

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEES ON FINANCE, PARKS AND RECREATION,
SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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May 30, 2013
Start: 1:00 p.m.
Recess: 4:17 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:

DOMENIC M. RECCHIA
MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO
LETITIA JAMES
Chairpersons

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Fernando Cabrera
Council Member Elizabeth S. Crowley
Council Member Inez E. Dickens
Council Member Julissa Ferreras
Council Member Lewis A. Fidler
Council Member James F. Gennaro
Council Member David G. Greenfield
Council Member G. Oliver Koppell
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Council Member Jessica S. Lappin
Council Member Darlene Mealy

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Michael C. Nelson
Council Member James S. Oddo
Council Member Diana Reyna
Council Member James Vacca
Council Member James G. Van Bramer
Council Member Albert Vann

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

Veronica White
Commissioner
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

Liam Kavanagh
First Deputy Commissioner
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

Elizabeth Smith
Assistant Commissioner for Revenue and Marketing
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

John Doherty
Commissioner
New York City Department of Sanitation

Ron Gonen
Deputy Commissioner for Sustainability and Recycling
New York City Department of Sanitation

Walter Czwartacky
Director of Special Projects, Bureau of Long Term
Export
New York City Department of Sanitation

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Good

afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, Commissioner.

Welcome to the eleventh day of the City Council

Hearing on the Mayor's Executive Budget for

FY'2014. My name is Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., I'm

the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Finance

Committee is joined by the Committee on Parks and

Recreation, chaired by my colleague, Council

Member Melissa Mark-Viverito. We're also joined

by Council Member Lewis Fidler and other Council

Members will be coming in, they're at other

hearings. The last time we met, we heard from the

Department for the Aging, Department of Consumer

Affairs, the Business Integrity Commission,

Department of Information Technology and

Telecommunications. Today we will be joined by

the Committee on Parks and Recreation and the

Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

to hear from the Department, to hear from

Department of Parks and Recreation and the

Department of Sanitation. Before we get started,

I want to remind everyone that June 5th is the

last day of the budget hearings. And at 4:00

o'clock the public can testify. For members of

1
2 the public who wish to testify, but cannot make
3 it, you can fax your testimony to my attorney
4 Tanisha Edwards at (212) 788-7061. Today we'll
5 begin our Executive Budget Hearing with the
6 Department of Parks and Recreation. The
7 Department's Budget totals \$351.9 million, which
8 reflects an increase of \$14.3 million from last
9 year's Adopted Budget. The Budget includes \$32
10 million in new needs, mostly for personal service
11 costs, \$3 million to repair sidewalks and \$9.4
12 million to restore planned PEG layoffs included in
13 FY 2012 Adopted Budget. The Budget also does not
14 include approximately \$19.2 million provided by
15 the Council to restore cuts in FY 2013, which
16 included cuts to job training, playground
17 associates and City pools. I look forward to
18 hearing from the Commissioner to learn more ways
19 on this Executive Budget as it affects our City
20 today. Now at this time I recognize my co-chair,
21 Melissa Mark-Viverito.

22 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
23 you, Chair Recchia. So, some of the info I'll
24 indicate has been said by the Chair of the Finance
25 Committee, but it bears repeating. So, good

1
2 afternoon to everybody. My name is Council Member
3 Melissa Mark-Viverito, and I Chair the Parks and
4 Recreation Committee for the City Council. I want
5 to thank everyone that has taken the time to be
6 here, to hear the, to be part of this Fiscal 2014
7 Executive Budget hearing for the Department of
8 Parks and Recreation. So we're going to hear
9 testimony on the expense and capital budgets and
10 general agency operations. Before we begin, let
11 me state clearly that despite the funding of
12 additional 414 positions to help maintain clean
13 and safe parks in the proposed Fiscal 2014 Budget,
14 I remain concerned, particularly because the
15 Department's Proposed Executive Budget still
16 includes plans to reduce job training
17 participants, also known as Parks Opportunities
18 Program. As proposed, the Fiscal 2014 Budget does
19 not include \$16.8 million restored by the Council
20 in the Fiscal 2013 Adopted Budget, for 850
21 fulltime equivalent JTP positions. In addition,
22 \$7.3 million for seasonal workers restored by the
23 Administration as part of an agreement with the
24 Council in the Fiscal 2013 Adopted Budget for 129
25 fulltime equivalent positions is not included in

