4   nice about one camera, obviously, is you don't

5   need an operator, typically. You can, but you can

6   also have a fixed camera. For larger rooms,

7   obviously, you do need multiple cameras that can

8   take, obviously, the view of the elected

9   officials, as well as the public speakers and what

10   have you. So, we see, actually, quite a bit of

11   variation, depending, obviously, on the size and,

12   once again, Mr. Cosgrave did reference

13   infrastructure. So, a lot of times what we would

14   do, in my meetings with NYC TV is they, obviously,

15   have a lot of capacity and resources and it's very

16   impressive actually what they put on the web,

17   especially with regards to their original

18   programming. So, to utilize those resources as,

19   you know, as it's available, usually we would tie

20   into whatever capacity that they have. So, we do

21   see quite a wide variation. So, like, the - - on

22   the state legislature, they have all of their

23   committee rooms do have the ability to stream from

24   both their main floor session, which requires

25   seven or eight cameras, versus a lot of their

2   committee rooms have one to two cameras. So, that

3   cost is obviously very minimal. So, I can

4   actually go to any hearing room I want. But,

5   they're not in session right now.

6   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

7   much.

8   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure.

9   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Council Member

10   James.

11   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So, in New

12   York State, I know the State Assembly and the

13   State Senate, they operate internally? Or, do

14   they contract out? Do you know?

15   CHRIS RYNDERS: So, for the State

16   of New York--

17   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

18   CHRIS RYNDERS: -- the legislature,

19   they do streaming in-house. So, all--

20   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: It's all in-

21   house.

22   CHRIS RYNDERS: That is correct.

23   So, the distribution itself. But, the other state

24   agencies outside the legislature, I know we both

25   provide for some of those state agencies. So,

that is all outsourcing.

ROBERT FELDMAN: For the Assembly,
there's a organization called New York Networks.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Um, hm.

ROBERT FELDMAN: It's part of the
SUNY system.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Um, hm.

ROBERT FELDMAN: I kind of like
call it the equivalent of BOSES [phonetic]. And,
they have a home base in the Empire State Plaza
and they provide a lot of those services, you
know, when it comes to anything that's right there
at the capital building.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So, what are
the costs associated with outfitting, let's say,
the New York City Council and all of its
committees?

CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure. That's a
great question. With regards to video, AV camera
equipment and those sorts of devices, we typically
do not provide that ourselves. We work with AV
companies or, in this case, we'd work with NYC TV-
-

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Um, hm.

1

2   CHRIS RYNDERS: -- to generate a

3 cost there. But, I would say an average would be

4 somewhere between a room like this would be

5 somewhere between two to, you know, up to $10,000,

6 you know, depending upon what you want to provide.

7 And then, also, the capacity of-- I know right now

8 from the Council meetings themselves, the regular

9 meetings from City Hall, the issue, too, is being

10 able to send a broadcast signal from that

11 location, 'cause they currently cannot do that

12 now. So, that's something to consider as well.

13 That I would need a lot more information to

14 understand what the costs would be there for those

15 types of meetings.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

17   CHRIS RYNDERS: Sure.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Well, go

19 ahead.

20   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: I mean, just

21 to view this as a congestion reduction or

22 mitigation initiative is really interesting. And,

23 to consider this as part of the green initiative

24 is also--

25   ROBERT FELDMAN: Absolutely.

2   CHRIS RYNDERS: Yeah.

3   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --is very

4   interesting.

5   ROBERT FELDMAN: Without a doubt.

6   One comment about the historical aspects of some

7   of the rooms, we work with Vassar College. And,

8   we've been moving along with them in webcasting

9   'cause the benefits to the families that live far

10   away to be able to see their kids doing things.

11   And, they have buildings and spaces that are just

12   beyond belief. And, we've helped them and come up

13   with ways to build cameras into rooms that, you

14   know, are 200 years old with amazing types of

15   architecture. So, that's a, you know, it's a

16   technical challenge. But, that's all doable.

17   You know, one comment I guess in

18   summation would be to perhaps just put your toe in

19   and try it; see what the responses are. You could

20   do that without any commitments or anything like

21   that with any, you know, with either one of us.

