

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

----- X

December 16, 2014
Start: 10:20 a.m.
Recess: 01:14 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:
RITCHIE J. TORRES
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
DONOVAN J. RICHARDS
JAMES G. VAN BRAMER
LAURIE A. CUMBO
ROSIE MENDEZ

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The hearing is coming to order. Welcome everyone I'm City Council Member Ritchie Torres and I chair the Committee on Public Housing and I'm joined today by Council Member Vanessa Gibson the chair of the Committee on Public Safety. The tragic shooting of Akai Gurley raises two sets of questions. The first is about the NYPD's protocol for vertical patrols in public housing which the public housing and public safety committees will jointly examine in a hearing scheduled for next month, the second is about the state of lighting in public housing. The image of a dimly lit stairwell in Pink Houses tells a larger story about the decline of public housing here in New York City. According to the Community Service Society who's present and will testify in a few minutes public housing is in a state of accelerated deterioration. Conditions are getting worse and are getting worse faster and those conditions are endangering the lives of public housing residents. The New York City housing authority is struggling with an 18 billion dollar backlog in neglected capital needs which means that the housing authority has been so underfunded for so long that

1
2 it does not have enough money to replace all the
3 broken doors and all the broken locks and all the
4 broken elevators that need repair. The housing
5 authority does not have enough money to guarantee
6 self, safe housing for all of its residents. How
7 ladies and gentleman did we come to this point. In
8 answering that question we should pause to reflect
9 on what is happening around us. We all have seen a
10 wave of demonstration sweeping New York City.
11 Thousands of people have taken to the streets
12 expressing their moral outrage in three words that
13 I've echoed across this nation; black lives matter.
14 Those words force us to, force our city's, force us
15 to confront our city's failure to properly value
16 black and brown life. And nowhere is that failure
17 more glaring than in public housing. As many of you
18 know public housing is large enough to be a city
19 unto itself. 90 percent of the residents are black
20 and Latino. It is a city of black and brown lives
21 if there ever was one. A city of largely low income
22 New Yorkers with a population the size of Boston.
23 There is not a single solitary soul in this chamber
24 who could look at the deplorable conditions of
25 public housing and honestly say that we live in a

1 city where black lives matter. I would submit to
2 all of you that the woeful neglect of public
3 housing on the part of our political leaders is as
4 definitive a sign as any that black and brown lives
5 are profoundly undervalued. How else does one
6 explain the savage disinvestment that we have seen
7 over the last two decades? How else does one
8 explain the decision by New York state in 1998 to
9 cut off not some but all funding from public
10 housing for the city by, or the decision by New
11 York City in 2003 to do the same. If the city and
12 the state truly believes that black lives matter
13 than the political establishment should stop
14 disinvesting from the safety of black and brown
15 lives in public housing. Our political leaders have
16 an opportunity to show that the lives of public
17 housing residents do matter. New York state has
18 five billion dollars' worth of bank settlements.
19 The governor should direct a substantial share of
20 those settlements toward public housing. The
21 mayor's housing plan includes eight billion dollars
22 in city subsidies and the mayor should direct a
23 substantial share of those subsidies toward public
24 housing. It is the right thing to do. The city and
25

1 the state clearly have the resources to invest. The
2 only question that remains is one of political
3 will. Will the political establishment finally do
4 right by the black and brown lives in public
5 housing after two decades of doing wrong by them.
6 The answer to that question remains to be seen.
7 With that said I will now turn over the floor to
8 the chair of the public safety committee, Vanessa
9 Gibson.
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very
12 much Chair Torres and good morning to each and
13 every one of you. It is a pleasure to be here with
14 you unfortunately under such challenging
15 circumstances I am Council Member Vanessa Gibson of
16 the 16th District in the Bronx and I chair the
17 committee on public safety and I want to thank my
18 colleague Ritchie Torres for his leadership. He and
19 I have joined together on several occasions in
20 having hearings this year regarding public safety
21 and public housing. And today we find ourselves
22 here at another hearing to talk about maintenance
23 repairs in NYCHA surround Akai Gurley's death. Two
24 weeks ago I was at Akai Gurley's funeral in
25 Brooklyn and it was such a sad state to see his two

1
2 year old daughter who now has to grow up without
3 her father and to see his parents there mourn the
4 loss of their son. I'm often reminded of two years
5 prior there was another young gentleman named
6 Timothy Stansbury who also lost his life at the
7 hands of a vertical patrol by a police officer in
8 which he lost his life as well. And so certainly
9 this is a call to action. This new administration
10 and all of us working together really must do
11 better by the 400 thousand residents that call
12 NYCHA their home. The largest public housing
13 infrastructure in this nation and yet we have
14 disinvested so much from the federal government to
15 the state and to the local government. This is a
16 very unique opportunity in the death of Timothy
17 Stansbury and Akai Gurley these hearings will have
18 significant meaning. We are going to address not
19 only the maintenance and the repair operation but
20 really provide the support that the housing
21 authority needs. And I'm thankful that we have our
22 chairwoman here of the Housing Authority and
23 representatives of the police department. And I
24 also want to recognize the hundreds and hundreds of
25 workers that every day come to work with the goal

1 of maintaining NYCHA. Many members of teamsters,
2 local 237. I work with them all the time and I know
3 they do an incredibly good job under difficult
4 circumstances. And so today we have an opportunity
5 to talk about the relationship between lighting and
6 safety in the wake of this shooting. And I just
7 want to say that many of our residents in public
8 housing live with dimly lit stairwells and broken
9 elevators each and every day. It is an everyday
10 reality for thousands of residents. We owe them
11 better. And during this administration we must
12 remain committed to making sure that the housing
13 authority has the support that it needs to build on
14 this infrastructure. We cannot lose public housing.
15 There are too many lives at stake and residents
16 have nowhere to go. And so I am thankful to be here
17 and remain committed as the chair of public safety
18 as my colleague Chair Torres has said next month we
19 will hold a hearing with the police department on
20 what we are doing as a city to support rookie
21 officers. We do them no service by putting them in
22 dangerous situations without experienced officers
23 paired up with them. We do them no service and we
24 do a disservice to the members of the public. So we
25

1
2 have a dual responsibility here, not just to the
3 public but to police officers to make sure that
4 they are truly given the support that they need. We
5 cannot continue to come together after Timothy
6 Stansbury, Akai Gurley, or anyone else that falls
7 victim to a dimly lit stairwell and a rookie
8 officer doing a vertical patrol. That is
9 unacceptable. So as we come together these deaths
10 will not be in vein. They will mean that we're
11 going to prevent these tragedies from happening
12 again. I want to thank my colleague Council Member
13 Ritchie Torres who is leading this effort and
14 making sure that we provide the necessary resources
15 and make public housing the priority that it
16 deserves to be. And with that I will turn this
17 hearing back over to my colleague Chair Torres.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Anyone who wishes
19 to testify can see the Sergeant of Arms and sign up
20 for testimony. Before I call up the next panel I
21 just want to note in today's Wall Street Journal
22 there was an article about the use of about 100
23 million dollars in forfeiture funds from the
24 Manhattan DA's Office that will go toward security
25 cameras, better lighting, and a swipe card system

1
2 in public housing. So there is an infusion of new
3 funding that's well timed with this committee
4 hearing. I'm sure it had nothing to do with it but..
5 So with that said I want to call up the first
6 panel. The president of the community service
7 society David Jones and the, and the president of
8 Teamster's Local 237 Gregory Floyd. And I want to
9 recognize two of my colleagues; the Majority Leader
10 Jimmy Van Bramer and Council Member Jumaane
11 Williams from Brooklyn. Good morning.

12 DAVID JONES: I'm David Jones, president
13 of the community service society and really honored
14 to be allowed to testify here today. Our work with
15 NYCHA has gone back through my colleague Vick Bach
16 more than 20 years. But this is the first time and
17 I'd like to pay credit to you as chairman on the
18 rest of the committee that there's really been a
19 serious inquiry into the background of NYCHA. And
20 what we see is the virtual looting of the
21 institution and one of the causes of this tragic
22 death. Talking specifically about Akai Gurley's
23 death in an unlighted, unlit hallway we want to
24 extend our deepest condolences. Though I must admit
25 I grew up in Bedford-Stuyvesant this seems like a

1 long litany of the dead black and brown young
2 people going back to my youth so there's a certain
3 amount of the, I hope this can be the beginnings of
4 a serious change because I've lived a little too
5 long now. From what we know the factors that
6 contributed to his death are confounding a building
7 elevator that... so dysfunctional that Akai and his
8 partner on the seventh floor chose not to wait any
9 longer and instead proceeded down an unlit
10 stairway, a stairway that we understand was pitch
11 dark. Two police officers, police officers on the
12 eighth floor conducting a vertical patrol,
13 something we have vigorously fought against over
14 the years, in the same stairway, one drew a gun,
15 with a drawn gun and Akai was dead. I think there's
16 so much blame to share here but the police policies
17 that I have fought against for decades is one. But
18 we want to focus this testimony on some of the
19 defects that NYCHA management that allowed this
20 disastrous building conditions to persist. We have
21 to understand that the building problems that
22 contributed to Akai's death, the maintenance
23 failures, the elevator problems are not unique to
24 Pink Houses, they're systemic occurring at many of
25

1
2 NYCHA's 334 developments at this very moment. Over
3 the past 15 years NYCHA residents have had to put
4 up with rising incidents of apartment defects,
5 badly needed repairs and enormously long delays in
6 getting them. Between 2002 and 2011 NYCHA
7 conditions had deteriorated to a level far worse
8 than those facing low income tenants in the private
9 rental market, a total reverse of the historic
10 trend. Where does the responsibility fall for this.
11 It falls I'm afraid on government; federal, state,
12 and city government that has systematically short
13 changed NYCHA since the late 1990s and failed its
14 residents. Over most of its 80 years NYCHA held a
15 national reputation as the largest public housing
16 program in the country, 179 thousand units housing
17 a population of nearly a half a million and
18 arguably, perhaps not arguably its best program in
19 the country. Among large city authorities NYCHA has
20 an exceptional track record. Compare it to others
21 like Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta, Newark that have
22 basically wiped out much of their stock. Despite
23 NYCHA's track record since the late 1990s as it
24 experienced a perfect storm of government
25 disinvestment on all levels that has contributed to

1
2 its financial and physical decline. At present
3 NYCHA is running an annual deficit of nearly 100
4 million with an estimated backlog on the orders of
5 17 billion in major capital improvements. Beginning
6 in 1998 Governor Pataki terminated operating
7 subsidies to NYCHA's 15 state financed developments
8 leaving it with an operating shortfall of 60
9 million. Mayor Bloomberg followed suit in 2003 and
10 terminated subsidies to six city finance
11 developments, added another 30 million to the
12 annual operating shortfall. The federal government
13 had been providing close to starvation funding
14 since the Reagan administration but it's, it
15 instituted still further cuts. The results in order
16 to show up the growing operating deficit NYCHA cut
17 operations by reducing its workforce head count by
18 25 percent from 15 thousand to 11 thousand leaving
19 many developments with an adequate maintenance and
20 maintenance staff. Over time an outside contracts
21 for repairs were surgically cut, even the worse the
22 authority plowed over 600 million in its capital
23 funds into operations to cover its gap making the
24 matter worse by deferring critical improvements and
25 accelerating deterioration. Akai and the residents

1 of Pink Houses deserve more from government. To
2 take up what the chairman said this was a race
3 based decision on behalf of government and we
4 should be clear what happened here. So all, for all
5 the half a million NYCHA residents today it is
6 critical that the committee and this body
7 particularly start reversing course. It may be the
8 case that local NYCHA management of Pink Houses
9 might have done somewhat a better job seeing the
10 elevators or whatever or stairwells, vandalism
11 under control. But the problems we can't get off is
12 the fact that there's been a system, systematic
13 government withdrawal of funds. And unfortunately
14 now we're in the position of not being able to rely
15 on the federal government. Some of you may have
16 noticed the midterm elections may not bode well for
17 NYCHA but we have a very vigorous state and city
18 opportunity and resources available to do something
19 about it. If we don't do something about it I
20 think the residents, particularly the young the new
21 Akais have every right to question whether this is
22 really not a matter of adequate resources but the
23 fact that we've decided only to enrich and
24 advantage certain groups within New York City
25

1 society and that would be a terrible tragedy not
2 only for the people in public housing but for the
3 entire fabric of the city of New York. Thank you.

4 GREGORY FLOYD: Good morning. My name is
5 Gregory Floyd, I'm president of Local 237
6 Teamsters. I represent 8,000 NYCHA employees at the
7 New York City Housing Authority. One-third of our
8 membership are residents of housing. They know
9 firsthand the challenges of maintaining America's
10 largest and oldest public housing stock.

11 Regrettably it took the recent death of a young man
12 Akai Gurley at the Pink Houses to shine more than
13 just a light on an unlit stairwell. For housing
14 authority that has more than 500 thousand residents
15 which makes the city the biggest landlord NYCHA is
16 fairly underfunded. Without sufficient funds to buy
17 needed equipment and to hire adequate staff we can
18 make all the suggestions we want on ways to further
19 reduce the repair of backlog but money is still the
20 key factor. NYCHA must receive greater help from
21 Washington. Next NYCHA should upgrade its lighting
22 to the use of tamper proof fixtures. No NYCHA
23 building currently have them. Obviously residents
24 suffer because of broken lights. We know there's an
25

1 unlit stairwell or hallway or poorly lit lobby or
2 street entrance, a darkened walkway or play area
3 can have deadly consequences. But elevator
4 mechanics and other workers trying to make repairs
5 in the dark suffer too. Our elevator mechanics told
6 me that NYCHA representative, told NYCHA
7 representatives at labor management meeting that
8 they have been approached by police officers with
9 their guns drawn while working on elevators at
10 night on roofs. Clearly there needs to be better
11 coordination with the police department to help
12 ensure that when our skilled trade workers or other
13 NYCHA workers are working on roofs their presence
14 is known. And while we appreciate the city
15 council's public housing committee hosting this
16 hearing we all know that the relationships between
17 lighting and safety if left unaddressed can have no
18 good outcome. Obviously more federal funding,
19 better NYPD coordination, and the use of tamper
20 proof lighting are needed. And they would impact
21 both the victim and the criminal but in different
22 ways. Residents, police, and NYCHA workers would
23 feel safer. Their sense of security would be
24 improved. For the perpetrators their sense of
25

1 security would be changed too. They would lose much
2 of it and that's a good thing. Reducing the number
3 of tragedies in public housing is not just a goal,
4 it's a necessity. The wellbeing of our entire city
5 depends on it. And I just wanted to add to what
6 Chairman Torres mentioned. There is a surpluse in
7 New York State because of money that was collected
8 from financial firms and I believe that the state
9 should follow, to lead of the district attorney Cy
10 Vance and allocate much of those funds to NYCHA so
11 that we can begin to reverse the tide that began in
12 the late 90s. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to recognize
15 the Deputy Leader for Policy Council Member Brad
16 Lander. And before I call the second panel I do,
17 you know I think one of the striking facts about
18 the CSS report is, is you know public housing has
19 had an image problem throughout the country. You
20 know one thinks of you know the most infamous
21 example is Pruitt-Igoe which failed so
22 catastrophically that it had to be demolished
23 within 20 years of, of its existence but, but NYCHA
24 was different, it's exceptional and for most of its
25 history was regarded as a high performing housing

1
2 authority. And over, it's only in the last 20 years
3 that, that it shifted and... So what we've seen is a
4 scale and pace of deterioration that's pretty
5 remarkable.

6 DAVID JONES: I'd like to echo... the
7 reason I'm so angry here is after Vick Bach's
8 report on this it became clear that this was not
9 just accidental. This was a form of looting going
10 on, of taking resources from what were perceived as
11 politically vulnerable communities and moving them
12 to other communities intentionally. This was the
13 charge of the 73 million in police force protection
14 that no other community, middle class, upper middle
15 class suffers. This is the payment... of taxes that...
16 is in charged. And it was so blatant in terms of
17 this was considered, we can take money from this
18 area because they can't defend themselves. And
19 that's why I'm angry. We turned... basic vital
20 resources in housing in the city of New York and
21 we've consciously trashed it and given it to others
22 who were more politically powerful. I think we have
23 to recognize... that's what going down here. I can't
24 come up with any other conclusion.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I'm going to
3 call up the second panel. I thank you for your
4 testimony. Going to call up a panel of, of tenants
5 and advocates before calling up the administration.
6 I want to acknowledge my colleague Donovan
7 Richards. Want to call Vann Franklin [sp?] from the
8 Resident's Counsel Millbrook Houses, Thomas Roko
9 [sp?] from the Safety Net Project, Monasia Wade
10 from the Green City Force Red Hook Houses, and Lucy
11 Newman from the Legal Aid Society. You may begin.