1 this budget. JTPs and seasonal workers do play
2 vital role in keeping our parks clean and well
3 maintained, and as such ought to be restored.
4 Also equally of concern are cuts that include
5 Department's proposal to close four pools, cut
6 back the pool season, and the proposal to cut
7 Playground Associates. The funding for these
8 programs totals more than \$2.4 million and was
9 restored by the Council in the Fiscal 2013 Adopted
10 Budget. None of which is included in the Proposed
11 Fiscal 2014 Budget. To reduce recreational
12 funding at a time when every indication clearly
13 shows that supervised recreational activities are
14 crucial and beneficial in the fight against
15 obesity, especially among our kids, would be
16 counterproductive and difficult to understand.
17 The Committees will examine why these cuts are not
18 being restored and how the Department plans to
19 adopt, to adapt, should these funds not be
20 restored. So we look forward to hearing from the
21 Parks Commission on these issues, as well as on
22 other Fiscal 2014 executive budget actions and
23 their impact on the agency's ability to carry out
24 its various missions, including parks maintenance,
25

1 forestry and recreational activities. We will
2 also review the agency's four year capital plan.
3 So as indicated, the 2014 Expense Budget is \$351.9
4 million, \$14.3 million more than the Fiscal 2013
5 Adopted Budget. The year-to-date changes include
6 \$32 million added to cover cost increases, \$9.4
7 million in PEG restorations to restore planned
8 layoffs included in the Fiscal 2012 Adopted
9 Budget, and a net of \$5.5 million added for other
10 adjustments. The capital budget for 2013 to 2017
11 for the Parks Department totals \$2.4 billion,
12 which is an increase of \$267.3 million, or 12.7
13 percent, since the preliminary plan. So we're
14 going to look at some of the key projects and
15 changes in that plan. And so lastly, in
16 recognition of the importance of parks and open
17 spaces, I hope that the Administration will take
18 steps to ensure that our public parks and parks
19 programs are adequately funded in the Fiscal 2014
20 budget and beyond. So now we're going to hear
21 from the Commissioner, Veronica White, of the
22 Parks Department, and we thank her and all the
23 other Parks staff that are here present.
24

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay,

1
2 Commissioner, you're up.

3 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you. Good
4 afternoon, Chair Recchia, Chair Mark-Viverito and
5 Council Member Fidler. I am Veronica White,
6 Commissioner of the New York City Department of
7 Parks and Recreation. I'm joined here today by
8 quite a number of members of our senior staff.
9 First of all, our Director of Government
10 Relations, Karen Becker, and our Deputy
11 Commissioner for Community Outreach, Larry Scott
12 Blackman. Our First Deputy Commissioner, Liam
13 Kavanagh, will join us shortly, he is at an event
14 with President Obama's new Secretary of the
15 Interior Jewell out in Jamaica Bay. I'm also
16 joined by Brooklyn Borough Commissioner Jeffrey;
17 Bronx Borough Commissioner Aponte; Assistant
18 Commissioner Holder; Assistant Commissioner
19 Antonucci, Linda Riccadoni [phonetic]; Bram
20 Gunther; and President of City Parks Foundation,
21 Alison Tocchi; as well as our Deputy Commissioner
22 for Management and Budget, Bob Garafola; and our
23 Deputy Commissioner for Capital Projects, Therese
24 Braddick; and Assistant Commissioner for Fiscal
25 Management, David Stark. Thank you for allowing

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2 me the opportunity to discuss the Executive Budget
3 for Fiscal Year 2014. But before I begin talking
4 about our budget proposals, I want to briefly
5 address the issue that I'm sure you've seen in the
6 press in recent days. I want to assure Members of
7 the Council that we acted swiftly when told of the
8 allegations of unacceptable activities that
9 occurred at our Five Borough facility. At their
10 request, the two female employees who brought
11 these allegations to light were immediately
12 transferred to locations where they could feel
13 safe and do their work. The two supervisors in
14 question were transferred to other positions where
15 they are no longer acting in a supervisory
16 capacity and will be suspended without pay,
17 pending possible other action while the Department
18 of Investigation completes its inquiry. As the
19 investigation is ongoing, I cannot give any more
20 detail, but I will emphasize to every employee of
21 the Department of Parks, that sexual harassment is
22 illegal and will not be tolerated. In August,
23 Parks overhauled the agency's equal employment
24 opportunity office and appointed a dynamic new
25 leader who has spearheaded efforts to expand

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2 outreach and training. Over the last nine months,
3 our EEO office has trained over 1,500 Parks
4 employees, familiarizing them with proper conduct
5 and what to do if they feel threatened in any way.
6 That figure is more than double the number of
7 employees trained in 2011. The office has also
8 instituted regular counseling hours in all five
9 boroughs. In addition, working with the Office of
10 Management and Budget, Parks will be adding two
11 fulltime EEO employees. Our internal discipline
12 unit, the Office of the Parks Advocate, is also a
13 resource for any employee who feels he or she has
14 been the victim of misconduct. As the
15 Commissioner of the New York City Parks
16 Department, I am committed to maintaining an
17 environment in which all of our employees are free
18 from any form of discrimination or harassment.
19 The Fiscal Year 2014 Executive Budget provides for
20 operating expenses of \$351 million. This
21 represents an increase of \$14.3 million over the
22 Fiscal Year 2013 Adopted Budget of \$337 million.
23 The Executive Budget includes 414 new hires that
24 were added in the Mayor's 2014 Preliminary Budget.
25 These new hires include 207 City Park workers, 30