22   And, you know, just like with the state, it was

23   all kind of like I can't believe this is going to

24   happen. I met with the, then, the Chief

25   Technology Officer or the CIO for New York State,

Dr. Middleman, like a few days after it was

announced. And, he goes you found out about it as

fast as I found out about it. So, it was really

kind of dropped on everyone. I had heard Governor

Spitzer in a campaign speech say the word

webcasting and my wife said, calm, calm down, you

know, 'cause I just hear the term webcasting and I

get all excited about it.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Me, too.

ROBERT FELDMAN: Yeah. But, you

know, it all settled into place. There was some

stress at the beginning. Some agencies had a

harder time than others pulling it together. Some

did try to do it themselves and found out it

wasn't, you know, their cup of tea, so to speak.

So, we found some new agencies that came along and

said hey, we tried it ourselves. It really didn't

work out. Can you help us now?

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right.

ROBERT FELDMAN: A lot of

approaches.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go ahead.

CHRIS RYNDERS: One other thing

just to consider, too, is that since cost is a

1

2   huge factor, obviously, is that we have a number

3   of clients, they just stream, especially at the

4   committee level, they just stream the audio or

5   whatever they have existing. So, in this case,

6   like City of Sarasota, you'll see they have every

7   commission and meeting published here. But, most

8   of this, 70% of these meetings are only via audio.

9   But, the nice thing is you still have the indexing

10   and linking to legislation and it's still all

11   searchable. So, it could be a nice starting

12   point, too, without you having to upgrade your

13   infrastructure essentially for all of your

14   committee rooms. So, that's something else to

15   consider.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We've been

17   joined by Council Member Bill de Blasio, who has a

18   quick question.

19   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: Thank

20   you, Madam Chair. I'm sorry I was late today.

21   What's striking me here, and looking at the

22   comparison in Commissioner Cosgrove's testimony

23   and--

24   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Cosgrave.

25   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO:

Cosgrave, I'm sorry, on other municipalities. I

mean I'm just struck by how much the public would

engage more if, not only they heard the audio, but

the video as well. And, that the cost is real,

but it's, to me, small price to pay to get folks

actually to understand the issues better, get more

involved. Right down to the Community Board

level, which I think is a great example. Someone

said to me the other day, in fact, PTA meetings

should be webcast so that people would, you know,

engage on a level that busy parents would love to,

but can't often because of schedule. But,

certainly, Community Boards, which are prone to

kind of cliquishness and need to be a place that's

for broader debate, I think it would be very

powerful to have people feel engaged because they

see it, get comfortable with it, and then, might

get more deeply involved. So, my question is, and

maybe this came up earlier, this is not a huge

cost in the scheme of things. It is a huge cost

compared to today, you know, starting at zero, but

not in the scheme of things. Has there been any

discussion in terms of the major technology firms

perhaps helping to pay for this as a pilot? I

1

2   mean, thinking about both some of them, I'll use

3   Google as an example, that I think has some sense

4   of social mission, but, also in terms of a

5   positive valid public relations opportunity to

6   help the biggest city in the country bring the

7   issues to the people. I would wonder if there

8   isn't a way to do this with some or all private

9   funding.

10   ROBERT FELDMAN: On a smaller

11   scale, in the Lower Hudson Valley, there's an

12   organization called Statewide Media Project.

13   They're a nonprofit. And, his sole purpose in

14   life is to help underwrite live webcasting of

15   government meetings. And, he's raised some money.

16   He's gotten some member items. It's hard to

17   believe he did get some money this year. And,

18   he's very optimistic now that next year he's going

19   to have even more money. And, he basically pays

20   to have meetings covered. In particular, ones

21   that have, you know, a lot of public interest.

22   So, I think that there are opportunities like

23   that. I had mentioned earlier when it comes to

24   the Community Boards, that perhaps like I have run

25   into in some of the small villages and towns

2   upstate, go to a local bank or a local company

3   that's maybe a profile company in a particular

4   community and say, hey, can you help us out with

5   this. We'd really like to get our stuff online.

6   And, you know, they're pretty inclined to do it.

7   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Bill, it makes

8   sense. We can't advertise on any City channel.

9   That would be the only challenge.

10   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: No,

11   absolutely. And, I mean, literally it would--

12   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Cannot.

13   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: -- maybe

14   use more of an MPR model, but even less

15   advertising than MPR--

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]

17   Yeah, we can't do it.

18   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: -- has

19   turned into.

20   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We can't. We

21   can't.

22   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: All

23   right.

24   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right.

25   COUNCIL MEMBER de BLASIO: Thank

2   you.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you,

4   panel, very much. And, thank you for your input.