12 VANN FRANKLIN: Good morning ladies and
13 gentleman. My name is Vann Franklin. I'm a member
14 of Community Voices Heard and Community Voices
15 Heard Power. I also run a garden program in
16 Millbrook Houses, Millbrook Community Gardens, I'm
17 also a resident of NYCHA. In light of the situation
18 about lighting and development of Pink Houses and
19 throughout the NYCHA family this is a fact that has
20 been systemic to residents of these communities for
21 quite some time; the lighting and dilapidated
22 conditions within NYCHA housing. In light of the
23 situations in present there's been a lot of talk
24 about what's going on. Many of the situations that
25 people are afraid of coming out of their apartments

1 because these lighting situations, they pretty much
2 breed these heinous acts of violence, the heinous
3 acts of violence from residents within the
4 communities or from police coming back into the
5 communities. We have been plagued with these
6 situations since the Bloomberg administration and
7 the, the former Pataki administration with the
8 cutting of funding to NYCHA residents and NYCHA
9 houses. I do believe that the funding for NYCHA to
10 improve itself should definitely be cut from this
11 MOU operation. The Memoranda of Understanding
12 between the NYPD and NYCHA residents or NYCHA as
13 itself. We've been double taxed for quite some time
14 paying the NYPD to police our neighborhoods
15 unknowingly and just recently this memorandum has
16 been taken down temporarily. But we're asking that
17 this memorandum be taken down permanently, that
18 these funds be given back to the residents of NYCHA
19 for these repairs, for the completion of repairs,
20 lighting, what have you in our communities. It is
21 seeming that we've been left in this trap, this
22 idea that we can't do anything else, that we're not
23 able to do anything else in these communities. And
24 the story of Akai Gurley just brings light to that
25

1 situation and I do hint on the light, to situations
2 like these and other issues that are newly growing
3 in these communities. I am hoping to have the
4 opportunity to testify at the next hearing when it
5 comes to the policing issue because I don't believe
6 that this is the time to talk about those issues
7 but these are big issues. And the situation of
8 lighting brings those issues to light. Thank you.

10 MONASIA WADE: Good morning. I would
11 like to thank Chairman Ritchie Torres and Committee
12 Members Mendez, Bramer, Richards, and Cumbo. Thank
13 you for conducting this session to address the
14 relationship between lighting and safety and New
15 York City Housing Authority public housing
16 developments. I am Monasia Wade. As a longtime
17 resident of Red Hook houses as well as a core
18 member for Green City Force I am glad to be here to
19 share my views on the status of lighting and safety
20 and NYCHA during this critical time. It is
21 important for us to recognize the relationship
22 between safety and lighting in the wake of Akai
23 Gurley shooting in Pink Houses that occurred
24 November 20th. I have been a resident of Red Hook
25 houses for 13 years. Since 2013 I have held two

1 service... as a... member with Green City Force. And
2 the, in this capacity I have gained firsthand
3 experience around the need for both interior and
4 exterior lighting throughout NYCHA. I also believe
5 that installation of additional and ex, internal
6 and external lighting can lead to more job
7 opportunities, another issue that is in the NYCHA
8 community particularly for young adults like me.
9 GCF is a New York City based program. The mission
10 of GCF is to break the cycle of poverty preparing
11 young adults to succeed in their chosen careers by
12 engaging them in service training and work
13 experience related to the clean energy economy.
14 Currently all 51 Green City Force core members are
15 involved in an energy efficiency program in my home
16 development of red hook. We are conducting our
17 signature love where you live to resident, to
18 residents energy conduct, energy efficiency,
19 education, and behavioral change campaign. As core
20 members we do taping in NYCHA development lobbies,
21 walk up stairwells in NYCHA buildings that are not
22 very well lit and knock on NYCHA doors like Akai
23 Gurley and Officer...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm going to ask
3 you to conclude. Just if you can conclude.

4 MONASIA WADE: If I can conclude?

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah if you can.

6 MONASIA WADE: The purpose my whole
7 statement basically I am, I as well as 51 other
8 core members are in Red Hook in non-lit
9 developments and it is important for our buildings
10 to be well-lit so that there is not another
11 situation like the Akai Gurley situation. Thank
12 you.

13 LUCY NEWMAN: Hi. Good morning. My name
14 is Lucy Newman. I'm an attorney at the Legal Aid
15 Society and to my right is..

16 HEIDI CAINE: Heidi Caine, also an
17 attorney with the Legal Aid Society.

18 LUCY NEWMAN: I'm in our housing unit
19 and one of the jobs that I perform in that unit is
20 representing public housing residents in
21 Termination of Tenancy Proceedings and Heidi Caine
22 is in our anti-gun violence unit. We'd like to
23 thank the leadership of our Chair Ritchie Torres
24 and for his commitment to public housing residents.
25 And also the Legal Aid Society would like to offer

1
2 our condolences to the grieving family of Akai
3 Gurley. Heidi's just going to start with a little
4 bit about the safety issues and policing and then
5 I'll conclude with a couple of recommendations.

6 HEIDI CAINE: Thanks. Everyone has a
7 right to be safe in their homes in New York City,
8 this is public and private housing. Being safe to
9 the tenants that we speak to means having working
10 locks to the building, it means well-lit
11 stairwells, it means that routine maintenance is
12 completed, it means that the elevators work
13 regularly. Feeling safe also means that one's
14 relatives and friends are free to visit them
15 without feeling like they're going to be harassed
16 or arrested by the police, without feeling that
17 they'll have to suffer the indignity of being
18 stopped or searched without probable cause because
19 of the color of their skin and because they're just
20 visiting somebody in NYCHA public housing.

21 Extensive unaddressed repairs as the Akai Gurley
22 situation has demonstrated has exacerbated NYCHA's
23 feelings that they are not safe before this recent
24 situation PJ Avito [sic] and, over the summer was
25 murdered. Weeks and months leading up to this there

1
2 were complaints by the residents that the entry
3 door was not working, that the locks were not
4 working. This, basically this... yeah... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: If you can
6 conclude.

7 LUCY NEWMAN: I'm sorry just Legal Aid
8 Society has a couple of recommendations, one of
9 which we've been making for many years which is
10 while we applaud the mayor for relieving NYCHA of
11 its obligations this year to pay the NYPD 78
12 million dollars we would urge them, the city and
13 NYCHA to terminate the MOU officially so that NYCHA
14 can start spending that money on needed repairs.
15 And in addition to that we'd recommend that rather
16 than spending additional city funds on over
17 policing the mayor in July issued a plan in which
18 they're going to increase the NYCHA police, the
19 NYCHA housing... by 200 police officers we would
20 suggest that they focus on repairing the extensive
21 conditions that lead to residents feeling unsafe in
22 their homes.

23 THOMAS ROKO: Hi, good morning Chairman
24 Torres and honorable members of the New York City
25 Council. My name is Thomas Roko Junior and I'm a

1 public policy fellow at the Safety Net Project of
2 the Urban Justice Center. The Safety Net Project
3 formally known as the Homeless Outreach and
4 Prevention Project combines direct legal services,
5 affirmative litigation, research, and policy making
6 to achieve economic justice for all New Yorkers.
7 For nearly 30 years the Safety Net Project has
8 worked on behalf of low income communities. Three
9 months ago my colleague Staff Attorney Leah
10 Goodridge gave compelling testimony discussing how
11 repairs are the silent accomplice to crime in NYCHA
12 developments. Today we are grappling with the same
13 issues of systematic despair, despair which help
14 set the stage for the tragic death of Akai Gurley.
15 The loss of Mr. Gurley begs me to ask the question;
16 how long can we allow disrepair to cause despair.
17 The Safety Net Project's previous testimony of Ms.
18 Green and her son Kevin who feared walking through
19 the broken entrance doors of their buildings which
20 allowed people who did not live in the development
21 to loiter in the hallway. More often than not due
22 to inoperable elevators Ms. Green and Kevin were
23 forced to walk up darkened stairwells just as Akai
24 Gurley did on that fateful night. In those darkened
25

1
2 stairwells Ms. Green feared that she may be
3 attacked by individuals who used the darkened
4 hallway to conceal themselves. For Ms. Green and
5 her son Kevin disrepair imposes a life of fear and
6 risk upon their family in the confines of their own
7 home. I ask how long can we allow disrepair to
8 cause despair. Ms. Jillian Recome [sic] has lived
9 in Hope Gardens Bushwick Houses since 2009. The
10 mother of three minor children pleads our home is
11 supposed to be our safe haven however our home is
12 anything but safe. Scaffolding faced our windows
13 for years which led to easy access into their
14 second floor apartment. For example in June 2013
15 three children climbed up the scaffolding and
16 pulled out the air conditioner out of their
17 windows. NYCHA's abysmal failure to adhere to
18 housing maintenance standards does not absolve the
19 police department of their duty to protect and
20 serve the public. The safety net project fully
21 supports the position of Communities United for
22 Police Reform to encourage public safety and
23 policing practices that are based on cooperation,
24 respect, and trust and not on targeting and
25 harassing. We believe that, that the..

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Please, please
3 conclude.

4 THOMAS ROKO: Yeah, sorry. We believe
5 that the following approaches would strengthen
6 safety in NYCHA developments; a comprehensive
7 transparent plan to carry out repairs in public
8 areas, implementing accountability for failure to
9 repair in a timely manner, and accountability and
10 transparency by expanding the 3-1-1 system to NYCHA
11 tenants. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you so much.
13 I would like to call up the third panel. The
14 chairperson of the New York City Housing Authority
15 Shola Olatoye, the executive vice president for
16 capital projects at the New York City Housing
17 Authority Raymond A. Ribeiro, the vice president
18 for operations at the New York City Housing
19 Authority Brian Clarke, and Captain Howard
20 Gottesman from the New York Police Department
21 Housing Bureau. Okay. Please raise your right hand.
22 Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, and
23 nothing but the truth today? You may proceed.

24 SHOLA OLATOYE: Chairman Ritchie Torres,
25 members of the Committee on Public Housing and

1
2 other distinguished members of the city council
3 good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to
4 discuss the New York City Housing Authority's
5 efforts to enhance the safety of our developments
6 for NYCHA's families. I also want to thank our
7 previous two panels for their commentary as well.
8 My name is Shola Olatoye and I am the, I am NYCHA's
9 chair and chief executive officer. Joining me today
10 are Brian Clarke vice president of operations,
11 Raymond Ribeiro our executive vice president for
12 capital projects, and Captain Howard Gottesman of
13 the NYPD's housing bureau. Before I tell you about
14 our work I want to say that my heart, our hearts
15 are broken and go out to the Akai Gurley family. As
16 the mother of two boys I can't imagine anything
17 more devastating than the loss of a child. Akai's
18 death was tragic and a stark reminder that everyone
19 deserves to feel safe in their homes. NYCHA is no
20 exception. Unfortunately we have experienced far
21 too much heart, heartbreak this year. This terrible
22 tragedy occurred at Pink Houses, a campus of 22
23 eight, eight story buildings housing over 36
24 hundred people in about 15 hundred apartments. It
25 has 25 stair wells, about 200 corridors, and over

1 34 interior lights, and over 400 exterior lights.
2
3 In total NYCHA maintains about 178 thousand
4 apartments in 334 developments citywide with a
5 population larger than Atlanta, Miami, or
6 Minneapolis. Our approximately 26 hundred buildings
7 have 400, I'm sorry 4,212 stairwells, about 38
8 thousand corridors and an estimated 255 thousand
9 interior lights and 26 thousand exterior lights.
10 For the important work of inspecting, maintaining,
11 and repairing all of this we have over 2700
12 caretakers and one thousand maintenance workers.
13 Caretakers remove trash, check and clean hallways
14 and stairwells, and maintain the grounds.
15 Maintenance workers assist with inspections and
16 maintenance and make minor repairs. NYCHA's staff
17 work incredibly hard and do their best to keep the
18 developments lit, clean, safe, and resilient. I've
19 seen this personally in my more than 70 development
20 visits. And as you can imagine this is a
21 considerable task. On a typical day they make about
22 nine thousand repairs. Residents call our customer
23 contact center to have a work order created or
24 NYCHA development staff create a work order based
25 on something they've, they've observed. Work orders

1
2 are requests for repair or maintenance that are
3 tracked in NYCHA's computerized system. Depending
4 on the need they are assigned to a maintenance
5 worker or a skilled trades worker and are scheduled
6 by either the customer contract center or a
7 boroughs scheduling and planning unit. A
8 development superintendent assigns staff to repair
9 public spaces. In general NYCHA creates work orders
10 for major repairs to fixtures or ballasts but does
11 not generate and track work orders for light bulb
12 replacement. This is usually handled by caretakers
13 the same day the outage is reported. For issuing,
14 for issues involving work orders it takes an
15 average of four point, an average of 4.5 days to
16 repair exterior light and 8.9 days to repair
17 interior lights. This is down from 40.9 days and 60
18 point, 62.3 days respectively in 2012. NYCHA has
19 spent about 1.4 million dollars so far this year on
20 lighting supplies alone. But as you've heard before
21 a generation of federal disinvestment, a loss of
22 about 1.16 billion dollars since 2001 to keep our
23 developments functioning forces NYCHA to
24 continually make tough decisions about how our
25 limited resources are used. There have been a

1
2 variety of count, of accounts about the conditions
3 at NYCHA and the responsibility of the authorities
4 surrounding the shooting of Akai Gurley. We are
5 cooperating fully with the NYPD's investigation
6 which is still ongoing. But let me tell you a few
7 facts that we do know about the circumstances. We
8 interviewed staff who were present before and after
9 the incident at 2724 Linden Boulevard one of Pink
10 Houses' 22 buildings. The caretaker assigned to
11 this building said that when she left for the day
12 on Thursday, November 20th there weren't any lights
13 out on the 7th or 8th floors. A senior NYCHA
14 official, a borough administrator conducted an
15 inspection on Friday November 21st. He concluded
16 that the light on the 8th floor of stairwell A was
17 out due to an issue with the ballast. Only the ends
18 of the two foot florescent bulb were dimply lit.
19 There were no work orders for these lights. NYCHA
20 has a record of two work orders for other lights in
21 the, other lights in the building. I should, I'm
22 sorry, interior lights in that building. One from
23 November 14th for the 5th floor and one from October
24 22nd for the third floor. Upon inspection that
25 Friday the 2st it was determined that these lights

1 were working. Since taking office Mayor de Blasio
2 has devoted unprecedented attention and generous
3 financial support to help NYCHA deal with
4 diminishing federal funding which accounts for over
5 97 percent of our government funding. His 210
6 million dollar plan to make neighborhood safer is a
7 long term collaborative and comprehensive approach
8 that involves more law enforcement on the ground,
9 physical improvements, community engagement and
10 outreach, and expanded employment and education
11 program. We also greatly appreciate Manhattan
12 District Attorney Cy Vance's recent plan announced
13 today to use 101 million dollars in settlement
14 money to enhance security at select developments. A
15 key component of the Mayor's initiative is that it
16 brings together many city agencies including the
17 NYPD to address crime in our communities. In line
18 with this new way of working collaboratively NYCHA
19 and the NYPD streamlined the way NYPD reports
20 issues from the field and how any necessary related
21 repairs are handled by NYCHA. Our NYPD officers on
22 the ground are a vital partner in keeping our
23 developments safe and secure. The mayor's financial
24 investment in NYCHA is helping to continue to
25

1
2 reduce the number of open work orders which once
3 totaled a shocking 423 thousand and the time to
4 take to, and the time it takes to respond to a work
5 order. Currently there are about 100 thousand open
6 work orders and it takes an average of 9.6 days to
7 respond to a maintenance request down from a peak
8 of 150 days in 2013. Although this progress is
9 important we know that we must keep working to
10 bring these numbers down. The numbers are starting
11 to rise for a few reasons including a reduction in
12 overtime and, and our work to inspect every single
13 apartment over the next two years. We are also
14 engaged in exterior lighting upgrade projects at 50
15 developments across the city that will benefit over
16 100 thousand residents. These are being funded by
17 multiple sources including Hurricane Sandy funds
18 and 35 million from the mayor and city council.
19 Special thanks to the leadership and generous
20 support of Speaker Mark Viverito, Committee Chair
21 Torres and the rest of the council. This
22 groundbreaking collaboration between the speaker,
23 city council, and mayor is exactly the kind of
24 innovative partnership that will NYCHA deliver on
25 its mission. Also we removed nearly 27 thousand

1 feet of sidewalk sheds in 2014 and we are on track
2 to finish installing security camera systems at 49
3 developments by the end of the year. We already
4 completed 44 of these multi-camera systems as of
5 this week. Everyone at NYCHA comes to work each day
6 striving to maintain our developments in a way that
7 is safe and secure and promotes a decent quality of
8 life for residents. We have a number of programs
9 and strategy, strategies in place to help us
10 achieve this incredibly important and challenging
11 goal from the mayor's action plan to our resident
12 watch, to our many productive partnerships with
13 other city agencies and non-profit organizations.
14 But to make public housing truly safer we need
15 additional funding. Faced with this reality of
16 shrinking resources and the enormity of the task at
17 hand we are developing a new strategic initiative,
18 investment plan called Next Generation NYCHA. Next
19 Generation NYCHA changes the way NYCHA
20 fundamentally operates, is financed, to make public
21 housing, public housing safer, stronger, and more
22 efficient for our residents for today and tomorrow.
23 We look forward to coming back to you to talk to
24 you about that plan as it evolves. Of course it
25

1
2 takes everyone working together to bring ideas, big
3 ideas like this to life. We appreciate support from
4 the mayor, the city council, and hope that our
5 successful collaboration continues. Our efforts to
6 increase transparency such as the NYCHA metrics
7 initiative posted on our website will track our
8 progress in the areas we need to continue to
9 improve. Thank you and we are happy to answer any
10 questions you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Madam
12 Chairwoman. You noted... it might be too early to ask
13 questions about Next Gen NYCHA, you noted that Next
14 Gen will fundamentally change the manner in which
15 NYCHA finances itself so could you elaborate on
16 that or is...