1
2 climbers and pruners, 96 maintenance and trades
3 workers, technicians and analysts, and 81 Parks
4 enforcement patrol officers. The Parks Department
5 is in the process of hiring 81 new fulltime PEP
6 officers. Doubling the number of City funded
7 officers on patrol, these new officers will report
8 to a centralized borough command center and be
9 deployed to all five boroughs to provide targeted
10 patrol in the parks. In addition to borough
11 patrols, PEP officers will be assigned to a fixed
12 point site in all five boroughs: Central Park,
13 Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Van Cortlandt Park,
14 Prospect Park and Clove Lakes Park. The 81 new
15 hires, combined with our current level of
16 staffing, will allow for a maximum of nine patrol
17 units per day in The Bronx, Manhattan and State
18 Island, and eleven patrol units per day in
19 Brooklyn and Queens. Many of the new PEP officers
20 have already begun their training and will begin
21 patrolling parks this summer. The first academy
22 began on April 15th and ends the third week of
23 June. The second academy will commence the first
24 week of July. The third academy will begin the
25 third week of September. The full contingent of

1 new PEP officers will be on patrol by the fall.
2 The newly hired officers who have not yet begun
3 academy training will be given a three day
4 seasonal security staff training course and
5 deployed to provide security at our City's mini-
6 pools this season. In addition to the PEP
7 positions, City Park workers, climbers and
8 pruners, trades workers and technician positions
9 are currently being hired, and we expect to have
10 all these new employees in place by the middle of
11 June. While we are happy to be hiring 414 new
12 Park staff, there is one program that without the
13 Council's continued support, would experience a
14 drastic reduction: the Parks Opportunity Program.
15 The Council's \$16.8 million restoration in Fiscal
16 Year 2013 represents roughly half of the budget
17 for the Parks Opportunity Program, and allows us
18 to support approximately 1,700 job training
19 participants through full, six month lines. Since
20 the beginning of FY'13, POP has helped 915 New
21 Yorkers transition from public assistance into
22 employment at an average hourly wage of \$11.24,
23 which is 55 percent higher than New York State's
24 minimum wage. Since its inception in 1994, POP
25

1 has placed close to 14,000 JTPs in employment.
2
3 Currently, POP's total placements year-to-date are
4 60 percent of this time last year. The Council
5 has always been supportive of POP and we turn to
6 you again this year because without you we will
7 lose workers who not only receive important career
8 development skills, but also provide critical
9 operational support to our parks. Our seasonal
10 workforce is another key component to the
11 maintenance and operations of our parks,
12 particularly during the warmer months. Last year,
13 the Council was successful in negotiating a \$7.4
14 million mural restoration to our seasonal budget.
15 This year, we are asking you to help us fully
16 restore prior year PEGs to our season program,
17 totaling \$11 million, which will help us to keep
18 the parks clean when they are used the most. In
19 addition to the funding allocated to Parks by the
20 Council and the Mayor, to support our personnel
21 infrastructure, critical funding was allocated in
22 FY'13 to improve our City's tree maintenance.
23 Thanks to the Council's support, last year the
24 Parks Department received \$2 million to increase
25 the number of street trees pruned and expand the

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2 program to include trees in parks throughout the
3 five boroughs. This funding was baselined in the
4 Mayor's Executive Budget. And will increase the
5 agency's goal to prune 60,000 trees both on the
6 streets and within parks using these contracts.
7 However, pruning is not the only tree need we
8 have. Due to previous budget cuts and severe
9 weather events, we face a backlog of tree stumps
10 across the City. We recognize this issue is
11 impacting your constituents and we are asking for
12 the Council's assistance to fund a \$2 million
13 budget request to help us reduce this backlog. As
14 you know, the Council has always been supportive
15 of Playground Associates, who are the individuals
16 that facilitate the Kids in Motion program, in
17 parks and playgrounds during the summer months.
18 This important program is designed with our youth
19 in mind, and provides recreational opportunities
20 when school is not in session. Your \$1 million
21 allocation funds 30 of these sites across the City
22 and we request that you continue to restore the
23 funding in this year's budget to keep programming
24 at these locations. Thanks to the leadership of
25 the City Council, funds were restored in Fiscal

1
2 Year 2013 to keep all of our pools open for the
3 entirety of the outdoor pool season.