5   And, I'm glad you got to hear the Commissioner,

6   some of his concerns 'cause that'll help address.

7   We are going to move forward. Thank you.

8   CHRIS RYNDERS: Thank you.

9   ROBERT FELDMAN: Thank you very

10   much.

11   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Our next panel

12   is Susan Lerner from Common Cause New York, Josh

13   Breitbart from People's Production House and

14   Rachel Fauss from Citizen's Union.

15   MALE VOICE: Over here, over here.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Whomever would

17   like to go first, go ahead.

18   SUSAN LERNER: All right. I will

19   start. Thank you. I have a very short written

20   statement. And, I would much rather riff a bit on

21   what we've heard this morning. First of all, I'd

22   like to commend the Chair and all of the co-

23   sponsors of this proposal. How excited we are to

24   see this moving forward. I have to admit, as

25   somebody who is thrilled to be back in New York

2   after a long exile in California, and I do not

3   want to be a advertisement for any particular

4   vendor.

5   Until today's meeting, I did not

6   know that the Los Angeles City site used an

7   outside vendor. But, I am a user of Los Angeles'

8   City website. I've had the ability to sit in my

9   former organization's office on the west side of

10   Los Angeles and not have to burn fossil fuel and

11   fight an hour and a half's worth of what should be

12   20 minutes traffic to get downtown to simply

13   monitor a City Council meeting or a committee

14   meeting. I've had the advantage of preparing for

15   testimony the night before on a crowded schedule

16   at one o'clock in the morning at home to go to the

17   website, click on tomorrow's agenda for the Ethics

18   Commission, click on the supporting documents,

19   print them out in PDF, read them and tailor my

20   testimony accordingly.

21   So, when I came back to what I

22   consider to be the greatest city in the world and

23   started doing government reform work and went to

24   the website and found that New York was way behind

25   Los Angeles, I was shocked. I was taken aback.

2   We are one of the communications, if not the

3   preeminent communication, capital in the world.

4   And, certainly we should be able to allow our

5   citizens to have the advantage of the cutting edge

6   of technology. And so, we're very excited and

7   looking forward to the increased dialogue of

8   figuring out the best and most efficient cutting

9   edge way to bring this up-to-date technology to

10   New York's residents because they will

11   participate. I mean, my personal experience is

12   that, indeed, they do.

13   When I testified in the Los Angeles

14   City Council on issues that were of interest, I

15   was always amazed at the phone calls and the e-

16   mails that I got from people throughout the city

17   saying oh, I heard your testimony. Or, you know,

18   I think you were wrong in what you said to the

19   Council. That's not the position your

20   organization or the organization I belonged to

21   should be taking officially. So, I found that

22   for, as an advocacy organization, it benefited us.

23   We got more input from our members because they

24   were able to monitor the testimony, the input that

25   we were having at the city level and sometimes at

the state level and engage our members and have

them be better informed, more educated, more

informed citizens. It's a very exciting process

what technology can do for us.

And so, what's been interesting,

for me, at this meeting, is that I will be honest

and say that I have a prejudice against too much

private/public partnership. I feel it's an

erosion of the capacity of government. But, I've

had to reassess that today because I've learned,

you know, what some of these private firms are

able to provide very quickly at a lower cost. So,

I'm going to have to reevaluate some of my basic

philosophy because I'm familiar with the LA

system. And, it works incredibly well and was put

into place pretty quickly, I have to tell you.

The other thing that I think is

really interesting is the discussion about the

Community Boards. And, you know, we're in the

YouTube age. If my organization, which is not

that technologically savvy, can figure out how to

video some of the forums that we present and

upload them onto our MySpace and our YouTube page,

then it seems to me that Community Boards could,

as one of the previous speakers said, be

encouraged to use private, you know, their

volunteer people. Most everybody has a video

camera to take pictures of your family events and

other things of interest. Find somebody who is

willing to come, you know, get a tripod, just go

ahead and tape it and if the City were, then, in

its website, to encourage a specific upload

format, as I said YouTube does it, MySpace does

it, and just have that posted to the Community

Board's webpage, I think it's sometimes a question

of encouraging creativity and involvement, rather

than trying to squelch it. We could see a lot

more information on the web.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

much. Go ahead.