17 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well so one of the, one
18 of the important things in there, we really sort of
19 think about it as, as, as sort of three pillars.
20 You really need all three to work. We need to
21 change the way we fundamentally do our business and
22 we're doing this in 18, 18 developments starting
23 next year where we are really looking to change the
24 highly centralized management structure that we
25 currently use, utilizes that staff have to you know

1
2 really ask central for really basic supplies. We
3 really want to empower local managers to make those
4 decisions within some parameters about the best,
5 about, that is informed by conditions on the
6 ground. So changing the way we operate is really
7 important. The financial picture is somewhat more
8 complicated because it does rely on increased
9 levels of support from all levels of government and
10 the private sector. And that is something that we
11 are working very closely with city hall and our
12 executive team and we'll have more details to share
13 with you early next year.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Now I
15 noted earlier that NYCHA has about 18 billion
16 dollars in backlogged capital improvements. Is that
17 an accurate cost estimate or...

18 SHOLA OLATOYE: Yes sir.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And what's the
20 lighting needs, the capital lighting needs of the
21 public housing stock citywide?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Good morning Ray
23 Ribeiro, Executive Vice President for Capital
24 Projects. We have for the entire portfolio we've
25 estimated that to upgrade all of the exterior

1 lighting at all 334 developments on the capital
2 need would be just under 500 million dollars for
3 the entire portfolio, 425 million.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And for interior
6 lighting, upgrades in interior lighting do you have
7 an estimate or?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well the interior
9 lighting is, is slightly different in that you know
10 the difference between interior lighting and
11 exterior lighting is that the, the lights in terms
12 of upgrades don't really need an upgrade internally
13 they just need to be simply replaced. But the
14 replacement of all interior lights in the, in the
15 public areas, in the lobbies could, could add
16 another 500 million to that.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So your cost
18 estimate of the exterior lighting needs is about
19 500 million dollars.

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: About 500... [cross-
21 talk]

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And what are the
23 planned capital expenditures over the next five
24 years?
25

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as, as the chair
3 indicated there are currently plans to upgrade
4 exterior lighting at 50 different developments
5 throughout NYCHA. That number is, is almost 100
6 million dollars' worth of, of funding towards that.
7 Being funded through the, the mayor's capital
8 allocation, city council, as well as any work that
9 we are doing in the areas that were flooded after
10 Hurricane Sandy, all of that underground wire, all
11 of those fixture, exterior fixtures are being
12 completely redesigned and refurbished with FEMA
13 insurance and CDBG funding.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And the 100 million
15 that you're receiving in forfeiture funding, do you
16 have any sense of how you're going to use that? Is
17 lighting going to be the priority for the use of
18 those dollars or?

19 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so currently the
20 plan with that funding is to actually leverage that
21 at the same, at the same developments that the,
22 that the original 35 million dollars was invested
23 in. The 35 million dollars was allocated towards
24 lighting so the, the, the additional monies will be
25

1
2 used towards additional security improvements at
3 the, at those same high crime developments.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know the
5 housing authority has seen savage cuts in staffing
6 levels. Can you give me a sense maybe over the
7 course of the last five years the trajectory of
8 staffing levels for skill trades. I know some
9 lighting conditions can be repaired by a
10 maintenance man but many of them require
11 electricians. Do you have a sense of, like how many
12 electricians do you have...

13 SHOLA OLATOYE: Sure. We'll have to get
14 you the specific breakdown chair.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

16 SHOLA OLATOYE: But I think as, as was
17 noted earlier at our height NYCHA had about 16
18 thousand employees and we're down to about 11,210
19 to be exact and if you want to add some more about
20 operation staff.

21 BRIAN CLARKE: Yes. Good morning Council
22 Member. So as far as electricians are concerned
23 they work with helpers so we have you know
24 approximately 120 electricians and 120 helpers so
25 for a staff of approximately 240.

1
2 SHOLA OLATOYE: We can provide the
3 historical number breakdown if you like.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know NYCHA's
5 going in the direction of, because currently skill
6 trades is administered at the borough level and
7 NYCHA's going in the direction of decentralizing
8 some of the trades toward the local property
9 management levels is that correct or?

10 BRIAN CLARKE: So, so there, the,
11 there's a lot of plans on the table in, in trying
12 to improve service but none of them have been
13 finalized. You're correct that right now we do
14 manage the, our skill trades centrally and various
15 departments.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Is there any
17 consideration to allowing developments to have a
18 dedicated electrician or?

19 BRIAN CLARKE: So, so we are, like I
20 said we are looking at you know various models to
21 improve service. There are some, some things on the
22 table that we're looking at to see whether or not
23 that is required or you know justified from a, from
24 a finance standpoint. You know generally speaking
25 it, with as far as the electricians are concerned

1
2 the, you know the repairs that we need it may be
3 better to you know cluster them maybe in a local
4 type level to you know to service geographically,
5 strategically geographically placed, you know
6 developments place the trades to support them
7 there. But like I said there isn't anything
8 finalized yet.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now just a few
10 questions. I know you answered some of them but I
11 do want to run through a few questions regarding
12 the lighting conditions surrounding the shooting of
13 Akai Gurley in Pink Houses, took place in the
14 eighth floor of stairwell A 2725 Lindon Boulevard
15 in Pink Houses. And I'm wondering what were the
16 lighting conditions that NYCHA observed before and
17 after the shooting?

18 BRIAN CLARKE: Okay. So, you know so
19 the, you know the day before we found the, the
20 lights in Stairwell B on the fourth floor. One
21 light was out in the corridor of the fourth, in the
22 corridor of the fourth floor there was you know one
23 of the eight, lights was, was out. The, the next
24 day after the incident you know as the chair said
25 on the 8th floor, stairwell A we found you know

1 the, you know diminished you know light. The, the
2 fixture had a bad ballast and that's where the
3 lights at the ends of tubes, the two foot tube were
4 dimly lit but for all intents and purposes you know
5 the light was out. We confirmed the, the fourth
6 floor lights were out as reported the day before.
7 And we also found one of the eight lights on the
8 second floor corridor out as well.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So the caretaker
11 observed no defects in the lighting in the 8th
12 floor of stairwell A before the shooting?

13 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And then you
15 observed defects afterwards, a ballast issue?

16 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah, correct. Yeah, with
17 the, with the fixture. So the, so the, the lighting
18 it's a, it's a two foot florescent tube. The, the
19 ballast regulates the, the voltage you know going
20 into the, going into the tube, energizes it so that
21 it'll light, and the, you know the ballast had gone
22 bad and that will happen over time.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Were there
24 any tenant complaints about the lighting conditions
25 in stairwell A?

1
2 BRIAN CLARKE: None that we have on
3 record.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Any NYPD
5 field reports about those conditions?

6 BRIAN CLARKE: None that we have on
7 record.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to ask, I
9 know you did, Madam Chairwoman I know you spoke to
10 the editorial... regarding the lighting conditions at
11 Pink Houses. I want to read a quote from the
12 article that arose out of your meeting. The quote
13 is; the failure to make timely repairs may have
14 contributed to dangerous conditions where a rookie
15 cop shot an unarmed man in a darkened housing
16 project stairwell officials told the daily news.
17 The article goes on to note that a NYCHA supervisor
18 had requested a lighting upgrade for Pink Houses
19 but that upgrade had not yet occurred because there
20 were higher priority repairs to address first. So
21 I'm curious to know what were those higher priority
22 repairs that kept NYCHA from granting the request
23 for a lighting upgrade of Pink Houses.

24 SHOLA OLATOYE: I'll let my colleague
25 speak specifically to the, to the, some of the

1 operational issues with regard to the property. But
2 I think you know just want to be clear was the
3 latter part of what you just said but staff focus
4 on high priority things; life and safety issue etc.
5 I mean that is you know a priority for our staff,
6 clear, elevators, major issues that are, affect
7 the, as I said the sort of health and safety of the
8 buildings. You know one of the things as I
9 mentioned in my testimony is the observation that a
10 light bulb was out, if that's simply just that, a
11 light bulb, staff will replace that upon site. They
12 should replace it upon site. Something that
13 requires a bit more attention like the replacement
14 of a fixture requires a higher level of, of, of
15 support and perhaps a replacement of a fixture. So
16 I think what we, what we noted in our testimony is
17 that you know light bulbs that were out versus the
18 Friday after a potential fixture that may have
19 needed replacement. And so whether or not we had
20 heard from caretakers about that particular fixture
21 I'll let Brian... [cross-talk]

22 BRIAN CLARKE: Sure. So just you know as
23 to the, you know the, you know the request for the,
24 you know for the upgrade so in October we had asked
25

1
2 you know within property management for a list of
3 needs for, you know for capital improvements so
4 these are you know large scale... like replacement of
5 you know boilers, roofs, things of that nature,
6 elevators, things of that nature. And the, so in
7 October we, we, we asked for that. So at that time
8 it was submitted by the superintendent from, from
9 Pink Houses for a request to upgrade the public,
10 you know the public space lighting. So that would
11 go into you know we, we have limited capital funds
12 as everybody's aware of. So when we go through the
13 process of reviewing these things we would have to
14 take a look at that in consideration of replacing
15 roofs, replacing elevators, boilers, things of that
16 nature.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So effectively the
18 property maintenance supervisor's generating a wish
19 list of, of improvements that he or she would like
20 to see at the development?

21 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah you're correct. This
22 is for, you know for planning purposes for 2015 and
23 the out years.

24

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so the super at
3 Pink Houses, how high did he or she rank lighting
4 upgrades in the wish list?

5 BRIAN CLARKE: Oh I just have it as a
6 request. I don't have the priority with me.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

8 BRIAN CLARKE: I could take a look and
9 see if, see if we have it.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Well when do
11 you expect to upgrade the lighting system in Pink
12 Houses?

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so as, as Mr.
14 Clarke indicated right as part of normal capital
15 planning process property managers make different
16 requests for capital upgrades at developments. So
17 while pink houses was not funded for the lighting
18 upgrades it did get an allocation of 36 million
19 dollars for brick and roof replacement. There is
20 also a project underway scheduled to actually start
21 construction this week that will replace all of the
22 rear doors, door hardware, frames, at, at the
23 development which was, which was also identified
24 as, as a need for that particular development. But
25 as we sit here today there is no specific

1 allocation in the current plan for lighting
2 upgrades at Pink Houses.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. I have an
5 operations question. How do you go about
6 prioritizing your complaints? Can you give us a
7 sense of your priority system?

8 BRIAN CLARKE: Sure. So the, kind of
9 fits into you know two broad buckets right. So we
10 have you know emergency you know repairs. These are
11 repairs that we try to complete either you know
12 immediately or within 24 hours. So those type of
13 repairs would be... and when I say repairs very often
14 it's abating, so it's stopping the emergency
15 condition and then we would follow up with the, you
16 know the corrective maintenance. So for example you
17 know, you know a gas leak or, you know or sewer
18 back up. That would be emergency type of you know
19 situation. A leaky faucet inside an apartment would
20 be a regular type of corrective maintenance item.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Sorry what was the,
22 sorry emergency complaints and then the second
23 category what's the response time?

24 BRIAN CLARKE: The, so the, you know our
25 service level you know for, you know for corrective

1 maintenance our goal is you know seven, you know
2 seven days, an average of seven days. For
3 emergencies it's 24, within 24 hours.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so lighting
5 falls into which category?

6 BRIAN CLARKE: So it depends on the, on
7 the lighting issue. So for example if, you know a
8 fixture had, was sparking or had exposed wires that
9 would be an emergency type of you know condition.
10 The, but if, but if the light was simply out as we
11 said the you know caretakers each day doing an
12 inspection of the building will replace bulbs you
13 know as needed you know that, you know that day.
14 But if it requires, or requires a repair of a
15 maintenance worker or an electrician then it would
16 be, it would fall into that either you know seven,
17 seven day level or you know for maintenance or
18 electrician we have for skill trades 15 day service
19 level. But as you can see from the averages that we
20 provided you know as part of the testimony we're
21 actually doing better, better for that for you know
22 public space and interior lighting, exterior
23 lighting.
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But let's take the
3 situation of Pink House issue, the eighth floor had
4 a broken light which caused the hallway to be, the
5 stairwell to be dimly lit or almost pitch black.
6 You know to many tenants that would strike them as
7 an emergency condition because that has
8 implications for their safety. Would that, would
9 that classify as a, an emergency condition under
10 your priority system or...

11 BRIAN CLARKE: No that would be, that
12 would be corrective maintenance. But if there were
13 multiple fixtures out inside that, inside, you know
14 inside that stairwell then the, you know the
15 property, the property management would upgrade and
16 address those. But the one fixture right now based
17 on our system would be corrective maintenance.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. So I just
19 want to... if there is a, if there's a single light
20 out that's causing a floor, a stairwell to be pitch
21 black that is a non-emergency condition for which
22 the response time could be as long as a week?

23 BRIAN CLARKE: Well if it's, if it's a
24 simple bulb, bulb issue it would be replaced that
25 day.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...something that would require the intervention of a skilled tradesman, of an electrician.

BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah then it would take, would, we would have to you know schedule that and it would take a longer period of time.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So the tenants in the building would have to contend with a pitch black stairwell until NYCHA took a week to repair the condition is that..

BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah based on our, based on our current system yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I guess in light of the shooting of, of Akai Gurley is that something NYCHA's willing to rethink?

BRIAN CLARKE: Yes. We are actually reviewing our emergency priority systems.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And going in the direction of classifying that kind of condition as an emergency or..

BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah like I said we're, we're, you know we're considering it and, and definitely this, this incident would be reviewed as part of that.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you have, how
3 frequently are these, are the lighting conditions
4 in a stairwell surveyed, both the exterior and the
5 interior lighting of a development?

6 BRIAN CLARKE: So, so the, the, daily
7 our caretakers what they'll do... And first off I
8 appreciate the, the, the comments from Council
9 Member Gibson regarding our staff. They're very
10 hard working staff, dedicated staff under you know
11 challenging conditions. They, our caretakers, will
12 after our morning muster will go to their building,
13 they'll walk it down. They'll identify, they'll
14 check to see whether or not the elevator is
15 working. And just, you know just by the way as a,
16 as a, as an opportunity to, just to clear up the
17 facts the, you know the elevator was working you
18 know the day, the day before, and the day after you
19 know the incident. The elevator at Pink Houses,
20 they are rated to travel at 100 feet per minute. So
21 to go up to the 8gth floor can take approximately
22 45 50 seconds so they're not as quick as the
23 elevators that you might find in, you know in an
24 office building. But, but anyhow you know back to
25 the, back to the question... And I'm sorry I lost my

1
2 place for a second there. Where was I? Oh I'm sorry
3 so, so the, I'm sorry about inspection. So I
4 apologize for that. So with the caretakers so
5 they're going to walk down the building, they're
6 going to observe any conditions such as let's say
7 bulk debris left in stairwells, spill conditions in
8 hallways. They'll also to check to see whether or
9 not the lobby doors are working and also whether or
10 not lighting, lighting is working. Once a week
11 development staff will do a survey of the exterior
12 lighting to check and see whether or not they are
13 working. And, and of course residents can call into
14 our call center to report any public space or
15 exterior, exterior lighting that's out.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I have a few
17 questions about... have a question for the Captain
18 about field reports. Can you describe the various
19 uses of field reports, the purpose of a field
20 report?