4 Unfortunately, unless the City Council restores
5 the \$1.5 million needed to operate the pools,
6 we'll be forced to close four pools and shorten
7 the season of all pools by two weeks. The pools
8 that would be closed are Wagner Pool in Manhattan,
9 Howard Pool in Brooklyn, Fort Totten Pool in
10 Queens, and Faber Pool in Staten Island. Our
11 decision was based on several factors, including
12 attendance figures, proximity to other pools,
13 access to public transit, and the location of the
14 pools relative to residential communities. If the
15 cuts to our pools were to occur, it could
16 potentially impact the popular program we were
17 able to offer at these sites, such as our Learn to
18 Swim Program. Our recreation division has made
19 significant strides to bring water safety
20 education to New Yorkers, with a significant
21 increase in our summer Learn to Swim participants.
22 A record number of children participated in the
23 citywide summer Learn to Swim program in our
24 outdoor pools during 2012, and over 24,000
25 children are safer at New York City pools and

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2 beaches as a result. The record number represents
3 a 22 percent increase in participation as compared
4 to the previous summer. In addition, last summer
5 marked the inaugural adult citywide Learn to Swim
6 program at Parks' outdoor pools which were offered
7 in six outdoor pools across the five boroughs. We
8 believe that it's important to teach lifesaving
9 swimming instruction to adults, as well as to
10 children, and we have a real demand for these
11 services. 420 adults participated citywide in the
12 program last year, and we look forward to serving
13 over 400 adults again this year. Recreation
14 continues to make strides to improve our patrons'
15 experience at our 35 recreation centers. As you
16 know, New York City Parks will extend the \$25
17 membership category to include individuals aged 18
18 to 24. We are proud to offer this program and
19 look forward to promoting this category with you
20 in your districts when it becomes available on
21 July 1. New York City Parks' recreation centers
22 remain one of the best values available to New
23 Yorkers for addressing their recreational and
24 fitness needs. However, recognize that any fee
25 based membership can present a hardship for some.

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2 In addition to the young adult category, Parks
3 will be providing seniors who are recreation
4 center members at the time of the fee increase the
5 opportunity to be grandfathered into the senior
6 category. This past Friday, we were happy to
7 stand with Council Members, community leaders and
8 residents as we ushered in what will surely be a
9 spectacular and memorable beach season. It has
10 been seven months since Hurricane Sandy hit our
11 City and we haven't stopped working to recover
12 from its devastating effects. Recognizing their
13 importance is not just summer recreational
14 destinations, but as vital economic engines in
15 both city and local economies, the Mayor committed
16 to opening our beaches on time for Memorial Day
17 Weekend, and I'm very proud to say that we
18 achieved our goals thanks to the Herculean effort
19 by so many across the City. Parks, the Department
20 of Design and Construction, and many of our sister
21 agencies worked tirelessly to make sure that our
22 beaches are open and safe for visitors. An
23 additional \$386 million dollars has been allocated
24 from the City's budget to allow restoration work
25 to continue throughout the summer and in coming

1
2 years, including a full restoration of the nearly
3 five miles of damaged boardwalk citywide,
4 installation of shoreline protection, and
5 continued repairs to beaches, shorefront parks and
6 playgrounds. In addition to the more than \$270
7 million that has gone into the capital work needed
8 to make sure our beaches are ready for the season,
9 our beaches will be staffed with the full
10 complement of lifeguards, approximately 1,400,
11 similar to prior years' totals, which includes
12 both returning lifeguards, and new recruits. We
13 continue to make progress on many of our
14 neighborhood park and playground capital projects
15 since we testified at our Preliminary Budget
16 Hearing. We're looking forward to cutting a
17 ribbon next week on the newly renovated Owen Dolen
18 Park thanks to funding and support from Council
19 Member Vacca. This heavily used community park
20 will include a new and expanded public plaza, new
21 drainage and border systems, new lighting and
22 electrical service for outdoor events. We also
23 broke ground on the Ocean Parkway Mall's
24 reconstruction which will repave the heavily used
25 bike and walking paths, thanks to funding from