RACHEL FAUSS: Good morning, Chair

Brewer and other members of the Council. My name

is Rachel Fauss. And, I am the Policy and

Research Associate of Citizens Union of the City

of New York, which is a nonpartisan, independent

civic organization of New Yorkers that promote

good government and advances political reform in

our city and state. We thank you for holding this

important hearing on this bill, which aims to

increase the openness of our City government by

webcasting the meetings and hearings of the

Council, city agencies, commissions and task

forces.

We support the bill, as it will

move the City toward greater openness and

transparency of government operations. Requiring

the City Council, agencies, commissions and task

forces to webcast their meetings and hearings will

increase their accessibility, as been talked about

a lot this morning, and allowing the public to

easily view these from home or from any location

with internet access will allow increased access,

of course and encourage the public to become more

engaged and will, we hope, result in more citizens

weighing in on the decisions that are made by our

local government. Further, archiving the webcasts

will allow citizens to view meetings at later

dates and provide an additional public record of

the meetings. We applaud your leadership on this

issue and the Council for introducing this

important bill and urge you to consider

strengthening the bill further. Although, as

we've heard this morning, there are things that you'll need to consider going forward about cost and the range and the scope of the bill.

But, one thing that we recommend you look at is expanding it to include other government agencies that receive significant funds from the City budget, such as the Board of Elections of the City of New York. The City Board is not considered a City agency, as you know, but rather is an entity created by the state. But, unfortunately, is not covered under the Governor Spitzer's Executive Order Number 3. And, you know, as the Commissioners of the City Board of Elections are appointed by the City Council, we believe it is both in the interest of the Council and, of course, the public that their meetings be required to be webcast.

And, you know, we suggest that you also take a look and if there are other agencies or entities that may not be covered by this bill, that should be, of course, we'd like to encourage the maximum inclusivity.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much.

1

2   RACHEL FAUSS: Thanks so much.

3   SUSAN LERNER: I'm sorry. I

4 realized there were two more points that I'd like

5 to briefly make. Number one is a lot of what

6 we've been talking about is archiving and

7 retrospective access. So, I'd just like to point

8 out that they ran into some problems at the

9 federal level using a private vendor and then,

10 having the video of the committee hearings

11 actually be public property. So, in discussions,

12 should you be going with a private vendor,

13 ownership of the actual content and long term

14 accessibility is obviously an important concern.

15 And, archiving through disks and just making the

16 videos permanently available as a physical object

17 that residents can actually go someplace, if they

18 have to, and look would be positive.

19   The other thing that I would like

20 to add, and I touch on it briefly in my written

21 testimony, is that once we have this great

22 recording real time and retrospective system, then

23 we need to think about proactive ways to provide

24 information documents and encourage comments

25 before the meetings and hearings that will be

2   webcast to engage the public in a real dialogue.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

4   Josh.

5   JOSH BREITBART: Good morning.   My

6   name is Joshua Breitbart. I am the Policy Director

7   of People's Production House.   I don't want to

8   repeat what my co-panelists have said.   I agree

9   very much with what they said.   So, I'll just skim

10   through my testimony.

11   Thank you for the opportunity to

12   speak with you today about this important,

13   forward-thinking amendment to the City Charter.

14   This proposal embodies the highest ideals of

15   technology in government and People's Production

16   House believes it would bring numerous benefits to

17   our City.

18   Webcasting and video-archiving of

19   meetings of our local government is a great

20   example of the democratizing power of the Internet.

21   We often hear about this power, but we forget that

22   the Internet is nothing without the content and

23   applications that we choose to put on it.

24   And, while my organization believes

25   that this is an important good government measure

and a policy that would improve local journalism,

and we support it for those reasons, we are

primarily, as an organization, concerned with the

digital divide. And, we believe this measure

actually contributes to the closing of the digital

divide in New York City by making the Internet a

more valuable service for New Yorkers. Nearly all

people in New York who do not have broadband access

at home could purchase it, but have so far decided

not to.

While City Council hearings may

never get the same audience as otters holding

hands do on YouTube, they've got, it's up to 12

million views now, this measure sends a message to

all New Yorkers that there is important, relevant

content for you online. This measure makes the

internet more valuable to New Yorkers, which is an

incentive for them to invest in a broadband

connection.