21 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Good morning Mr.
22 Chair, council members. My name is Howard
23 Gottesman. I'm a captain with the Police
24 Department's Housing Bureau. Field reports, brief
25 description, it's a police department form that's

1
2 used to report an incident or a condition that may
3 need correction to the housing authority. We have
4 situations like breaking a local NYCHA rule or we
5 have also dangerous conditions like mattresses left
6 out in hallways, stuck elevators, unreasonable
7 noise. There's, there's many, there's many
8 situations that require a field report.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I want to, I
10 want to understand. First I want to address the
11 housing conditions but then I'm interested to know
12 the NYPD's role in documenting violation of NYCHA
13 rules. My understanding is that the process, and I
14 don't know if this is still the process but that
15 when, when an officer would document a condition in
16 a field report the field report would go to the
17 PSA. The PSA would then send their field report to
18 the Borough Property Management Office. The
19 Property Management Office would send the field
20 report to the local Property Management Office. And
21 then the local Property Management Office would
22 arrange for a maintenance person to correct the
23 condition. I mean that strikes me as, as an
24 absurdly bureaucratic process to be blunt. And I'm
25 wondering did NYCHA create that process? Did the

1
2 NYPD create that process that, is there a new
3 process in, in the works?

4 SHOLA OLATOYE: Chair we focus our, the
5 work on, we focus our, our, our attention on the
6 work, not necessarily the source of the work. And I
7 think what we have done actually under Chief Gomez
8 and now Chief Sopito [sic] is actually working on a
9 more streamlined approach to, to the field
10 reporting process. We, we are working to actually
11 make this an electronic process as opposed to the
12 paper process now and try and improve the sort of
13 chain of possession of documents as well. I think
14 you, you rightly point out and, and something that
15 we can work, work closely on.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So what, what does
17 this streamline process look like? Do you have a
18 sense of...

19 BRIAN CLARKE: So, so if I can just
20 elaborate a little bit more. So the, we had
21 recognized that you know the, the timeliness
22 reports when you have a paper type system you know
23 is not ideal. So the, you know in September we had
24 actually you know spoken with Chief Gomez and
25 Inspector Delehanty and the, actually issued you

1 know a process procedure for actually you know
2 calling in those type of conditions that Captain
3 Gottesman just, you know just reviewed for example
4 if they observed you know, you know doors unlocked
5 or lights out, things along those lines. So the,
6 the way it would work now is that the field report
7 would be completed by the police officer, submitted
8 to their local PSA you know desk officer would be
9 you know reviewed and then they would call into our
10 emergency service department you know the
11 particular condition and we would create a work
12 order for that. And then the field report would be
13 distributed to our borough management office and
14 then, and then out to our, our property managers.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So that, so that
17 strikes me as a dramatically more efficient process
18 right rather than have the PSA send the field
19 report through various bureaucratic channels. The
20 PSA's going to directly call the condition into the
21 CCC centralized call center... work order's
22 immediately generated, is that how the process will
23 work?

24 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah right, right now
25 it's into our emergency service department but...

1 [cross-talk] we would look to you know learning
2 things. We would actually prefer to go into our
3 CCC. So we're work, working with NYPD to change
4 that.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so that new
7 policy has been in place since when?

8 BRIAN CLARKE: September.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so is the NYPD
10 fully implementing it? Do we have any indication...

11 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Yes, September 10th
12 like Mr. Clarke said we implemented a new procedure
13 for certain cases that gets called directly into
14 NYCHA emergency service by the desk officer right
15 away. And it's also recorded on a field report the
16 more traditional way which is forwarded through the
17 chain that the chair described.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And is NYCHA
19 keeping track of the complaints coming, operations
20 question sorry, is NYCHA keeping track of the
21 complaints coming from the NYPD to ensure
22 compliance with the new policy or?

23 BRIAN CLARKE: A work order is created
24 and the work order number is shared with NY, with
25 NYPD at that time when we, when we create it.

1
2 However within our system we're not able to call
3 that out. But we are looking at ways to do that,
4 maybe creating a subcategory so we can track those.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And what kind
6 of conditions are, are typically reported by the
7 NYPD.

8 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: We put out a
9 directive. We highlighted damaged or defective
10 lobby doors or door locks that compromises the
11 security of buildings, also a defective intercom
12 system. And we also listed some examples of
13 situations that would compromise the safety or
14 security of the building. For example leaving bulky
15 items like furniture and mattresses in hallways,
16 something that would hinder an emergency responder
17 from gaining access or something that could be
18 easily lit on fire, an unsecured elevator room, or
19 any sort of damage to a parapet wall or roof of any
20 development. That would be something that would
21 need to be called in immediately. Of course it
22 doesn't preclude any other example that I didn't
23 list.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now according to
25 the New York Times the NYPD uses field reports to

1 document behavior that does not violate the law but
2 might violate NYCHA rules. And the New York Times
3 describes it as the NYPD functioning as an armed
4 hall monitor for, for the New York City housing
5 authority and you know I, I'm, I must confess that
6 I'm a critic of broken windows policing, the
7 aggressive policing of minor, I guess minor
8 offences against the law but here you have
9 aggressive enforcement of minor rules that are not
10 even violations of the law and I'm wondering why in
11 the world is the NYPD enforcing NYCHA rules that
12 have nothing to do with enforcement of the law.

14 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: We don't really
15 enforce the rules. We report any rule violation to
16 NYCHA if it's not of a criminal nature.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Why is that an
18 appropriate function for a law enforcement agency?

19 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: We're physically
20 there, we observe something, it's conduct that may
21 be intimidating to other residents. NYCHA is the
22 landlord and they should be put on notice if
23 there's either another resident or someone that is
24 not supposed to be there that's conducting

1
2 themselves in manner that's not in accordance with
3 the rules and regulations.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you know, can
5 you explain to me how the NYPD got in the habit of
6 enforcing NYCHA rules that have nothing to do with
7 law enforcement or is that, is that being done at
8 the request of NYCHA. Is that being, is the NYPD
9 doing it out of its own volition.

10 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Again we don't
11 enforce, we don't enforce...

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm sorry citing,
13 writing field reports about violations of NYCHA
14 rules?

15 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: It's a simple report
16 letting NYCHA know what was observed.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so does NYCHA
18 use these reports in eviction cases or...

19 BRIAN CLARKE: No we do not.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So if, so if NYCHA
21 has no intention of using these reports then what
22 incentive is there for the NYPD to, to document
23 these behaviors in a field report. I mean if the
24 question's beyond your pay grade I understand but...
25 but that's my, my point of confusion here is, is

1
2 that it would seem to me that the NYPD has no
3 business documenting behaviors that do not violate
4 the law. It's up to NYCHA to enforce its own rules
5 that would seem to be an inappropriate function for
6 law enforcement. With that said I do want to give
7 my, my colleagues an opportunity to ask questions
8 so I'm going to turn the floor over to Council
9 Member Gibson.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very
11 much Chair Torres and thank you Chairwoman and your
12 team for being here. So the chair really alluded to
13 a lot of what I wanted to ask. But let me first
14 begin. Chairwoman you mentioned in your testimony
15 there are currently 100 thousand open work orders.
16 Do you know how many of those are regarding
17 lighting?

18 SHOLA OLATOYE: I do not know. Less than
19 one percent ma'am.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: How many?

21 SHOLA OLATOYE: Less than one percent of
22 those are lighting.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. What, what
24 is the process by which you determine lighting

1
2 repairs that rise to the level of urgency,
3 emergency, or basic routine?

4 BRIAN CLARKE: So the, so for, you know
5 so for lighting if a fixture is you know sparking
6 or if there's exposed wires that would be an
7 emergency type of situation for, you know for you
8 know public space lighting. Otherwise bulbs, the,
9 we replaced them as needed so they're done you
10 know, you know predominately the same day that
11 they're, that we discover them out, you know part
12 of the caretaker, caretakers will replace bulbs. So
13 if the deserve them, if they observe them out
14 they'll replace them so that isn't statistically
15 tracked. The, and then if it's something beyond you
16 know those items... so let's say if it's a situation
17 where we have to replace you know a ballast then
18 that would be done as a normal you know corrective
19 maintenance and the, you know the average time you
20 know is about 8.9 days right now.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: So the light
22 that was out in stairwell A of Pink Houses leading
23 up to Akai Gurley's death, the issue with the
24 ballast is considered a routine repair?

25 BRIAN CLARKE: Yes, right now, yep.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. Are there
3 any chances or any conversations you guys are
4 having to make adjustments to that, that different
5 categorization?

6 BRIAN CLARKE: Yes. As previously
7 testified we are, we are reviewing that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: And what type of
9 outreach is done on the ground for residents of
10 public housing to make sure they know about the
11 customer contact center?

12 SHOLA OLATOYE: So our residents are
13 really a critical component of helping us generate
14 this kind of data. We can only fix what we know
15 about. Obviously our staff who are there should be
16 reporting that. We work very closely with the
17 tenant association leadership as well as at least
18 in most of my meetings with you and your colleagues
19 one of the first things I ask is please encourage
20 residents to call the customer, the CCC because we
21 use that data every morning actually to really
22 provide the list of tasks for the day. So the
23 outreach is not only with the resident leadership,
24 it is through the NYCHA journal which goes out to
25 our entire population, through our websites we now

1
2 actually can, folks can follow sort of NYCHA alerts
3 online, you can get emails about when your, your,
4 your work is scheduled. So we're really trying to
5 utilize many different mediums to get out, get to
6 residents but there's always more that can be done
7 and, and we look forward to any recommendations or,
8 or suggestions you might have.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. I'm glad
10 to hear you say that because I always feel there's
11 room for improvement.

12 SHOLA OLATOYE: Always.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: The number of
14 residents in my district, I represent 10 NYCHA
15 developments in the South Bronx and PSA7.

16 SHOLA OLATOYE: Mm-hmm.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: And many of them
18 don't know about CCC and many of them don't call.
19 And so I say that because you mentioned you know
20 less than one percent of the calls are regarding
21 lighting but I can assure they're probably more
22 people that will be calling if they knew that there
23 was an avenue to call and express a repair that was
24 needed.

SHOLA OLATOYE: And Council Woman I

think you're exactly right. And something that is actually reflected in the slight uptick in work orders that, that we've reported is because our staff are actually in the apartments and are documenting and creating work orders from the work that we observe. And so you know this is a real shift in policy to ensure that we actually get into each and every apartment over the next two years. And so we're generating our own work by going into an apartment. Often times you know a resident may have called or frankly said this is more of a priority than the other 10 things that we're observing visually. So we're actually generating this work ourselves as we get into that apartment, get into these apartments. But there's always more work to be done and further outreach, not only in English but obviously in the many languages that are represented by our residents who live in the housing authority.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Now the previous panel, Mr. Jones and Mr. Floyd talked about tamperproof lighting. Is that something that you're looking to, to have a conversation about so that we

1
2 could prevent any levels of damage onto any of our
3 lighting system?

4 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah so we, we do have
5 some tamper you know resistant you know, you know
6 fixtures. You'll see them, they'll have kind of you
7 know metal wiring, you know mesh you know
8 protecting it.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: You said some.

10 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah I did. The, we don't
11 necessarily have that every, everywhere. We'll
12 install those where we have you know persistent you
13 know vandalism.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: And the
15 persistent vandalism is based on what, the
16 caretakers? [cross-talk]

17 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah it's based on...
18 [cross-talk]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Based on the
20 level of calls that you can... [cross-talk]

21 BRIAN CLARKE: It's based on, it's...
22 [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...priority?
24 [cross-talk]

1
2 BRIAN CLARKE: ...development management
3 making that decision.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. With the
5 101 million dollars the District Attorney of
6 Manhattan has allocated to NYCHA is there a
7 timeframe by which NYCHA has to spend that fund,
8 funds? And then is it going to only be focused on
9 the 15 priority developments that we were working
10 on this summer?

11 SHOLA OLATOYE: So the answer is yes it
12 would only be focused on those 15. I shouldn't...
13 actually make a note in Manhattan, those, of those
14 15 in Manhattan obviously given that this is the,
15 Mr. Vance's focus area. In terms of the time
16 commitment we, this is an announcement that we're
17 just learning of and so we're working closely with
18 our team, city hall, and the district attorney's
19 office to develop, begin planning and augmenting
20 the resources that was already provided for us. We
21 are actually starting... I'm going to let Mr. Ribeiro
22 talk a little bit more about the lighting
23 initiatives, exterior lighting initiatives funded
24 by this, by this body already underway and our
25 overall timing.

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The, the lighting
3 upgrades at the, at the 18 developments have all
4 been designed and we are currently in the process
5 of submitting the required CPs to OMB and we
6 anticipate that construction for these, these
7 locations. We'll start in the spring. Perhaps even
8 earlier if, if the weather will permit and we do
9 want to start some of the work even earlier so
10 could start as, as early as February March.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. And I
12 imagine once those funds have been exhausted
13 maintaining the security systems that are put in
14 place with these funds. I'm sure we'll need to have
15 a conversation about that in terms of who's going
16 to pay for maintaining once the funds have been
17 exhausted?

18 SHOLA OLATOYE: There's no question that
19 first of all really appreciate the increased
20 investment but there is an operating cost with
21 them. And it is something that we've raised both
22 with, with our colleagues at city halls to ensure
23 that we actually have, also have those resources to
24 ensure that they can be maintained long term.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. Captain I
3 know my colleague talked about the field reports
4 and I just had two quick questions about that. And
5 I appreciate the efforts to expedite the process as
6 the police officers in you know PSA2 and all the
7 others are patrolling and looking at some of the
8 unsafe conditions... do those reports have a greater
9 weight than tenant complaints? So if your officers
10 are patrolling in Pink Houses and they see and... a
11 dimly lit stairwell does that complaint have more
12 weight than a tenant's complaint. So is there a
13 level of priority that's given for calls that are
14 made by the police or the field reports or is it
15 the same?

16 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: That's a good
17 question. I, I don't know the answer to that. We,
18 we do the reports. I don't know what level of
19 priority the housing authority assigns it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay and you
21 know I know that we are going to have a hearing in
22 the next couple of weeks about verticals but I do
23 want to go on record in saying and I know the
24 previous panel had alluded to some of the
25 caretakers and elevator staff that are in the midst

1
2 of interactions with police officers with guns
3 drawn. I'm very disturbed to hear that. And I want
4 to make sure that you understand it's something
5 that we will certainly need to talk about moving
6 forward because we want our, our staff to be safe
7 just like tenants are and certainly those types of,
8 of situations can be a recipe for disaster. So I
9 want to make sure I mention that because it was put
10 on record and I just was very disturbed to hear
11 that.

12 SHOLA OLATOYE: Councilwoman if I could
13 just amend an earlier statement the DA's 101
14 million dollar investment is actually for all 15
15 map developments, so just to be clear.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Oh okay. I
17 thought that was the case. Because.. [cross-talk]
18 that means it extends to the developments in the
19 rest of..

20 SHOLA OLATOYE: That's correct ma'am.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Do you know, are
22 the Pink Houses in the 15.

23 SHOLA OLATOYE: Pink, were not in, was
24 not in the 15.

25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. So are
3 there any additional funds other than what local
4 council members, the mayor's plan, is there
5 anything additional in terms of funding for
6 capital, for Pink Houses itself, outside of some of
7 the usual streams?

8 SHOLA OLATOYE: So as we testified
9 earlier there is, we just, the board just approved
10 about 36 million dollars for brick and roof
11 replacement at Pink and that's funded through our
12 federal allocation. There's also an additional 200
13 thousand dollars that's focused on rear door
14 replacement at Pink which is actually scheduled to
15 begin this week, next week.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay thank you.
17 Thanks Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Before I call on
19 Council Member Williams I do have one question
20 regarding the new policy around field reports, the
21 new policy's based on a memo from the housing
22 bureau is that correct or?

23 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Yep, that's correct.
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So, and the housing
3 bureau only has jurisdiction over police service
4 areas.