1 Chairman Recchia. And at long last, thanks to
2 hard work by Parks and all of our partners in
3 government, we recently broke ground on the long
4 awaited reconstruction of the Queensbridge
5 seawall. We are particularly grateful to Council
6 Member Van Bramer and Speaker Quinn for securing
7 the necessary funding to move this project
8 forward. This project will secure the seawall,
9 and when the project is completed in 2014, allow
10 residents of the nearby Queensbridge Houses direct
11 access to the waterfront once again. We also
12 continue to fulfill the Mayor's PlaNYC commitments
13 by making significant progress on regional park
14 renovations. Phase I of Highland Park's
15 renovation includes reconstructing the reservoir's
16 perimeter walkways, installing lighting and
17 fencing, as well as providing ADA access to the
18 park. This summer is nearing its completion and a
19 ribbon cutting is anticipated later this summer.
20 The project is nearing its completion, not the
21 summer, fortunately. In addition--we're just
22 starting the summer--in addition, there are now
23 four separate projects underway in Fort Washington
24 Park that will upgrade and supplement the already
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2 active recreation at the park, improve scenic and
3 landscape quality, improve pedestrian and greenway
4 connections, provide ADA access and stabilize the
5 shoreline. We recognize that Hurricane Sandy may
6 have delayed some of our capital projects but we
7 are working to move them through the process as
8 quickly as is possible. Sandy may have damaged
9 our parks, playgrounds and beaches, but it hasn't
10 damaged the spirit and commitment of the Parks
11 Department, which we have as stewards of 14
12 percent of New York City property, including 152
13 miles of our coastline. We want all New Yorkers
14 to feel the way we do about parks, which is why
15 this summer we are launching Go Park. Go Park is
16 an awareness campaign that highlights the
17 diversity of New York City parks' resources,
18 encourages exploration and builds pride for New
19 York City parks. The goal is to encourage New
20 Yorkers to use, care for and support their parks.
21 I am extremely proud of our agency and of the men
22 and women who have worked at the Parks Department
23 and all the work we do day in and day out. We
24 continue to move ahead in the face of many
25 obstacles, but are unwavering in our mission to

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2 offer New Yorkers world class parks and exciting
3 recreation programming, to invest in our parks and
4 our natural resources for the future. None of
5 this work would be possible without the
6 partnership with the New York City Council, and we
7 are very grateful for your support. I thank you
8 for the opportunity to speak with you today, and
9 I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Thank you,
11 Commissioner, and before I turn it over to my co-
12 chair, I want to recognize we've been joined by
13 Council Member Al Vann, Council Member Liz
14 Crowley, and Council Member Olive Koppell. I will
15 let all my colleagues ask questions first, and
16 then I will ask you questions. I recognize my co-
17 chair, Melissa Mark-Viverito, the Chairwoman of
18 the Parks and Recreation Committee. And here
19 comes the wonderful Deputy Commissioner for
20 Lifeguards, Liam Kavanagh. [laughter] You're
21 coming from the beaches, right?

22 LIAM KAVANAGH: Back from the
23 beaches.

24 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
25 you, Mr. Chair. First of all, Commissioner, I

1
2 really do want to thank you for the comments that
3 you made at the opening with regards to the
4 incident that's been reported in the last couple
5 of days. I know I spoke to you very briefly about
6 it yesterday, but I know that in having
7 conversations with others, your swift action is
8 very much appreciated. Referral to the
9 appropriate agencies is very much appreciated, and
10 I think it sends a strong message to women in
11 particular, but to any employee, in terms of what
12 is not acceptable behavior in a workplace. And
13 so, for that I really do want to thank you for the
14 real quick way that you handled this matter. And
15 looking forward to hoping that the other measures
16 you're implementing in the agency with regards to
17 training, etc., and enhanced training, 'cause
18 clearly it seems the training that was in place
19 maybe was not the most appropriate, that we can
20 avoid these kinds of incidents in the future. So,
21 thank you for that.

22 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: I have
24 a couple of quick questions, and I know colleagues
25 are already asking to ask questions. You've--you

1
2 know, you talked a little bit about, a lot of the
3 testimony answered some of the questions that we
4 have. You spoke about Sandy relief efforts. And
5 I know there's been extensive coverage in the
6 press. Obviously, you guys are doing, as you
7 indicated in your testimony, a Herculean effort to
8 really get everything online. Where are we at in
9 terms of federal funding and reimbursement for
10 some of the, obviously the expenses that you're
11 incurring?

12 VERONICA WHITE: So basically what
13 we do, and through the winter months, my team, led
14 by Assistant Commissioner Antonucci, worked with
15 FEMA and with OMB to ensure that every single
16 damage site was documented. So that we could be
17 assured of recovery of federal funds. But as to
18 how many we have recovered right now, basically
19 the money comes in to our account at OMB and is
20 just over \$4 million at this point, I just checked
21 with OMB just before the hearing. So it comes in
22 slowly, but it comes in, as long as we have done
23 all the work. So, we're working on that very
24 closely with OMB and with FEMA.