However, as the democratizing power

of the internet goes up, those without access to

the internet fall further behind. With passage of

this measure, watching webcasts of government

meetings would join the list of civic activities,

2   like researching candidates or publishing one's

3   political viewpoints, that people on the wrong

4   side of the digital divide are shut out from. So

5   this measure places a further burden on the City

6   Council to support other measures to get New

7   Yorkers online.

8   On behalf of People's Production

9   House, I look forward to working with you on this

10   ongoing effort. Thank you.

11   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you all

12   very much. Are there any questions? The one

13   question I have is when you are thinking about

14   utilizing this in terms of your members or the

15   public, what might be some examples? Let me be

16   specific. I know in Los Angeles you talked about

17   how it is when you are writing testimony. My

18   understanding from talking to the vendors previous

19   to the hearing, having visited them and, you know,

20   talked with them, is that in some cases, in order

21   to accommodate the ADA improvements, the video,

22   after it goes up, a little bit after the hearing,

23   so it's not a real time hearing, and I think that

24   makes sense from a cost perspective because it is

25   important to make sure that it is an ADA-compatible

2   production. So, the issue then would become how do

3   we use it in a usage - - that Susan previous to,

4   perhaps? And, also what would be some examples, if

5   we are doing this for a limited number, maybe we

6   don't do all 3,000 "open meetings," but we do some

7   aspect of it including perhaps the Board of

8   Elections? We would also come to some kind of a

9   list that would make sense as most public-friendly.

10   But, what would be some examples where you think

11   that it could be used either to improve dialogue

12   with the public or to help people think differently

13   about government, because one of the goals, I must

14   admit, here is to have people understand that the

15   government is something that is useful to them and

16   something that they can relate to?

17   SUSAN LERNER: Well, I think one of

18   the proceedings that both Josh and I took part in

19   was the Contract Franchise Review Board discussion

20   about the Verizon Citywide cable franchise

21   contract. Great difficulties getting a copy of the

22   contract in advance. The hearing was called on

23   very, very short notice. And, I think that if it

24   had been possible for people to access the agenda

25   and the document beforehand to file comments,

perhaps through e-mail, and to watch the actual

testimony and discussion of the Board, that it

would have increased the public input and the

public understanding of the process.

I, certainly from a Common Cause

point of view, would very much support a phased

introduction and a dialogue to identify the

appropriate commissions, which should get priority

for webcasting. I would certainly hope that it's,

to me, it seems perfectly appropriate to say

Council meetings and City Council committees should

get some priority because they are Citywide. And

then, to look at the commissions and try and

identify the ones which are going to have the

greatest impact I think in public interest.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Anybody

else?

JOSH BREITBART: Yeah, I would add

that, you know, as a media organization, we record

a lot of the events we participate in. And, we use

them to educate people about the process, not just

what happened, but the general process of

participating. And, it makes, you know, being able

to see what happens at a hearing makes the

1

2   experience of participating in it for the first

3   time much less intimidating.

4   Another way that we use audio and

5   video that we gather is we produce journalism

6   pieces and documentaries. And, one thing you might

7   consider if you're, you know, creating an archive,

8   I believe that you may be only creating a, you

9   know, a low resolution digital copy, but there's

10   also the potential to license footage for people

11   who want to use that for documentary purposes.

12   And, again, you know, that's the kind of thing that

13   just makes the process a lot less intimidating for

14   somebody who doesn't do it for a living.

15   SUSAN LERNER: I found in Los

16   Angeles that it was helpful to be able to say to

17   people who are interested or to urge people to

18   come, actually, and testify to the City Council or

19   to a Council committee hearing. You can watch the

20   proceedings on the web, you know, in advance. You

21   can see what's going on. You can see how people

22   like you participate. So, if you care passionately

23   about this particular issue and the Council is

24   discussing it next Tuesday, look and see whether

25   you're comfortable. And, after they've watched it

on the web, actually, people who are really

involved in a particular issue, I found are more

comfortable taking public transportation, driving

down, getting involved in testifying because they

see that there's no magic to it.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

SUSAN LERNER: It's accessible.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

RACHEL FAUSS: I'd just like to make

one addition. I think with archiving the webcasts,

something to think about is that often the public

might not be aware of what is happening of a

hearing until after the fact. And, this way at

least they'll be able to see exactly what occurred

and then, provide their input to their elected

officials or, you know, leaders in city agencies.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. All

right. Thank you very much. That's a wonderful

panel. Our next panel is Joly MacFie, who's quite

a star here in our Committee. And, I'll tell you

why in a minute. I think you'll see it. And,

Kayza Kleinman, who is from Nonprofit HelpDesk.