5 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Correct.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So, so all the
7 developments in my district are not overseen by PSA
8 but overseen by a local precinct, has new policy
9 applied at local precincts or...

10 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: The policy that I
11 have goes to our housing borough commanders and our
12 PSA commanders.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Is, is the
14 housing authority attempting to ensure that there's
15 uniformity and how we apply the policy between
16 local precincts and PSAs?

17 SHOLA OLATOYE: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, thank you.
19 Council Member Williams.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you so
21 much. Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you Commissioner
22 and all who are testifying. I want to say I'm very
23 proud of this council for, for holding these
24 hearings particularly making sure that the focus
25 as... city and the country are going through an

1 important discussion, it's not just on the police.
2 There's important discussion we have to have but
3 there are many other institutions that need to be
4 brought into the conversation. And so while I often
5 hear that these communities ask for police, that's
6 why they're there, it's true, but they also ask for
7 other things like lighting and working elevators
8 and youth programs and things of that nature. So
9 there's a lot of things that I asked for and for
10 some reason we sometimes don't hear the other parts
11 that I asked for. So I'm glad that we're having
12 these hearings today. Just quickly I wanted to,
13 better understand how much money do you get from
14 each government. I know I think the state zeroed
15 out and you get some from the federal and then you
16 get some from us, just probably not enough but if
17 you can just run it to me again.

18
19 SHOLA OLATOYE: So 97 percent of our
20 funding comes from the federal government.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And you get
22 none from the state correct?

23 SHOLA OLATOYE: Correct.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And, and I
25 guess we give you the three percent.

1 SHOLA OLATOYE: Correct.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: What, what is
3 that number altogether, how much?
4

5 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well this year the mayor
6 invested 210 million dollars in NYCHA initiatives.
7 We can give you the specific breakdown as to the
8 actual dollars to the housing authority, 35 million
9 dollars for exterior lighting, as you know there
10 was 52 million dollars that was for, given for the
11 2014 fiscal year, there was additional programming
12 dollars, about 1.3 million dollars for communities
13 programming to extend hour, the hours at our
14 communities center this summer, and there... but we
15 can give you the specific breakdown as to of that
16 210 how much is coming to the housing authority
17 versus the other agencies, we can follow up with
18 you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And how much
20 do you get from the federal government?

21 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well we receive as I
22 said about 97 percent of our three billion dollar
23 annual operating budget.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And what's the
25 annual operatings?

1 SHOLA OLATOYE: Three billion dollars
2
3 sir.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay. And how
5 much do you need to operate?

6 SHOLA OLATOYE: So we have approximately
7 an 18 billion dollar capital deficit meaning to
8 bring our buildings up to working order today that
9 is what it would cost. Our ability.. so, so that all
10 of the issues that we're dealing with in terms of
11 you know sort of delayed and deferred maintenance
12 would be you would just have sort of routine
13 maintenance but that, that is the number Sir.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And, and
15 that's the capital. Is there, are there any
16 differences in the operating budget?

17 SHOLA OLATOYE: The operating need is
18 much greater. I mean we, but, but it's based on
19 frankly 20 years of deferred maintenance. So we
20 work within what we're provided right now. We know
21 because this body has, has supported us that our
22 current operating allocation from the federal
23 government is insufficient. It does not provide for
24 things like safety, safety and security
25 enhancements. We know that it does, it is

1
2 insufficient because it doesn't provide for things
3 like community service and programs which this body
4 has supported. So there are many sort of components
5 of what we do that are supported from other sources
6 and... but, but our capital needs, our ability to
7 actually operate our buildings functionally is
8 certainly one of our greatest challenges.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Just in, in
10 terms of... and I was hoping to ask some questions of
11 Mr. Floyd, hopefully he'll be back. But I, I read
12 today that there's a huge problem with overtime
13 particularly when it came to plumbers making
14 repairs. And I'm trying to understand one, is that
15 happening in other areas, not just plumbers? I know
16 there's some negotiations going on. Are we pushing
17 on that overtime issue? And would it cost us less
18 in overtime if we just hired more plumbers?

19 SHOLA OLATOYE: One of the, the nature
20 of being a plumber is that you're responding to an
21 emergency. And so when you have buildings that are,
22 more than half of our portfolio are 50 years old we
23 have a lot of emergencies. And so it is certainly a
24 major challenge for us to ensure that residents
25 have heat, have hot water, have gas which you know

1
2 is a constant challenge for us. We are, we've
3 actually reduced, sort of put a really, reduction
4 on overtime issues across the authority besides
5 emergency related issues so that we could actually
6 deal with our operating deficit. And, and that is
7 a, that's a challenge for us for sure. And as we
8 look into 2015 and beyond I think the most
9 important focus here is how do we ensure that
10 residents have the kinds of services, services and
11 service levels that ensure that clean safe and
12 connected communities is what everyone has. And so,
13 and how we do our work, how, how our staff are, are
14 supported to do their work of, of cleaning and
15 main, maintaining is an important and critical part
16 of that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So I don't, I
18 don't have the article in front of me but it looked
19 like, if I remember correctly, they were making
20 more in overtime than the deficit in the operating
21 of NYCHA. So, so that concerned me. I understand
22 what you're saying because most of it is
23 emergencies. But my two questions, are there
24 overtime issues across the board with maintenance
25 in other areas, electricians, other type of areas?

1
2 And two have we done a calculus to see... one of the
3 responses were it wasn't the plumbers fault, they
4 just weren't enough plumbers to address the
5 concern. So my question is have we looked at the
6 math to make sure that we actually using the money
7 wisely instead of hiring more plumbers to address
8 the concerns but paying overtime for the few that
9 we have?

10 BRIAN CLARKE: Certainly you know
11 additional staff would, you know would, would help
12 with, you know with overtime. But you know as we
13 said the nature of you know the particular, or
14 plumbers in particular is you know, you know
15 emergency based and especially now we're heading
16 into the, you know we're in the heating season you
17 know with heat and hot water issues. So that's, you
18 know it's definitely a challenge and you know as
19 the chair said years of you know diminished you
20 know budget for the housing authority, 50 year old
21 buildings we have a lot of needs so it helps you
22 know drive up that overtime figure.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Alright. So I
24 want to try, I'm going to try to separate the
25

1
2 questions. Are there other overtime issues similar
3 in other areas?

4 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah we, we have overtime
5 for a, a lot of different... [cross-talk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That are as
7 costly?

8 BRIAN CLARKE: Excuse me?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That are as
10 costly?

11 BRIAN CLARKE: The, you know the, the,
12 you know depending upon you know different, there's
13 different labor rates depending upon you know the
14 different, different titles, different, different
15 skill trades.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And it seems
17 like you said it may be more cost effective to hire
18 more plumbers. Have we looked at whether instead of
19 paying that amounts overtime we can hire more
20 plumbers?

21 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah I mean it... the, the,
22 the, certainly you know having more staff and being
23 able to do preventive maintenance and things along
24 those lines would help reduce, it would not
25 eliminate overtime but you know having the ability

1
2 to hire, hire more staff would certainly help in
3 that area.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay... [cross-
5 talk]

6 BRIAN CLARKE: And there are needs,
7 there are definitely needs outside of... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Have we done a
9 cost analysis? And we've, we've... yes?

10 SHOLA OLATOYE: We have done that
11 analysis.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And so paying
13 the overtime is, is more efficient than hiring more
14 plumbers? It might be, I'm just... [cross-talk]

15 SHOLA OLATOYE: One of our, it's not an
16 option right now for us to think about hiring staff
17 Councilman and so we are working within the
18 resources that we have which are the hard met,
19 hardworking men and women who show up to work every
20 day. You know with the largess of this body and
21 perhaps other levels of government we would
22 certainly welcome the opportunity to, to better
23 equip our, our staff to do the work the jobs that
24 they're trying to do every day.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So if we're
3 paying a certain amount of overtime every year,
4 across the board, not just the plumbers, that was...
5 we've calculated that even though we're paying that
6 money on overtime we, we wouldn't have the funds to
7 hire other full time employees?

8 SHOLA OLATOYE: Within our current
9 operating budget Sir we don't have the ability to
10 hire additional staff regardless.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay. Another
12 point that I wanted to point. I think Mr. Floyd
13 also mentioned that there needs to be better
14 coordination with the police department to help
15 ensure that a bunch of issues... collaboration is, is
16 a big point for me because I believe we try to have
17 our police officers do the job of every agency so I
18 think that's a concern. And often times I'll ask
19 about the communications between commissioners of
20 different areas and... at least in the last
21 administration there wasn't many. So I wanted to
22 hear about what kind of relationship there is. I
23 know that they do some of the... reports but other
24 kind of communications happen? In particular are
25 there communications with the police department if

1
2 there's failures and lighting failures in other
3 areas to inform them that there might be some
4 security issues and safety issues.

5 SHOLA OLATOYE: So I think you're right
6 Councilman that this is an administration that has
7 prided and really charged each of the leaders of
8 the agencies to work differently and to work more
9 collaboratively. So when I was appointed my, one of
10 my first few meetings was with then Chief Carlos
11 Gomez, head of the Housing Bureau, within a few
12 days of his recent appointment of Chief... and I also
13 sat down... NYCHA convenes quarterly a safety and
14 security taskforce of which the Housing Bureau is a
15 part of. And I should say it, it includes not only
16 the housing chief but his top deputies. There is a
17 regular stream of communication between the
18 leadership of the agencies. And then that is
19 replicated through our PSA structures as well. Our
20 monthly resident associations meeting, resident
21 associations meeting either certainly invite local
22 PSA leadership to attend and for the most part they
23 generally do do that. And as you heard us testify
24 to earlier today a, a streamlined approach to the
25 field reporting processes underway.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: When, when
3 will that process be completed?

4 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well it was started in
5 September and we're working in it as, as the
6 Councilwoman said it's continually improving but
7 we're certainly even in our ensuring that we have
8 ways in which to track the source of the
9 information we're working on that as we speak Sir.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And I think
11 just a couple more questions. What other services
12 are at Pink Houses in terms of providing a better
13 quality of life for the residents that live there?
14 Are there any mental health services? What youth
15 services are there? Other kind of social service?

16 SHOLA OLATOYE: So at the Pink Houses
17 there's a senior center that is a DYCD cornerstone
18 center, actually I'm sorry DFTA run center by the
19 Fort Green Senior Citizens Council. There's a
20 community, a community center, also a DYCD center
21 sponsored by the Italian American Civil Rights
22 League, interestingly enough, the daycare center
23 which is their, it's sponsored by the Colony South
24 Brooklyn Houses. So those are three social service

1
2 related organizations that are based at the Pink
3 Houses.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Any mental
5 health or therapy services?

6 SHOLA OLATOYE: When, well I can't speak
7 to the program of these specific agencies because
8 this is actually not run by NYCHA but I will say
9 that in the immediate days, hours and days after
10 this horrible incident we, NYCHA's family services
11 unit was deployed to the site not only for staff
12 but for residents around mental care and grief
13 counselling in the immediate week of the event.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I have one
15 more question. Just on this I... without belaboring a
16 point I do, I don't want to go too much in depth
17 but my concern in, in a lot of, in my NYCHA
18 development I'm sure across sometimes those
19 services are, are not pushed and advertised as much
20 as they should be. So I know that people like the
21 vertical patrols of the service of, of the police.
22 My hope is that at some point we can do vertical
23 patrols. Telling them about these services or
24 bringing them services that they may not know
25 about. So my hope is that we can get these services

1
2 a little further out knocking on doors or however
3 because I found that people just don't know what is
4 there and perhaps we can provide some more like the
5 therapy and the mental health service. Lastly
6 there, there's, there was a, seem, you, you brought
7 down the, the repairs from a sizable amount, 423
8 thousand to 100 thousand and also brought down the
9 number of days would you fix up a request which I
10 think is great. How much it cost and where did you
11 get the money to do that?

12 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well we, first of all
13 the, the, the mayor's forgiveness of the 2,000, the
14 remaining part of the 2,000, the city's 2014 fiscal
15 plan fiscal year of the police forgiveness was
16 specifically focused on reducing the number of
17 vendor work orders. So that was a huge investment
18 in both staff, staff and resources that allowed us
19 to, to tackle that big number. And, and then we
20 have... and also within that it allowed us to
21 establish a new assessment unit as I mentioned
22 earlier that is actually allowing us to get into
23 the apartments and observe and record other issues
24 within the, within the unit. We have as you've
25 noted utilized our own resources to address the

1
2 ongoing challenges of maintenance repair within the
3 housing authority.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you
5 Commissioner, thank you for the indulgence. Mr.
6 Chair if there is a second round I'd like to be on
7 that, thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I actually want to
9 call a brief recess. Just... and I do want to give
10 the Council Member Barron an opportunity to say a
11 few remarks who is the Council Member for Pinks
12 House, Pink Houses.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
14 Chair. And thank you to the panel for coming. As
15 you may know I'm the Chairperson of Higher Ed. but
16 the NYCHA development where this killing took place
17 is in my district. And we certainly send our
18 condolences to the family of Akai Gurley and to
19 those who knew him because he was known in that
20 development, the Pink Houses as well. And as we
21 talk about the lighting and as we talk about
22 vertical patrols that the police department
23 conducts I've heard varying stories as to whether
24 or not during their vertical patrol the police have
25 to report to NYCHA conditions that are hazardous.

1
2 Can you tell us if in fact that is what is supposed
3 to happen?

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm actually going
5 to, I'm going to call a recess because I do want to
6 give the chairwoman a, an opportunity to take a two
7 minute break but then we'll call the, we'll call
8 you right back okay. Thank you.

9 [pause]

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We're resuming the
11 hearing ladies and gentleman. So Council Member
12 Barron would you want to resume or..

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes, thank you.
14 So my question is we know that vertical patrols are
15 done in the housing developments. And I've heard
16 that as a part of the vertical patrol police are
17 supposed to report to NYCHA any conditions that
18 they find during their patrol that need to be
19 addressed. So my question is have you received, is
20 that the case and have police, during the, during
21 conducting their vertical patrols alerted you to
22 the fact of lights being out or doors being,
23 inappropriately closing?

24 SHOLA OLATOYE: Good morning
25 Councilwoman. My colleague from NYPD has stepped

1
2 out of the room so we'll let him speak specifically
3 to the NY, NYPD approach and policy but yes we do
4 receive them and they have a, a variety of, of
5 information on them about the status of, of the
6 buildings.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So do you know
8 whether there was a report regarding that
9 particular stairwell?

10 SHOLA OLATOYE: No there was not.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: There was not.
12 And how frequently do they give you reports? Is it
13 a matter of cost that at the end of a vertical
14 patrol they make a notation and submit it to NYCHA?

15 SHOA OLATOYE: I'm going to let Captain
16 Gottesman answer that question if you would repeat
17 it ma'am.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: As, as NY, as
19 the police department does vertical patrols is
20 there a particular form that they use to submit
21 data regarding their findings? And if so who
22 completes it and how regularly is it given to
23 NYCHA? And what are some of the other aspects that
24 are on that report?

1
2 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Just to clarify are
3 you talking to field reports?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Whatever the
5 report is. As a vertical patrol is completed and if
6 the police officers note something that needs to be
7 addressed, perhaps lights out, perhaps doors that
8 don't close appropriately because it is a fire
9 protection as well do they note that and what is
10 the requirement for reporting that?

11 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Well for a vertical
12 patrol the requirement is an activity log entry.
13 What the officers observe during the vertical could
14 lead to additional reporting. If it's a non-
15 criminal condition or a condition that needs
16 correction by the housing authority that would go
17 on a field report if it's a criminal condition it
18 would go on other reports.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And when is the
20 field report submitted, how frequently is that
21 submitted?

22 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: The officer is
23 required to submit it by the end of his or her tour
24 to the desk officer of that PSA.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And then how
3 does it get transferred to NYCHA?

4 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: So...

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: What's the time
6 period for that?

7 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Monday through
8 Friday once a day we have a messenger that goes
9 collecting these reports and depending on what
10 borough it is those reports get dropped off to one
11 of four separate locations.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And do we know
13 if there were any field reports, citing any
14 conditions in Pink Houses during that week or so
15 preceding that event that needed to be addressed?

16 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: I don't know about
17 any, about the week or so before but we just
18 started a new database starting September 29th to
19 better count our field reports. And that allowed us
20 to search to see whether a field report was done in
21 the Pink Houses since September 29th which was
22 prior to the incident you speak of one field report
23 was done but it was not for a lighting condition,
24 it was for a noise condition.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So there, only
3 that one field report indicated any conditions that
4 needed to be addressed by NYCHA? Well that's noise
5 and NYCHA doesn't respond to noise do they?