25 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

1
2 So you feel confident that we'll be able to get
3 that. I know a lot of it is also projected in out
4 years, as well, but you know, you're confident
5 that we'll get--

6 VERONICA WHITE: I'm confident that
7 we're doing everything we can at the Parks
8 Department and working with OMB--

9 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: To make
10 sure that--

11 VERONICA WHITE: --and FEMA and I
12 hope that, and expect that Washington will deliver
13 as they should.

14 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Okay,
15 thank you for that. Now, you know, one issue that
16 we've been very strong at in these hearings, in
17 the budget hearings, and also as a Council, we've
18 been really, really supportive of the JTP program.
19 And feel very strongly that it's way, way better
20 program than a WEP situation is. And
21 unfortunately, we come here every year, and that's
22 not baselined, and we have to fight to make sure
23 that that is available. So, you spoke about it in
24 your testimony, and we are very--it's frustrating
25 that that's not baselined or considered a

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2 priority. I think the training that JTP workers
3 is much more thorough, it's a greater opportunity
4 to really get people on track, in terms of
5 placements. You talked a little about placement
6 success in your testimony. But do you track how
7 many participants that find employment outside of
8 the Parks Department immediately after, soon after
9 they complete the program? And the rate of
10 retention at those jobs. I know you talked about
11 a percentage increase from last year, but could
12 you talk a little bit about the numbers?

13 VERONICA WHITE: So, we do track
14 those that find, that we find and help find
15 employment outside of Parks. And for Fiscal Year
16 '13, we're projecting to place about over 1,000
17 people in employment with approximately 750 in the
18 private sector, and 260 hired by outside parks.
19 And our job retention rates are approximately 97
20 percent for 30 days, which is excellent; 82
21 percent, 90 day milestones; and 66 percent on 180
22 day milestones. Which, as you know from my
23 previous experience as a CEO, I do know these
24 numbers from other programs, and these numbers are
25 very, very good.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: And is
3 there monitoring beyond that? Not really.

4 VERONICA WHITE: No, we don't, it's
5 more of a, it's a resource issue, so we don't know
6 beyond the six month--

7 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Well,
8 based on your experience with CEO, is it safe to
9 assume that if there is a retention after 180
10 days, that there'll be a level of permanency for
11 those people placed?

12 VERONICA WHITE: For many there
13 are, and even if sometimes when people lose jobs,
14 it has nothing to do with their own performance,
15 it has everything to do with the financial status
16 of the organization they work for. That six
17 months experience is very excellent on a résumé
18 and can help them then get another job. So we do
19 find that once you have that stability level of
20 having a job for six months, it's a big jump from
21 just being employed for a month.

22 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Now, I
23 know that, you know, the--the crux of your--

24 VERONICA WHITE: And Karen knows
25 more than I, always explaining to me that it's, it

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2 takes, we actually provide lifelong support for
3 people who are interested in coming back. We just
4 don't track each one of them. But we do, we are
5 able to support with counseling people that do
6 come back and are interested in talking to the
7 agency. So, and people know that when they leave
8 our program.

9 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

10 The other thing, I know that, you know, and the
11 essence of your testimony really speaks to the
12 need and the importance, right, of the Council
13 funding that helps us to enhance your budget. But
14 obviously as we indicated, you know, everything
15 that we are able to secure, are we believe
16 essential, in terms of the functioning of the
17 Parks Department. And when we look at the number
18 of parks, and the percentage of parkland that is
19 in the City of New York, the amount that is
20 dedicated to the Parks Department, is pretty
21 pitiful. And I think it's just gone down over the
22 years. And so we have then the situation of
23 really relying on these private partnerships to
24 enhance the budget of the Parks Department. But
25 at essence, it's enhancing the budges of specific

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2 parks, because those conservancies are set up to
3 really manage specific parks, which leads me to
4 the question of one of the things that is in our
5 budget briefing, is that in this year's budget, in
6 order to meet the contractual obligations to the
7 Central Park Conservancy, the Department's budget
8 includes a new need, of \$2.8 million in Fiscal
9 2014. So my understanding is that based on the
10 agreement, that you have with Central Park
11 Conservancy, everything beyond \$6 million, the
12 Parks Department will owe 50 percent of that
13 additional revenue to the Central Park
14 Conservancy. Correct?