This is our last panel. Joly, I'm sorry. Go

ahead. Joly, do you want to start, sir?

2   JOLY MACFIE: Okay.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And, thank you

4   very much. Just so everyone knows, this is the

5   star of Broadband Advisory Committee, where he

6   videos and then puts all the material up on our

7   blog and then, in addition, he is putting the

8   material from this hearing and others on YouTube.

9   So, I'm very appreciative. Very special

10   individual. Go ahead, sir.

11   JOLY MacFIE: My name's Joly MacFie.

12   I started videotaping and webcasting the New York

13   music scene ten years ago. And, I'm also join the

14   Internet Society and I've become its secretary.

15   And, so I've been doing this on behalf of the

16   Internet Society for, you know, matters that relate

17   to us. And, we're a global organization and people

18   are interested. And, we have people watching this

19   stuff very keenly in the Pacific Islands and places

20   like that, you know, with nothing to do with New

21   York. But, there are issues that come up here in

22   New York that come up first. I mean, like, for

23   instance, the recent white space hearing that, you

24   know, are of nationwide interest. And so, it's

25   interesting, you know, not just for the City for

1

2   that.

3   I really was thinking just to talk,

4   you know, a little bit about technical things, you

5   know, that in terms of webcasting live, that audio

6   is often as good as video. There's a lot of

7   people, when they're in the office or something,

8   they're doing something else, but they're listening

9   on the headphones to what's going on. So, to just

10   send out, you know, an audio feed and that also

11   hits people on dial up or something who have less

12   of a thing.

13   And then, that when I put it out, I

14   usually put out an MP3 stream. I'll put out flash

15   video, which is the most common, now the most

16   common thing. The Congress always used to go out

17   in Real. I noticed they just changed, you know,

18   maybe a month ago to flash as the most common

19   platform way of doing something, of having the

20   capability to download the video. I personally use

21   Ipod format, which is the H264. And, that's

22   probably just about good enough to use, you know,

23   it's not at broadcast quality. But, it's of a fair

24   quality. But, you'd have to have almost a cable

25   modem to watch that.

1

2   I'd like to emphasize what Joshua

3   said about the other side of the coin is getting

4   people access so people can actually watch the

5   stuff. And then, the other thing I'd just like to

6   mention is to think about also about the outreach

7   so that people know that there's stuff there,

8   'cause a bit of a frustrating thing for me is I go

9   to a lot of effort to put this stuff up and then, I

10 haven't had as many viewers as I might hope.

11   And, you know, personally, the only

12 way I get to know about these things is through

13 Canals [phonetic] newsletters. And, I personally,

14 you know, although I'm involved, did not know until

15 I came here today that the State was webcasting.

16 No one had told me.

17   And, further comment is in terms of

18 licensing the video that you put out, you know, is

19 it going to go out into the public domain? Or,

20 would you consider some other kind of licensing

21 like, for instance, Creative Commons, where if you

22 wanted to, you could put it out on the Creative

23 Commons noncommercial. And then, if someone wanted

24 to use it commercially, they could come back to you

25 and do some kind of deal with the City.

2   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Very helpful,

3   sir.

4   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Yes. Okay.

5   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Nice to see

6   you.

7   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Okay. My name is

8   Kayza Kleinman. I'm from The Nonprofit HelpDesk,

9   which is a division of Jewish Community Council. I

10   am not going to follow my written testimony, which

11   goes to because of everything that's been said, I'd

12   rather respond, which goes to one of the points

13   that was just made about preparing. I prepare my

14   testimony in a vacuum. It would have been really

15   neat if I had had some idea of who and what else

16   was going to be said. I would have prepared a far

17   more responsive and I think useful testimony. Not

18   that my written testimony is, you know, useless.

19   But, it's not as focused, I think where it should

20   be. So, that is one example of why webcasting is

21   so important.

22   I would like to make a technical

23   point, which speaks to a point just made in terms

24   of cross-platform. Silverlight was mentioned as a

25   cross-platform. I'm a little leery of that. I

2   don't know how well, at the moment, that plays on

3   the MAC, on Linux, etcetera. I do think that when

4   the City looks at this, it's very, very important

5   to really, not be just cross-platform or across the

6   Microsoft platforms, but really across the universe

7   of what people out there are using. Linux is

8   becoming a very, very popular low-cost alternative.