6 BRIAN CLARKE: If there's a persistent
7 complaint, you know development management you know
8 will speak to you know the tenant who's you know
9 offending.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Thank you
11 Mr. Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
13 Mendez?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you. This
15 is for the officer. Back in 2004 when Timothy
16 Stansbury was murdered on the rooftop the officer
17 at that time had his gun drawn as was the case here
18 more recently with Akai Gurley. The then
19 commissioner said that they were going to look into
20 the practices and training of officers. And I'm
21 just wondering from then until now has that
22 happened put a particular focus on doing vertical
23 patrols in public housing developments?

24 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: In 2010 there was a
25 department wide retraining on vertical patrols. As

1 far as going back to the date the council member
2 mentioned I would have to get back to you on that.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So you
5 don't know if there was any retraining from 2004
6 when Timothy Stansbury was murdered up until now,
7 up until 2010 is the only time you know that there
8 was a retraining?

9 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: From 2004 to 2010 I
10 would have to get back to you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And, and
12 specific to public housing patrolling?

13 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Correct.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So I heard
15 all the testimony about the lighting and I, I want
16 to bring up another issue regarding lighting
17 because Joe Garber is no longer here he always used
18 to, for those of you who've been with NYCHA for a
19 while you may remember him, he always used to come
20 to the hearings and bring up the issues of
21 lightings that were on during the day particularly
22 in some of the Williamsburg public housing
23 developments and I was wondering if you've been
24 able to determine in those developments where
25 lightings are on the development grounds all day

1
2 long why they're on and if you're able to cure that
3 problem?

4 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah the, so the you know
5 lighting, you know the exterior lighting can be
6 controlled by either timers or sensors. So the, you
7 know the, if lights are on you know during the day
8 could be related to a timing or sensor issue. Or it
9 could be that you know because of a particular you
10 know corrective maintenance issue that in order to
11 keep the lights you know functioning we had to
12 bypass you know the, the timer or the sensor.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay thank you
14 very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
16 Cumbo.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Hello. Good
18 afternoon. Thank you Chair. Wanted to ask, and
19 before I wanted to thank all of you for coming
20 today, wanted to just get some more clarity. I
21 heard what you said but I wanted to get more
22 clarity with the Cy Vance plan to use 101 million
23 dollars in settlement money. That is only going to
24 go towards the 15 developments that have already
25

1
2 been identified or those 15 developments that have
3 been identified that are in Manhattan?

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It's all 15
5 developments.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: It's all 15
7 developments?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yep, in all boroughs.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: In all of the
10 boroughs?

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Now my other
13 question is and this might have been covered or it
14 might be very obvious to others but I want to have
15 the clarity. Have there been discussions with other
16 DAs in the ability to make a movement similar to
17 the AD in Manhattan?

18 SHOLA OLATOYA: So I know that... good
19 afternoon first of all. City hall has been having,
20 is, is really leading that conversation through the
21 Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. And we are
22 obviously supportive of those conversations as they
23 evolve but we've not led them directly.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So let me just
25 get some clarity on this as well. So each of the

1 attorney general... I mean, excuse me, each of the
2 attorney, district attorneys were given a certain
3 amount of funding out of this settlement?
4

5 SHOLA OLATOYA: I can't speak to... I
6 don't, this is not, not my area of, my area of
7 expertise councilwoman so I know that there was a
8 statewide settlement and I know that some district
9 attorneys have more than others but I think you
10 know we can, we'll have to defer to them in terms
11 of how they get it and their allocation of it and
12 their prioritization of those funds.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But each of them
14 were, each district attorney was given a certain
15 amount of funding?

16 SHOLA OLATOYA: I'm not sure of that, I
17 can't confirm that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. And when do
19 you anticipate that this level of funding by
20 District Attorney Vance will start to be
21 implemented, utilized, received, and go out the
22 door?

23 SHOLA OLATOYA: So we expect there,
24 there's some, obviously additional paperwork that
25 has to happen and some final sign offs but we, we

1
2 are already planning as you heard testified earlier
3 for these dollars. We expect to see them sometime
4 in the first quarter of 2015 and that will support
5 the work that's already underway at these 15
6 developments for exterior lighting and security
7 enhancements.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That's fantastic.
9 You, in your paperwork here it says that there are
10 200, there are 250 thousand, 255 thousand interior
11 lights and 26 thousand exterior lights. At any
12 given time do you have a, a firm understanding of
13 which of those are functioning and which of those
14 are not?

15 BRIAN CLARKE: So you know we have,
16 certainly have what's been reported in our work
17 order system and so we can provide that you know
18 real time. For, but for those items that, that
19 aren't reported those may be outside the system.
20 And as I said the caretakers when they do their
21 walk down of the building each day they will
22 identify whether or not a light is out or not and
23 if it's a simple repair like a bulb they're going
24 to fix it and we're not going to record that as a
25 work order.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But I know that
3 with the 15 developments that were highlighted for
4 lighting issues a lot of that was, I don't under, I
5 don't even understand how to describe the lighting
6 that you're utilizing. It's kind of like that
7 stadium lighting that's very large and very big and
8 that's very different from the type of lighting
9 that we're talking about right now. So what I want
10 to know is in our public housing developments if
11 there is... let's say you have a, let's say you have
12 300 issues in terms of complaints regarded,
13 regarding lighting and you simply do not have the
14 funding to respond to all of the lighting issues or
15 requests that have come forward. How do you
16 prioritize which lighting concerns or issues will
17 be addressed?

18 BRIAN CLARKE: So the, I, I actually
19 previously testified you know to this. The, so if a
20 fixture is you know sparking or has you know
21 exposed wires that will be handled you know prior
22 to a fixture being out because of a, a ballast
23 issue.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And that would
25 get priority but what would you say, and you may

1
2 have testified about this what is the back, the
3 backlog in terms of lighting fixture issues at this
4 time?

5 SHOLA OLATOYE: So of our work orders
6 existing about 100 thousand, less than one percent
7 represent work orders for lights. And as was
8 previously testified the, the lights, if it's
9 sparking, if it's creating an immediate health and
10 safety issue that's clearly addressed in our
11 emergency services work. If it is simply, if it is
12 a fixture or, or something that is more of a
13 corrective maintenance that is something that would
14 be handled in that course of business.

15 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah, and also if I can
16 add because I did not testify this earlier but for
17 example if there was power issue affecting an
18 entire line of, of lights in a stairwell that would
19 be you know prioritized as well.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. What is the
21 current lighting system or issue in Pink Houses
22 now? So following the shooting what's happened at
23 Pink Houses currently? What, what is... if we were to
24 go there right now what actions or fixture,
25

1 fixtures or lighting fixtures were fixed or
2 addressed or anything to that nature?
3

4 BRIAN CLARKE: So, you know so after you
5 know the, you know the incident we you know
6 inspected the property and we made repairs so
7 there's 34 hundred you know interior public space
8 lighting and about 400 you know exterior and we
9 repaired you know 143 you know of these fixtures.
10 But lot of it was bulb replacement.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: A lot of them
12 were done through bulb replacement. So 143 were
13 actually replaced and fixed?

14 BRIAN CLARKE: Correct.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay, now let me
16 ask you this question. So 143 were fixed. Did you
17 have complaints on those 143 or was this after you
18 did their surveying of property? Or how much did
19 you, how many complaints did you have relative to
20 how many lighting fixtures you had to fix?

21 BRIAN CLARKE: We, we found, we found
22 many more out there than were, than what we had
23 work orders for.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. Now in
25 order to empower our communities and our, and the

1
2 people that we represent is it to their, is it to
3 their best interest to report as much of these as
4 they're seeing? Would that begin to do something to
5 change the dynamic so that we can empower the
6 residents?

7 SHOLA OLATOYE: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. So we're
9 going to start a fix the light bulbs in our
10 districts campaign. Wanted to ask also is there a
11 current, is there a current plan of what happens
12 when there is a shooting or a fatal shooting in
13 NYCHA whether it's done by a resident or someone
14 that lives outside or it's an incident like
15 happened with Akai Gurley? Is there something that
16 happens when the police department or others say we
17 couldn't see the tape, it was too dark, we couldn't
18 see this, no one could identify anyone because it
19 was a dark stairwell? When those sorts of
20 situations happen is there something that happens
21 immediately following a report such as that?

22 SHOLA OLATOYE: In those, it's hard to
23 sort of talk about hypotheticals but I think you
24 know in... and, so I'll speak specifically to this
25 incident on November 20th and 21st. As soon as our

1 staff were allowed access to the crime scene and as
2 it was previously testified we noted a light or a
3 ballast issue on the eighth floor which was
4 subsequently replaced. And as, and as Brian, Mr.
5 Clarke just testified we then did a full
6 walkthrough out of both sensitivity to the tragedy
7 that had just occurred and, and replaced the other
8 issues that, that our staff at that point had
9 noted. We work really closely with NYPD you know
10 both in, in terms of when, when incidents,
11 unfortunate incidents like this happen and you know
12 our staff, we, one of our major concerns is A the
13 safety of residents and our staff so we were very
14 clear around protocols, around communication,
15 around making sure that buildings are secure so
16 that residents don't feel sort of put upon. As I
17 mentioned earlier we also dispatch our family
18 services team to, to the, to the Pink Houses for
19 onsite grief counselling etcetera. So we, there,
20 there are some sort of basic operational things
21 that we take care of but we really sort of defer
22 the site access issues and to NYPD until after we
23 can get, until we can get access to the site.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And as you know
3 it and wanting to be more specific in my own
4 district we had a shooting in Farragut Houses that
5 was fatal. And one of the things that we want to
6 make sure of is that... I think we're moving in the
7 right direction by making sure that lighting is
8 certainly addressed especially on the aftermath of
9 the Akai Gurley and the attention that that brought
10 because an NYPD officer that killed Akai Gurley but
11 what we all want to make sure of at the same time
12 is that there are crimes that are happening that
13 are not receiving that level of attention that will
14 often have no news media and, and the electeds
15 [sic] and many others are not as aware of those
16 issues that are not, that are not happening because
17 it's not in their district specifically. But I
18 really want to make sure that the same attention
19 that is given to the situation in Pink Houses are
20 given to all developments, particularly when a
21 shooting happens internally within the NYCHA
22 development. So that's really more of a statement
23 because it's, it's tragic that our budget
24 constraints are such that real movement like that
25 happens through an incident such as that but want

1
2 to make sure that when it's not as public, and when
3 it's not as media attention getting that we also
4 put those same resources in into those other areas.
5 And then my final question pertains to, and this
6 might have been addressed as, as well, how do
7 emergency lights factor in? So when a light goes
8 out do emergency lights come on? If so are they
9 battery powered? How long do emergency lights last?
10 What developments have emergency lighting
11 installed?

12 BRIAN CLARKE: So, so emergency exit
13 lighting and I, I think should apologize for not
14 clarifying this earlier. So if there was a problem
15 with an emergency exit lighting that they are.. you
16 know we're required to repair them as an emergency
17 as soon as possible. The, the exact, I'm going to
18 have to get back to you on the details on battery
19 backup and battery life, I don't have those with me
20 right now.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Well what
22 percentage of our developments would you say are
23 actually, actually have emergency lighting
24 installed in them?

25

1
2 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah I don't have that
3 detail with you, with me.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. That would
5 be certainly something that we want to know more
6 about and, and not to discover in the aftermath as
7 well. And just wanted ask to because, because I'm
8 curious and.. in situations like this where lighting
9 are factors and, and, and unsafe environments are
10 happening what, what civil responsibilities do, do,
11 does the city then incur or NYCHA then incur when a
12 situation like that happens when there is a slip
13 and fall or there is a, someone falls down the
14 steps due to the lighting or something like that
15 happens in terms of you have a shooting that
16 happens and lighting is attributed to the cause
17 what financial responsibility do we have in those
18 issues?

19 SHOLA OLATOYE: Well as the landlord to,
20 and, and the owner of the properties we are liable
21 and, and it is up to a court of law to determine
22 that level of liability. So like any landlord we
23 have insurance. We have, we, all of, sort of all of
24 those important matters to protect the housing
25 authority in our.. limited resources but we would,

1
2 we would be just, we'd be treated like any other
3 property owner and would await a decision per the
4 courts.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Are we finding
6 that on a year to year basis that our liability for
7 situations such as these and others is exceeding
8 what it would cost to make the repairs?

9 SHOLA OLATOYE: That's a really good
10 question and I don't have the answer to that but we
11 can certainly follow up with you to give you that
12 analysis. I will say really anything exceeds our
13 operating expenses and our ability to, to actually
14 meet, work with any existing federal dollars that
15 we receive. So anything on top of that we are,
16 obviously we do carry insurance and that is
17 something that, that's why you have those things.
18 But then the premiums that one pays to ensure, to
19 keep that insurance do go up for sure and we can
20 certainly provide you that analysis that, it's,
21 it's in our annual audited financial statements as
22 well.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
25 Lander.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you Mr.
3 Chairman. I know there's a few tenants actually
4 from Pink Houses here who have a time constraint so
5 I'm going to try to be very brief. First I just
6 want to acknowledge and appreciate you know the
7 work you've done to dramatically bring down work
8 order time. Your appreciation that you've taken it
9 from absurd just down to needs improvement you know
10 and your recognition that while we need money to
11 improve it that there, that may or may not be
12 coming so we'll look forward to seeing what you
13 bring when you have the NYCHA Next Generation Plan
14 and continue to work together to get that
15 improvement. So two quick questions. One, on the
16 lights themselves are we shifting from incandescent
17 to LEDs? What, what lights are we putting there?
18 If, and I know if those are achieving savings
19 because they use less energy is NYCHA seeing any of
20 those savings or are we stuck in this problem that
21 we spend the money on better lighting but HUD gets
22 the savings and we need to solve that problem?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would say as, as
24 part of the day to day replacement of bulbs that,
25 that remains incandescent and florescent bulbs but

1
2 whenever we do an upgrade to the lighting they're
3 being converted to LEDs yes.

4 SHOLA OLATOYE: And then the, the other
5 issue which is sort of reduction in energy costs
6 and you rightly point out that NYCHA pays about 564
7 million dollars a year in energy costs and so
8 there's really a disincentive frankly for housing
9 authorities to actually reduce that because we, we
10 don't see any potential upside in, in potential
11 savings. We are excited to be working with HUD and
12 the city on a potential energy performance contract
13 which will allow us to work to install energy
14 retrofitting interventions that we could then plow
15 back the projected savings... allow us to, to do
16 other capital interventions. It's a special program
17 within HUD. It has not been approved yet but it's
18 something that we certainly are looking towards to
19 do. But it's certainly a major issue for us and
20 it's a fixed cost that, that we just eat every
21 year.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Yep, and I just
23 know the, the chair here and Council Member
24 Richards this was a big part of the council's
25 climate change agenda so maybe we could get an

1
2 update at some other point on how that's going with
3 HUD. You know it's an absurd situation that we are
4 continuing to not invest in more energy efficient
5 lighting because HUD achieves those savings rather
6 than NYCHA at a time when they continue the federal
7 government continues to starve NYCHA of the
8 resources that it's, that are needed. So we'd like
9 to know what we need to do to put pressure on HUD
10 to either get that energy performance done, if it's
11 the right way to do it, or structure it more
12 thoughtfully. I mean I think this council has put
13 capital into NYCHA before. If a thing we could do
14 is put capital resources in for lighting
15 replacements that would use capital dollars on the
16 front end but NYCHA then achieves the savings as a
17 result of the energy cost savings on the back end.
18 But of course it'd be foolish for us to do that if
19 those savings are just going back to HUD. And I
20 like the idea that you could plow it back into
21 additional capital repairs which would be fine but
22 I would also be glad to see you be able to just use
23 that savings in the operating budget. So maybe not
24 for today but help us understand what we need to do
25 to be pressuring... like I feel like pressuring the

1 federal government to give more money to NYCHA.
2 While we have to do it is sort of a... waste of time.
3 But pressuring them to get this worked out so that
4 your replacements could be cost efficient would
5 make sense for this council to do and even be an
6 investor in helping on. Do you... just have some
7 general percent, percentage? Like what's the, what
8 percent of the lights are still incandescent versus
9 which ones have been switched to LEDs?
10

11 BRIAN CLARKE: So the, you know the vast
12 majority of our public space lighting are you know
13 florescent, florescent bulbs.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And you said
15 like total overall energy costs are 564 million
16 dollars. So we're not talking about like little
17 incremental... that's a lot of money to be spending.