15 VERONICA WHITE: So, the agreement
16 states that 50 percent of the concession revenues
17 from Central Park will go to the conservancy, yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Right,
19 so I think that that's problematic. In light of
20 the fact that I was at a press conference
21 recently, where there was a gift of over \$100
22 million given to the Central Park Conservancy, and
23 I'm sure that beyond that there's extremely
24 generous gifts. The fact that the budget of the
25 Parks Department has to take away \$2.8 million to

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2 then further enhance and give back to the
3 Conservancy, I'm wondering if there is an
4 opportunity there to have a conversation, either
5 the way you reword these conservancy agreements,
6 that may be beyond, in these revenue sharing
7 situations, beyond a certain amount that is gifted
8 to a central, you know, to a conservancy. The
9 Parks Department shouldn't have to give money
10 back. Now we're talking about \$2.8 million that
11 could be put towards POP, could be put towards
12 JTP. And in fact, we're giving it to a
13 conservancy that has an extremely generous board
14 and relationships with the private sector. This,
15 again, brings up the issue of concerns of these
16 agreement and how they are really beneficial to
17 premiere boutique parks in the City, which I
18 understand, it belongs to everybody, and I
19 understand it's an incredible attraction. But,
20 you know, at what expense. So, I'm wondering if
21 there's room for conversation there, about whether
22 things could be renegotiated? Maybe we could
23 encourage the Central Park Conservancy not to take
24 in the \$2.8 million, so that we could fund some
25 JTP positions. You know, let's--

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2 VERONICA WHITE: So we've worked
3 with--

4 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: And I'm
5 not going to gain any friends from the Central
6 Park Conservancy right now, but I think it's an
7 appropriate question.

8 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you. No, I
9 have--I understand the question and I'd like to
10 say that there are 40 million people do come to
11 the park every year, to Central Park. And the
12 Parks Department, many of our activities that we
13 fund, like our winter jam, our pumpkin festival,
14 we do in that park, and people come from across
15 the five boroughs precisely because there's
16 transportation. So, people come to Central Park
17 from all five boroughs, we know that, we have
18 events there because of that, and we have many
19 activities in particular for children, that are
20 run by the Parks Departments, as well as things
21 the Conservancy does. What we have asked the
22 Conservancy to do, and we've worked in particular
23 with the Friends groups at the historic Harlem
24 Parks, to help us maintain and care for those
25 parks, as part of their mission to help us out.

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2 So we have friends groups in the historic Harlem
3 Parks, we've determined that it would be a good
4 idea, and they would like assistance from the
5 Central Park Conservancy and maintenance and
6 operations at those parks. The effort comes from
7 a combination right now of Parks Departments and
8 friends volunteer groups. So the Central Park
9 Conservancy will be assisting us with that. So
10 what we're doing is asking them to help provide us
11 additional services in parks where they are
12 welcomed by those groups.

13 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: And
14 where are those parks located? And they all over?

15 VERONICA WHITE: No, they are the,
16 just--

17 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: In the
18 surrounding areas.

19 VERONICA WHITE: In the surrounding
20 area in Harlem.

21 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.
22 I mean, I--

23 VERONICA WHITE: There are a few
24 other parks that we've asked them to do some work
25 with that are surrounding the park, for example at

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2 Columbus Circle and downtown at City Hall Park,
3 for the most part, we're asking them to assist us
4 with the historic Harlem Parks.

5 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

6 VERONICA WHITE: And the groups
7 that we work with, they are the Friends groups,
8 are very grateful for that and excited about that.

9 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: I'm
10 going to allow some of the colleagues to ask
11 questions. I think there's a list already formed
12 here. So, and then I can come back to any
13 additional. And I appreciate the responses so
14 far. So, I see that Council Member Koppell is the
15 first on the list.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you,
17 Commissioner, welcome. Several things. First of
18 all, as you may know, I've been involved with
19 respect to the project to build the filtration
20 plant in The Bronx, in part of Van Cortlandt Park.
21 And as part of the discussions of the filtration
22 plant, we go back in history and going back about
23 15 years, there was a commitment made in the MOU
24 that was approved by the City Council for the
25 filtration plant to build a bridge as part of the

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2 ongoing trail that goes through Van Cortlandt Park
3 across the Major Deegan Expressway. And the
4 commitment of that legislation has sort of been
5 forgotten by everybody except the people in the
6 area of the park and the activists in my district,
7 and me, and others. And has there been any study
8 done at all of late by the Department, as to the
9 feasibility, the cost and looking into whether
10 that bridge, which has been promised will be
11 ultimately built. It's still something that's a
12 significant issue in the community.

13 VERONICA WHITE: I'm going to ask
14 First Deputy Commissioner Liam Kavanagh to address
15 that.

16 LIAM KAVANAGH: Good afternoon, I'm
17 Liam Kavanagh, First Deputy Commissioner of Parks.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Yes.

19 LIAM KAVANAGH: And the MOU between
20 the Parks Department and the Department of
21 Environmental Protection did require DEP to
22 produce a study of the feasibility of a bridge
23 connecting the two parts of Van Cortlandt Park, as
24 you described; however, the language did say that
25 construction would only be undertaken if it was

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2 both financially, and from an engineering
3 standpoint, feasible. The estimate for the
4 construction was over \$8 million, if I remember
5 correctly, and DEP determined that it was not
6 financially feasible to build a bridge.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well, the
8 report was finally issued very late, you're right
9 about that. There was a report. I don't think
10 \$80 million, that's not the number that I
11 understood--

12 LIAM KAVANAGH: I'm sorry,
13 Councilman, \$8 million is what I--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: \$8
15 million, yeah.