9   Notebooks that are like three, $400, primarily run

10   Linux. I think it would be a real shame to go into

11   this at a point where, you know, there's this

12   explosion. The more standards-based, the more

13   truly platform agnostic in terms of technology that

14   the City is I think the more useful this platform

15   will be. So, that was just, you know, a technical

16   issue.

17   Some of the other points I wanted to

18   make were, you know, the Commissioner kept on

19   repeating about how, you know, we have to think

20   very carefully about mandates, which is true. But,

21   is concerned that well, you know, you've got rooms

22   that, you know, meetings are held in people's homes

23   and whatnot. I just have to laugh because the

24   truth of the matter is a video camera that can plug

25   into a computer, costs all of about $250. And, you

know, maybe that's not broadcast quality. But,

let's be real, you know. It's a really fairly

straightforward way of getting moving on, you know,

all of these myriad little meetings, so to speak.

And, I think that approaching it from that side as

well as from the City Council side, has a really

big advantage, 'cause very often people see City

Council, it's too big; it's too much. It's not

local enough. Now, my local committee and they're

deciding, you know, who's getting grants in my

neighborhood, whether or not, you know, we're going

to make an issue of, you know, the street cleaner

or what have you, now, this hits close to home, you

know. So, this is something a lot of people would

be more interested in seeing and that's a better

hook, so to speak, to get them into, you know,

looking at government as something that they can

really, you know, make a difference to on something

that they're really interested in.

So, I think that rather than

excluding it, we really should look at some way of

pulling it in, even if we don't start with, you

know, the really high-end, but, you know, again, as

was mentioned, this is the YouTube age, you know.

2   And, quite frankly, there are companies that

3   actually use YouTube or similar infrastructure.

4   So, it's not like you really-- the City necessarily

5   has to invest huge, huge amounts. You know, it's a

6   good way to get your toe wet, figure out what does

7   and doesn't work. This is I think really

8   important. You know, looking at the local stuff

9   helps draw people in I think, you know, on an

10   organizational and on a personal level.

11   One point that I didn't hear

12   mentioned, and this is in my written testimony, is

13   the fact that when people, you know, and I looked

14   at the NYC TV site. It really is very, very

15   impressive. And, I would think that the City

16   should definitely make use of the infrastructure

17   that they provide in making this happen. But, the

18   reality is a lot of people don't even know that the

19   station exists. Okay. And, in any case, you know,

20   when people think of TV, they think of information

21   in certain boxes and entertainment. When they're

22   looking for information, they think internet.

23   Okay. They go to Google. They go to Yahoo!. They

24   do a search. Get the stuff up on the web, index it

25   properly, use the right metadata. And, once you

2   figure out how to do this, it's not that hard.

3   You know, I should have been able to

4   get on, you know, get on to Google and do a search

5   on New York City hearing, technology, and find

6   information about all these hearings. It isn't

7   there. It's a crying shame. You know, there've

8   been great hearings on the digital divide and all

9   these other issues. Why is it so hard to find? Do

10   this right and, like I said, it's not that

11   complicated.

12   And, the City, with minimal

13   outreach, has suddenly made it much easier for

14   people to know what's happening. You don't have to

15   do all these advertising campaigns every time there

16   is a hearing. But, you know, make sure that it

17   shows up on the search engines and you've done a

18   huge, you know, private business will tell you that

19   optimizing their search engine, their search engine

20   results is a huge-- is a really good investment.

21   You know, one other important point

22   I think is, when we're talking about open

23   government and transparency, is that in tough

24   times, you know, when times are good, nobody really

25   cares who's getting funded, whatever, because I'll

2   get what I need anyway. In tough times, hard

3   decisions get made and you have, you know, the

4   government has two choices; either let people know

5   what actually really happened or let some

6   commentator say well, he said this and she said

7   that, without taking sides, you know, without going

8   to specific examples. If a government agency's

9   doing its job right, they're always better off when

10   people know exactly what happened. I get nervous

11   when I hear about a government agency who wants the

12   stuff off the web as soon as possible.

13   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

14   KAYZA KLEINMAN: I like Sunshine

15   Laws. Okay.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

17   KAYZA KLEINMAN: I really do. So,

18   one other thing parenthetically is that there is a

19   surprisingly large segment of the population that

20   does not have TV--

21   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

22   KAYZA KLEINMAN: -- but does have

23   internet access. And, some of these folks are the

24   just the kind of people you want to engage.