18 SHOLA OLATOYE: Certainly. And, and
19 lighting obviously is a very important, is, is a
20 major sort of piece of this. We also know that
21 there are other capital interventions that would
22 help reduce our energy costs like better pointing
23 in our buildings where all of our heat is sort of
24 going out of sort of our old buildings, improved
25 boilers, etcetera. One of the opportunities or

1 light if I might in this conversation is, is the
2 work that's happening in the long delayed but soon
3 to come Sandy Resiliency Effort because there we're
4 going to see and actually have an opportunity to
5 measure the, the impact of better resilient
6 infrastructure whether that be by raising our
7 boilers to above you know sea level, doing better
8 pointing, and some other sort of energy efficient
9 infrastructure that Mr. Ribeiro and his team are
10 working on. So I think we can, we will have that
11 data to be able to show that these interventions
12 actually pay off in the long run.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's right. So
15 we're, we'll be, we're glad for the points of light
16 but we'd also like to be pointed in the direction
17 of effective advocacy with HUD to help gets needed
18 in the energy performance or other contracts. And
19 then my final question's just... I want to go back a
20 little bit to underline a couple of the, the labor
21 issues that Council Member Williams was talking
22 about. And I recognize one that you shouldn't
23 negotiate in public and two that what's in the
24 paper about the plumbers is not directly related to
25 this set of issues. But it, it does sound like from

1
2 the exchange you had with him that it does continue
3 to be the situation that both for weekend work and
4 for overtime work the authority is paying you now
5 more than we wanted to for things that are
6 currently classified as overtime and that there
7 have to be some ways to... whether that's through
8 how, the contract negotiations, whether that's
9 through more creative and thoughtful ways of
10 scheduling the work, whether that's through hiring
11 some additional staff to be there at the right
12 times that we can structure things to bring down
13 labor, both simultaneously bring down overtime cost
14 and get to more work sooner. And it's... I've, I feel
15 like you've said things publically that, that are
16 what lead me to believe that so... Is that, is it
17 fair to characterize that as a goal of, of the
18 authorities, as part of its cost savings and
19 productivity work?

20 SHOLA OLATOYE: So our goal is to
21 improve service levels and ultimately what's
22 happening on the ground for residents. And so we're
23 working with not only our labor colleagues but our
24 other sort of agencies across the city to figure
25 out how to do that. And, and there's some lessons

1
2 to be learned from other housing authorities across
3 the country. There are lessons to be learned from
4 yes, from the private sector that ultimately
5 support the men and women who come to work at the
6 housing authority every day to do the best job that
7 they can do.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: so I guess, I
9 guess I just want to underline because the media
10 likes it as a gotcha [sic] story. Labor relations
11 often look like two tables with people on opposite
12 sides. But to hear you you know clarify your
13 appreciation for the work folks.. every day and get
14 a shared understanding I think with this council
15 and with those workers that there are some things
16 we can do to solve these problems together in a way
17 that respect and compensate their work but that
18 also improve service levels and enable us to get to
19 more work sooner that that's a joint effort this
20 council also wants to be a part of helping drive
21 forward.

22 SHOLA OLATOYE: Wonderful. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
24 Rosenthal has one question and then I do want to
25 give the resident council leaders from Pink Houses

1
2 a brief opportunity to just offer brief testimony
3 and then I will call the admiration... I know it's a
4 little unorthodox but I want to call the
5 administration back for some subsequent round of
6 questioning.

7 SHOLA OLATOYE: You like unorthodox.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But I appreciate
9 your, your, your cooperation as always. Council
10 Member Rosenthal one question right?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

12 Thanks so much. Really appreciate this hearing and
13 all your hard work and obvious effort to try to
14 deal with all these problems. It's really just a
15 suggestion. You know in the school, the main issue
16 here was the ballast, it wasn't even the light, it
17 was the ballast itself. And the School Construction
18 Authority is in the second of a three year effort
19 to finish replacing the ballast in most of the
20 schools in New York City because of another problem
21 that I'm not even going to mention because it
22 doesn't have anything to do with this. But I would
23 really urge you to reach out to them. You know one
24 of the things I found in implementing layered
25 access in my district as we went through the

1 details was that we were able to cut out or
2 identify multi-layers of things going on that
3 didn't necessarily have to be there and upon real
4 digging in and exploration we were able to come up
5 with some alternative ideas that ended up being
6 not... we ended up using the savings for something
7 else. Anyway the point just being SCA is in, two
8 thirds of the way done in a major renovation of all
9 their lighting ballast and they may have existing
10 contracts that could be inexpensive. So it was just
11 a suggestion. Thank you.

12
13 SHOLA OLATOYE: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. So I
15 will call the administration back. Thank you for
16 your cooperation it means the great deal. And I
17 want to call the resident council leaders from Pink
18 Houses to the stand. We have Louise Green ad, and
19 Karen Coldwell.

20 KAREN COLDWELL: Okay. My name is Karen
21 Coldwell. I'm the TA President for Resident
22 Association in... Pink Houses. Our issue of security
23 and safety in our buildings is a major issue. We
24 have the lobby doors and exit doors are broken.
25 They're off track. The windows are broken. The

1 locks are broken. This allows roving bands of
2 children to come in and out of the buildings. Also
3 anyone that wants to walk in and out which creates
4 a security issue our stairwells in our A and B the
5 lights are out. The lobby lights are out. And we
6 were advised that the caretaker in each building is
7 responsible for putting in the lights that are out
8 if they're not in cages. This obviously is not
9 being done. The building where the shooting
10 occurred at our last resident association meeting a
11 list was given and that building was on the list of
12 all the buildings that had doors broken and lights
13 in the lobbies and stairwells that are out. That
14 issue was not addressed and our super, manager,
15 assistant manager, assistant super, were not able
16 to attend our resident association meetings due to
17 not being, given authorization through overtime.
18 Our meetings occur at 7 p.m. at night. So if
19 they're not given overtime they're not going to
20 come. And that creates another problem. We also,
21 regarding security we have cameras in the building,
22 each building in the lobby and some of the
23 buildings outside of the building. Only a few of
24 them. We were allotted money by Senator Sampson for
25

1
2 Pink Houses, Boulevard Houses, Cyprus, and Lindon.
3 This money has not been released and we still don't
4 have those cameras. The lighting that will put in
5 after the incident outside and in the buildings has
6 been done. But that creates a problem. Nothing
7 occurs until something happens. And then all of a
8 sudden everyone can find the money to do these
9 repairs. We know that tickets should be put in but
10 these lighting put in but these lighting put in
11 without tickets. The 707 number that we require to
12 call and give a ticket does not have, given the
13 ticket information in a timely fashion so repairs
14 are not done. That also creates a problem.
15 ...security and safety issues. Ms. Green.

16 LOUISE GREEN: [off mic] Good afternoon.
17 My name is Louise Green. I'm the Vice President of
18 the... Association. I have a few issues that's been
19 very dear to my heart... [cross-talk]

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Can you, can you
21 turn on your microphone? Sorry.

22 LOUISE GREEN: I was away when the
23 incident occurred so when I'm getting off the bus
24 to... my son, so he says Ma, did you hear what
25 happened. I said what happened. He said well didn't

1
2 you complain about the lights. I said yes. He said
3 well you know... incident that occurred because of
4 the lighting situation. Really that's a twofold. I
5 blame NYCHA because NYCHA only does I say cosmic
6 surgery. Where they hits the paper then they run
7 around do things. The month before I had a meeting
8 with the 75 precinct and PSA and we were talking
9 about the relationship between the police
10 department and the community. And it's just ironic
11 that I just set there and, you know when your
12 officers come around they don't speak, they don't
13 even say hello. They don't even knowledge that
14 we're here. And we are they eyes and ears like
15 they're our eyes and ears. So if anything happen it
16 would be one of us. If we had a better relationship
17 my opinion the officer was scared. I don't think it
18 was done... I think because of all the hypes that he
19 hear about Pink Houses it was preconceded [sic] in
20 his mind that he was dealing with dangerous hoodlum
21 people. That's the way I personally feel. Because
22 he wouldn't have, have walked in the staircase with
23 his finger on one trigger and a flashlight in
24 other. What would have happened is what... our kids
25 coming up the steps. The elevators takes about 10

1 or 15 minutes to come up so most of these kids, if
2 you got kids you know they're not going to wait for
3 the elevator. They're going to run down to the
4 staircase. And I'll also like to address your
5 issue. The chairman said that family counselling
6 was sent out to Pink Houses for the residents. Well
7 I just concur with my president and I ask her well
8 did anybody call you for counselling, so who do
9 they call because they didn't call us. And my last...
10 least is repairs. They said they have done so much
11 improvement when it comes to repairs. I have a...
12 which they came and inspect in October. You know
13 when my paint day is? April 29th, 2015. And when I
14 tell you the paints are literally peeling off of my
15 walls. And my earliest date is 2015. Also heating,
16 you know the last several weeks we had those cold,
17 cold... days? Pink Houses didn't have any lights. We
18 didn't have any heat. We, I calls, I called the
19 risk management, I called quality control, and I
20 also spoke to another person and this was like 15
21 degrees outside. We had no heat what's so ever.
22 That was in October. Now I came home last week,
23 heat start October 15th. You know when my building
24 receive heat? Friday, December the 12th. So it's a
25

1
2 problem here. We're, it's a problem between
3 communication. I'm pretty sure the CO is saying
4 what she was told by her staff but maybe she needs
5 to come out and maybe... some of these developments
6 and really find out what the real deal is because
7 they're not telling her what the real deal are. And
8 safety, we have the shooting. The young lady on the
9 sixth floor has a home attendant. She was sending
10 her to the store to pick up some groceries. She
11 fell and twisted her ankle because they don't clean
12 up all the branches. Now this young lady's a home
13 attendant, she doesn't get paid. Now she's been out
14 of pay with a month. But how is she going to get
15 reimbursed, she twisted her ankle on those branches
16 that were outside, they don't do any cleaning up.
17 Now when the newspaper come around and the cameras
18 come out oh all that garbage look good. Go check it
19 out now and you'll see all that garbage and stuff
20 is back out there. What I would like to see as
21 being a resident of housing authority for the last
22 35 or 37 years I think it's time that we really are
23 committed, committed to the tenants in housing
24 authority. Whether they're paying a little bit of
25 rent or whether they're paying a lot of rent

2 because some tenants do pay a lot of rent, they're
3 entitled to basic services. If it would have been
4 anybody else the city would have fined them 50
5 thousand times over. Can anybody answer me is
6 housing ever fined when they don't provide the
7 things that they're supposed to provide? Can
8 anybody answer that questions for me? Do they get
9 fined... if the garbage come sanitation'll [sic] fine
10 the private house do housing authority get fines
11 for their violations?

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I just want to
13 note... I... [cross-talk] No I want to... [cross-talk]
14 it's unusual for, for a council member and a
15 witness... [cross-talk]

16 LOUISE GREEN: Oh I'm sorry.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...to engage in a Q&A
18 or... [cross-talk]

19 LOUISE GREEN: I'm sorry...

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...a conversation so...

21 LOUISE GREEN: You see I'm new, I'm new...
22 [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So it's yeah...
24 [cross-talk] it's a monologue we're listen, we're

2 here to listen, not to answer your questions..

3 [cross-talk]

4 LOUISE GREEN: Okay could you.. [cross-
5 talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We've broken a few
7 customs but I can only go so far.

8 LOUISE GREEN: Okay I'm sorry. Okay, you
9 know... Because I know you're here to hear but it's
10 more than just hearing. Just like you here to
11 listen I'm here to listen to get some answers too.
12 So since I can't ask that question could one of
13 y'all maybe ask that question.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'd be more than
15 happy to answer in private so..

16 LOUISE GREEN: Okay that's alright.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Definitely, okay.

18 LOUISE GREEN: And thank you very much
19 for your time.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And thank you for
21 coming. Thank you. So thank you for your testimony
22 and we're going to take a two minute recess. Thank
23 you.

24 [pause]

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. We are resuming the hearing. I thank you for, I want to thank the Chairwoman for first helping one of the tenant leaders with her chair. That's resident engagement at work so.. And, and thank you for agreeing to a subsequent round of questioning. I notice the PowerPoint presentation I notice reduce maintenance wait time has fallen to an average of 9.6 days. Do you keep track of, of median response times or?

SHOLA OLATOYE: Yes we do.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay so what's, what's the median response time city wide for..

SHOLA OLATOYE: So that is, that, that number is pointing to an average work response time chair. We, I'm going to have to ask my colleague so we can follow up with you afterwards with the specific median time..

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

SHOLA OLATOYE: ...as well as the development as I said it's an average. We also track by development as well.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

SHOLA OLATOYE: And by trade. So as you heard earlier for interior lights it's a certain amount of time versus exterior lighting so we can certainly provide you with that data following the hearing.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So the average for interior lighting is 9.6 days, is that, am I reading that correctly or...

BRAIN CLARKE: No the...

SHOLA OLATOYE: That's the service level overall.

BRIAN CLARKE: I'm sorry Chair... If I can just stop and take an opportunity to clarify...
[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Of course yeah.

BRIAN CLARKE: So that's, that's overall average. That's, that's... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

BRIAN CLARKE: overall. For the public space lighting it was 8.9. I do have the median. It's for, you know for the public space and so it's a little less than, than, than two.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Less than two days?
The median?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah, less than two days..

[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Oh wow, okay.

That's very good actually. And, and that's, what is, do you have the median for Pink Houses? How does, how does...

BRIAN CLARKE: No I do not.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Do you have the, what's the citywide average and the average for Pink Houses? I'd be curious to know.

BRIAN CLARKE: I'll, I'll check and see if I have it here for you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay no, okay. And I have, I have one more question Madam Chairwoman you, you indicated that the mayor's plan is, is a long term plan. And so I'm interpreting that to mean that the relief from the NYPD payments is going to be sustained well into the future? Is that a, a fair interpretation of my part or is that something that's still up in the air?

SHOLA OLATOYE: We are certainly looking toward, to every potential source that we could reinvest in the long term next Generation NYCHA plan and that's certainly one of them.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to call
3 Council Member Barron.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
5 Chair. I do want to say that I grew up in public
6 housing; NYCHA, what was then called the Fort
7 Greene Projects. I'm very familiar with that
8 housing development and that format for living. The
9 tenant panel that presented referenced several
10 things that I just want to briefly follow up on.
11 One, was the money that was given to NYCHA for
12 cameras. At Pink Houses my predecessor Council
13 Member Charles Barron gave money for cameras and it
14 took two to three years for that to be processed
15 and for the cameras to finally come. My predecessor
16 Council Member Charles Barron also gave money for
17 the Boulevard Houses. And we understand the cameras
18 are being processed. So the first question is can
19 you tell us what the status is of cameras at
20 Boulevard Houses?

21 SHOLA OLATOYE: Those cameras have been
22 installed councilwoman and you may have, I, we
23 testified earlier that of the 49 developments that
24 we committed to completing by the end of this year
25 Mr. Ribeiro and his team have completed 44.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Mm-hmm.

2 SHOLA OLATOYE: And so we, ad expect
3 fully that we will complete not only the cameras
4 with the security enhancements that include layered
5 access at those 49 developments by the end of the
6 year.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay good. And
9 in terms of cleanup at, at the Pink Houses I also
10 dedicated to support and undergird what was going
11 on in terms of maintenance and cleanup so I would
12 like to sit and talk with someone, specifically I
13 gave it for Pink Houses understanding how
14 widespread the conditions were that needed to have
15 maintenance. I'd like to follow up. But then the
16 other point that was made by the, by the resident
17 representatives is that the police officers do not
18 have regard and value for the residents often times
19 of these housing developments. And while the
20 conditions may not have been what they should be in
21 terms of lighting it seems that that police
22 officer, Officer Liang violated what was presented
23 to us by Chief Gomez as the policy. And what Chief
24 Gomez was the policy for doing a vertical patrol
25 and it came, he said at that point, as a result of

1 the killing of Timothy Stansbury. What Chief Gomez
2 says was that officers are trained to not un-
3 holster their weapons. They are trained to keep
4 their finger away from the trigger, and they are
5 trained to question anyone that they might
6 encounter in the stairwells as to why they were in
7 the building. And certainly none of that happened
8 in the killing of Akai Gurley. So it's very
9 disturbing that we couldn't get a more definitive
10 answer to my colleague's question as to training.
11 And it's very disturbing that Chief Bratton has
12 talked about discretion in terms of officers
13 conducting vertical patrols. That's unacceptable
14 especially in light of the result of the killing of
15 an innocent unarmed law abiding person just going
16 about his business. So if you have a comment for
17 that from the police department I would love to
18 hear it.