25   They're often educated. They don't not have TV

2   because they're ignorant or--

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: It's

4   philosophical.

5   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Philosophical

6   reasons, whatever, but they do have internet

7   access.   And, they will use it if they see that

8   there is a real, you know, practical use to it as

9   opposed to just, you know, sitting and goofing off.

10   Last point, back, I agree with all

11   the people who have been talking about the digital

12   divide issues.   We are getting there.   But, there

13   are still some huge holes and as this stuff

14   happens, it becomes more important to really deal

15   with that.

16   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right.

17   Thank you very much.   Joly, I have one question,

18   which is when you, as you do so kindly, put this

19   material up, what would be the best way to

20   advertise it?   Obviously, I find that you actually

21   have to tell people in their e-mail, as opposed to

22   telling them just having it up on the site.   People

23   don't go to sites unless, or even to the YouTube,

24   unless they are told to do so.   So, what do you

25   think in terms of government would be the best way

2   to make sure that people do know that there is

3   webcasting? And, in this interim state, how do we

4   tell people about your great work?

5   JOLY MacFIE: Well, I think that the

6   blog is a good thing. I don't know if this is on.

7   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: It's on.

8   JOLY MacFIE: You know, the blog is

9   a good thing. And, the thing about the broadband

10   blog is that it's not even very-- that doesn't

11   Google up well at all.

12   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

13   JOLY MacFIE: And, that when you

14   have a meeting, having one page on the web, so that

15   there's one URL with all the information on it.

16   Another suggestion, actually, what I forgot to talk

17   about was about, you know, the services like

18   YouTube. Now, the reason I can put stuff up that's

19   an hour long in YouTube is 'cause I'm an early

20   adopter and they grandfathered the early people so

21   that we don't have the ten-minute restriction.

22   But, you can partner with YouTube and possibly make

23   a deal with them that they won't show ads on your

24   stuff.

25   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm. Um,

2   hm.

3   JOLY MacFIE: That's possible. But,

4   you know, I have subscriptions on YouTube to, for

5   instance, the Queen of England--

6   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

7   JOLY MacFIE: -- to Number 10

8   Downing Street in England, the Prime Minister has

9   got his own YouTube channel and they put on short

10   clips and the other things. Now, people like to

11   look at short clips. Now, take, for instance, your

12   introduction that you did to the committee meeting,

13   you know, when you read out--

14   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Um, hm.

15   JOLY MacFIE: -- that thing with the

16   text. You could do something like that. When

17   you're planning the meeting, do that briefly and

18   put that up as the introduction--

19   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right, yeah.

20   JOLY MacFIE: -- that would then

21   engage people and make them interested.

22   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, that's a

23   good idea.

24   JOLY MacFIE: Another thing I forgot

25   to mention is that, now Lou came today ready to

2   stream this thing live.

3   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: He's always

4   ready.

5   JOLY MacFIE: And, he was going to

6   use Ustream.tv. There were two services where you

7   can stream live for free. One is Ustream.tv;

8   another one is called Mogulus.com, that's based in

9   the City. And so, these Community Boards and

10   everybody could be educated that basically all they

11   need is a laptop with a webcam and they can sign up

12   for free for these things and webcast and archive

13   live for a cost of--

14   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Have you met

15   all the Community Boards?

16   JOLY MacFIE: Zero, no.

17   KAYZA KLEINMAN: I have.

18   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

19   KAYZA KLEINMAN: I have. It's a--

20   JOLY MacFIE: [Crosstalk]

21   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm just being

22   facetious.

23   JOLY MacFIE: No, but--

24   CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I bring a

25   little--

JOLY MacFIE: -- their kids--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Don't repeat me. Nobody--

JOLY MacFIE: -- could come and do it--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Nobody heard me say that.

JOLY MacFIE: --for them.

KAYZA KLEINMAN: Yes.

JOLY MacFIE: Their kids could come and do it for them.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes, okay. Anyway, I want to thank you both for your testimony and also for being such regular supporters of this Committee. And, I think it's a good beginning because I know in past Committees, just having the Committee makes something move forward, just having the discussion. So, thank you both very much.

JOLY MacFIE: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much. We're going to close this hearing. But, we are promising to move forward with webcasting in the City of New York. Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, DeeDee E. Tataseo 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 ___DeeDee E. Tataseo___

Date November 19, 2008