19
20 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: I don't have a
21 comment for that.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. I
23 didn't think you would. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Before I
25 call Council Member Gibson I do have one question

1
2 regarding just one clarification on one of the
3 items on the board meeting notes, the NYCHA board
4 meeting notes for October 29th. I notice one of the
5 agenda items indicates rejection of all bids for
6 the installation of closed circuit television
7 cameras and layered access control systems. Can you
8 clarify what, what's the nature of that approval
9 or...

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So yeah as you know we
11 have several contracts already in place to install
12 CCTV and layered access improvements. In an effort
13 to keep that program going we issued bids to, for
14 additional CCTV layered access in a slightly
15 different format in a requirements type contract
16 format. Those bids unfortunately came in higher
17 than we expected and therefore we requested the
18 board's authorization reject all of those bids.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So how many, how
20 many, how many security CCTV layered access
21 projects do you have slated for 2015?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So we have, we
23 currently have six construction contracts, six
24 contracts in place to deliver CCTV. There is
25 approximately I think the number is 20 million

1
2 dollars' worth of CCTV and layered access projects
3 that were funded from the city council in 2015.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And what effect if
5 any will the rejection of these bids have on the
6 pace of those projects?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It, it will not. We
8 currently as I said have already six contracts
9 already in place...

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...that extend through
12 2015 so we can simply use those contracts. We're
13 just trying to create some overlap with those
14 contracts so that we are never in a situation where
15 we do not have a construction contract in place.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What about the
17 effect in terms of administrative cost or...

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I'm sorry?

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Any effect in terms
20 of administrative costs or...

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No the, the, as the
22 contracts that are in place, two year contracts, so
23 the prices that we paid this past year will be the
24 same prices that we pay in 2015.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay thank you.
3 Council Member Gibson. Thank you so much...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you again
5 and thank you for your patience for being here this
6 afternoon. I had a, two quick questions. Instances
7 where lights are out for an extended period of
8 time, if there's more of a, a severe problem how
9 does NYCHA go about handling that and how do you
10 notify the tenants in that particular development
11 of a light being out for an extensive period of
12 time.

13 BRIAN CLARKE: So the, you know
14 depending upon the issue and what we actually need
15 we, you know we maybe, may need an electrician, we
16 may need a contractor you know for that type of
17 work. The, you know the average that we showed you
18 is for, you know for all of, you know for all those
19 types of repairs so 8.9 for, you know for you know
20 the public space. And the, and then four point,
21 four and change, forget the exact number for the
22 exterior lighting, so that's for all types of, of
23 you know repairs fit into those averages. You know
24 regarding you know service level and work order
25 information there was a lot of information that's

1
2 available you know on our, on our website.. [cross-
3 talk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I just wanted to
5 talk a little bit more about the coordination and I
6 appreciate Council Member Jumaane Williams talking
7 about the coordination between PD, NYCHA is
8 extremely important as well as all the other
9 entities, DFTA, DYCD and others that have programs
10 and services on NYCHA property. But I'm
11 particularly interested in the coordination between
12 the NYCHA staff, the care takers, and the
13 maintenance workers as it relates to addressing
14 lighting issues. So are there any instances where
15 the caretakers or maintenance repair lights
16 themselves or is there a process by which you bring
17 in additional outside staff to address lighting
18 issues?

19 BRIAN CLARKE: So yeah simple repairs
20 like replacing a bulb are done by the caretakers.
21 Replacing a fixture can be done by a maintenance
22 worker if it's a short you know rewiring type issue
23 it would be a, you know an electrician you know
24 would be used. And I think I... did I answer all the
25 questions?

1

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: And...

2

BRIAN CLARKE: What was the last one you had there?

3

4

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...checking for lights at, in terms of repairs that are necessary, is that a part of the caretaker and maintenance workers daily operations? How does that work?

5

6

7

8

BRIAN CLARKE: Your caretaker for our, you know for daily, if they do the walk down of the building and so any lights that are out they're required to report. So that's for the interior public space lights. And then once a week we do a survey of the exterior lighting on our properties. That's done every Wednesday.

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. And within the analysis that's done by the workers in terms of the work orders that are necessary to replace these lights, is that a part of the same work order that tenants would normally call in? So what I'm trying to get at is that you have different layers, the caretakers, maintenance workers, you have the tenants, tenant leaders, then you have PD that does their verticals and patrolling. So you have all these entities coming together and yet we still

1
2 find ourselves having so many issues with lighting
3 in our public housing. So I'm trying to understand
4 is everyone at the same level in terms of priority?
5 So the workers that are on the ground every day,
6 when they put in orders for work that needs to be
7 done is that addressed in an expeditious fashion?

8 BRIAN CLARKE: Okay so the, so a work
9 order is created a, a variety of ways so for
10 example you know resident calling in, you know
11 creating work orders, development staff. So if we
12 require a maintenance worker or an electrician you
13 know and this observed by development staff that
14 could be created at the development level. We have
15 this relatively new process where NYPD calls into
16 our emergency services department and creates a
17 work order. And depending upon the situation we'll,
18 you know we'll create the priority. So for example
19 if it was exposed wiring or sparks coming from the
20 fixture regardless of who reported that that would
21 be given you know the, you know the, the, the
22 emergency type priority. And there's always the
23 discretion at the development level depending upon
24 the situation where you know the, they can, you
25 know depending upon the specific site conditions

1
2 they can upgrade a work order and complete it you
3 know, you know earlier for example.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: So the ballast
5 that was out in stairwell A in the building where
6 Akai Gurley died that ballast was repaired by a
7 maintenance worker?

8 BRIAN CLARKE: Yes the fixture was
9 replaced and, you know I'm going to have to clarify
10 that. I'll double check that to see exactly what
11 title replaced that alright so that I can give you
12 100 percent the answers because we had both
13 maintenance workers and electricians on site making
14 repairs.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. I thank
16 you. That would be very helpful. And I guess
17 chairwoman I just wanted to just allude I did look
18 at the Manhattan DA's press release that talked
19 about the 101 million dollars and 89 million
20 dollars of that is going to go to infrastructure
21 improvements and cameras layered access, door
22 repairs, and exterior lighting. And then the 12
23 million dollars is public safety analysis,
24 programming surveys and violence reduction surveys.
25 So obviously once this money is exhausted in terms

1
2 of the operation of the layered access intercom
3 system there's certainly going to need to be a
4 conversation about how we maintain that for those
5 15 developments. And I represent one of those so
6 obviously I have a vested interest in this.

7 BRIAN CLARKE: Also if I could just
8 follow-up on the question that Council Member
9 Torres had brought up before about the service
10 level at Pink. It's a combined service level, I
11 don't have it separated out between public space
12 and exterior lights but overall the average service
13 level is you know 10 days.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very
15 much. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Council
17 Member Cumbo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you Chair
19 Torres. Just wanted to follow up with some of the
20 questions that came from the testimony previously.
21 I wanted to note is it possible or can we have that
22 as members of the city council, can we get because
23 of the seriousness of some of the issues in some of
24 our developments, can we get the, the lighting cost
25 needs in each of our perspective developments so

1
2 that if we wanted to put up the money in our own
3 district we could? And if so what would be the
4 turnaround from you letting us know what the
5 lighting needs are and being able to fulfill it?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So yes we can provide
7 a development by development breakdown of what it
8 would cost to upgrade the exterior lights at the
9 developments. And we have contracts in place
10 already to do this type of work, requirements type
11 contracts so all we need is the funding and then we
12 could do a quick turnaround in terms of actually
13 having improvements made out in the field.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And when, and
15 what would the turnaround time be?

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well A design, a, it
17 would, we would need to do a, a short design,
18 several weeks for a design. We would need to go
19 through the CP process with OMB and the
20 controller's office. So within, within a few months
21 of a, a funding being made available we could, we
22 could presumably be in construction.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay that would
24 be very helpful. The other question that I had was
25 with quality control... and this goes to, please

1 correct me if I say it wrong, Captain Gottesman,
2 Gottesman? Okay. Wanted to note as it pertains to
3 the PSA3s one of the things I wanted to note is do
4 you all do a quality control in the sense of
5 understanding what relationship the, the PSA3
6 officers have with the community in terms of having
7 potentially plain clothed individuals see or
8 interact with the, the officers to see what their
9 experience is so that they could determine are
10 officers simply in the development not speaking to
11 people, not engaged with them, not returning
12 information or questions that are asked, so that
13 way you have an idea similar to how they do in
14 department stores or any other store where they're
15 able to have some quality assurance of what's
16 happening on the ground?

18 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: The, the quick
19 answer to that is yes. We do have internal quality
20 assurance measures. We do what we call CPR tests.
21 That's conducted by our quality assurance division.
22 At times our housing bureau investigations unit
23 will also conduct CPR test via phone to ensure that
24 individuals reaching out to the PSA are treated
25 properly.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Do you know from
3 that, do you have an, I mean, because it's one of
4 the things I guess the challenge as a new council
5 member is that you always hear testimony from the
6 administration and then you hear testimony from the
7 individuals that are on the ground receiving the
8 services from the administration. And what's
9 happening seems to be like night and day of what's,
10 of what's being performed. So since you have that
11 do you have an understanding of where officers...
12 Like would you know in Pink Houses that those
13 officers are not interacting with the public in a
14 way that's productive or creating a safer
15 environment as the TA leader pointed out of the
16 eyes and the ears of the community? Do you know
17 what the relationship is?

18 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: I don't, I don't
19 have with me today specific results from those
20 internal tests specific to developments or even
21 PSAs. But those are known.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But are simple
23 things... because this even happens just across the
24 board. I mean we have a lot of communication issues
25 in New York City just with all of the development

1
2 and the growth and so many new people coming into
3 our neighborhoods and communities but are there
4 things or parts of your training where there are
5 issues or things, like is it part of your training
6 for officers to know that they have to say good
7 morning to individuals, good afternoon, how are
8 you, my name is officer so and so, have a good day
9 today, good evening, get home safely, I'm officer
10 so and so? Because I don't experience that much of
11 that. On occasion it does when you've created a
12 level of alright I've seen you now for the 10th
13 time so we're going to engage in conversation. But
14 is that part of the training at all?

15 CAPTAIN GOTTESMAN: Certainly curtesy is
16 spoken about, trained from the police academy level
17 on through in-service training and it's something
18 that we, we continue to do.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Is the courteous,
20 curtesy reactive or is it proactive? So courteous,
21 when you talk about curtesy is one of those things
22 where it's, if someone speaks to you as part of our
23 training you speak back? Or is your training you
24 speak to individuals that are in the community and
25

1 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And we hope to
3 have... you're not, he's not the policy maker. He's
4 essentially the, the messenger for lack of a better
5 description and the, the housing bureau chief will
6 be here next month to answer policy questions and
7 training questions so.. So, so yeah. I, I think I
8 want to enforce the scope of the hearing.. [cross-
9 talk]
10 talk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Alright thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So great. So I
14 will, I will conclude the questioning.

15 BRIAN CLARKE: Yeah hi Council Member
16 just wanted to follow-up on Council Member Gibson's
17 question. A maintenance worker replaced the fixture
18 at Pink Houses. Oh a maintenance worker replaced
19 the fixture.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay thank you
21 very much. I appreciate that. Thank you for being
22 here.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right. So NYCHA's
24 in the process of creating Next Gen NYCHA which is
25 your plan for preservation right? We all have an

1
2 interest in sustaining the largest public housing
3 stock in North America. So what is the time frame
4 for that plan?

5 SHOLA OLATOYE: First of all I want to
6 thank you and the members of the council for
7 inviting us here today and my colleagues as well
8 Captain Gottesman for joining us. As we've
9 discussed Next Generation NYCHA really is, it's a
10 10 year strategic investment plan but we're really
11 talking about a generation. And we expect that plan
12 to be released May 1. We will be talk, be able to
13 talk more sort of specifically about some of the
14 initiatives that we not only will be proposing but
15 actually doing by the plan is, is released. And you
16 know this is meant to not just be a plan that is on
17 the shelf in a few months but something that really
18 serves as a, a, a path, a guide for how the housing
19 authority not only changes the way it operates but
20 really sets us on a path to ensure we're around for
21 another generation.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah and, and I
23 want to commend you for pursuing community
24 visioning process... number of developments. You know
25 when I, I use the, the commonly used phrase black

1
2 live matters I think when it applies to public
3 housing it's about resident engagement. It's about
4 letting the residents know that their lives matter,
5 that their voices matter. And so I commend the
6 housing authority for creating a culture, or
7 beginning the process of creating a culture of
8 resident engagement. And you know for me there's
9 probably no agency who has a harder position,
10 agency had who has a harder position than you do
11 because you're essentially a mayor of a city right,
12 you have, you're responsible for the lives of so
13 many people and yet you receive so few resources to
14 meet those responsibilities but you can count on me
15 to be an advocate for the housing authority and for
16 greater resources. So with that said I appreciate
17 your testimony and thank you for being so
18 cooperative.

19 SHOLA OLATOYE: Thank you so much
20 everyone. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to call up
22 the next panel. Jacob Morris self-identified
23 advocate. And this will be the final panel. Okay.

24 JACOB MORRIS: Thank you. Thank you Mr.
25 Chairman. By the way I, I see you as a personal

1
2 inspiration for the 16 and 17 year old youth that
3 are now allowed to serve on community boards. And I
4 hope that... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: They think I'm too
6 old but...

7 [laughter]

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I like to think I'm
9 an inspiration.

10 JACOB MORRIS: I, I like to think that.
11 You know you are definitely emulating a young Scott
12 Stringer or something like that.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: He was actually a
14 16 year old on a community...

15 JACOB MORRIS: That's right. Well I'll,
16 this, what I'm about to read is called the NYCHA
17 responsive management accountability resolution.
18 Whereas in regards to emerging details of the
19 events surrounding the fatal stairwell police
20 shooting at Brooklyn's Pink Houses which have taken
21 on a disturbing cast and given that the approximate
22 cause of the tragedy in gendering this resolution
23 is an unlit stairwell with defective lighting that
24 NYCHA management needed to be replaced for months
25 prior. The fact that the light bulbs were repaired

1
2 the next day speaks for itself. And whereas we
3 believe that the NYPD should be part of the
4 solution and not part of the problem. And so
5 therefore if NYPD officers become aware of a dark
6 stairwell for example which as we know was dark for
7 a substantial time prior constituting under normal
8 building management standards criminal and civil
9 negligence which definitely impacts the safety and
10 security of the building they should report it to
11 NYCHA management and that report... [beeping] should
12 be given immediate high priority for rectification.
13 It'll take me about another 45 seconds to finish
14 this Mr. Chairman. And whereas to understand how
15 the ingredients of these situations resulting in
16 tragedies of this nature we must view and analyze
17 them holistically. We must hold those at NYCHA
18 management accountable for any maintenance issues;
19 broken locks, doors, lighting, malfunctioning
20 elevators, and so on which police patrols become
21 aware of that impact the safety and security of the
22 residents and their visitors not to speak of the
23 officers themselves that mandate priority response.
24 What may seem like a minor thing can have a major
25 impact. And whereas the respective resident's

1 councils of NYCHA developments also have a
2 critically important role to play in this currently
3 flawed process of remediation. And when they
4 report... [cross-talk]

5
6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Going to ask you to
7 conclude if you can.

8 JACOB MORRIS: ...when they report
9 maintenance problems that impact the building
10 safety and security they should be responded to
11 promptly and formally therefore be it resolved that
12 a more accountable mechanism be established for
13 reporting and priority, prioritizing maintenance
14 issues that impact the safety and security of the
15 residents of NYCHA developments that would include
16 priority responsiveness to such reports from both
17 residents councils and the NYPD and therefore be it
18 further resolved that those responsible in NYCHA
19 custodial management for not responding including
20 demanding adequate resources to respond in this
21 newly established higher priority of coded category
22 of safety and security maintenance deficiency
23 report in a very timely manner must but held
24 strictly accountable up through in all appropriate
25 supervisory levels including to the top Thank you.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I thank you for your testimony. And this concludes the hearing. I, I thank you all for coming and look forward to holding, partnering with Council Member Gibson in holding a hearing on vertical patrols in public housing and completing this two part series so...

JACOB MORRIS: Thank you for... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...thank you so much.

JACOB MORRIS: ...holding this, this really important hearing Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Take care. Alright this meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date _____ December 23, 2014 _____