16 LIAM KAVANAGH: --I recall, yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: That's
18 more like it. [laughs] And Mr. Chairman, I know
19 some of us are not going to be here, but I don't
20 want this to be lost. There is a commitment that
21 if it was feasible, and I think the report
22 indicates that it's feasible, and whether the
23 fina--and whether it was financially feasible,
24 also, and the fact is that there's been no attempt
25 made, as far as I know, by anybody, to put this in

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2 the budget. But the commitment is there, it was a
3 commitment made as part of the overall agreement
4 on the filtration plant, which as you know was
5 heavily fought. And I don't want it to get lost.
6 I mean, I know it's not going to be in this year's
7 budget--

8 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: What we'll do
9 is after the--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I wish it
11 was in this year's budget.

12 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I know.
13 After the June 5th hearing, we will follow up with
14 the Parks Department and we'll get back to you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Okay, and
16 DEC--

17 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --it says
19 sort of, as he said, it's a joint obligation, as I
20 see it, of the Parks Department and the DEP. But
21 it should not be lost. I mean, I would love to
22 put it into this budget, if we could.

23 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The \$8
24 million.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I don't

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know that we can, yes. Whatever it is--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: All right,
we will talk--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: But--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: --with DEP
and Parks.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: And The
Bronx Delegation, I'm not only speaking for myself
now, I'm speaking for the whole Bronx Delegation.
We have requested that this be included. One of
the issues that has been of concern to me and I
raised it with your predecessor, Commissioner, is
the concession that is granted for a horse riding
stable in Van Cortlandt Park. That concession
utilizes a very large acreage in the Park. And by
my observation and I live quite near there, so I
pass it all the time, it's not all that heavily
utilized. In addition, while I don't have an
exact accounting, I don't believe that the
concessionaire has actually paid what he is
obligated to pay, and your predecessor sort of
said, "Well, yeah, but he's invested a lot of
money in the facilities." Well, all well and
good, he invested a lot of money in the

1 facilities, but these facilities, Mr. Chairman,
2 and Chairman of the Committee, knows this, these
3 facilities are used by a few, what you might call
4 affluent people who can afford to have a horse and
5 board the horse in the Park. And they're lovely
6 facilities, they're fences and jumping things.
7 Things that the average New Yorker doesn't
8 participate in: horse jumping or horse showing.
9 So, the fact that this concessionaire may have
10 invested in facilities in the Park is nice, but it
11 really doesn't rebound to the benefit of most of
12 the citizens of New York. And if he owes money,
13 it's be nice to get that money so we could hire
14 the people we've been talking about this morning,
15 rather than--so what's the st--I also heard that
16 the concessionaire was leaving. Do you have an
17 update on both the financial situation with
18 respect to the concession on the horse stable, and
19 the future of this concession?

21 VERONICA WHITE: I don't have any
22 update--

23 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: - -

24 VERONICA WHITE: --at this time on
25 that. I can look into it and I will get back to

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you.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Okay. I would really like to get a report. It's, to me, it's, unfortunately, it's an abuse of the park. And I--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Hold on. I think we might have some answers to your questions. You want to ask--

VERONICA WHITE: Assistant commissioner Betsy Smith is here.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Okay - -

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Betsy Smith, she's in charge of all the concessions.

VERONICA WHITE: In charge of revenue and concessions.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Press-- identify yourself, Betsy.

ELIZABETH SMITH: Right. My name is Betsy Smith, I'm the Assistant Commissioner--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you.

ELIZABETH SMITH: --of Revenue and Marketing at Parks. The Van Cortlandt Stables were in the process of doing other extensive audits on the financial statements of the Van

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2 Cortlandt Stables, and there may be additional
3 amounts owed, and we're looking into that right
4 now. Just one other comment: it's a public
5 stable, there's public riding there, there are
6 public riding programs, including programs for
7 handicapped children. So, we feel that the Parks
8 purpose of the Van Cortlandt Stable is being
9 adequately managed there. We can look into the--
10 the size of the facility has been, the licensed
11 premises, certainly for as long as I've been
12 around, so we can look into that. That, the term
13 of that license agreement expires in I think two
14 years.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well, I'm
16 glad to know it expires. And the Chair of the
17 Committee, I would like you to note that it's
18 expiring, Ms. Mark-Viverito note that it's
19 expiring, 'cause it should not be renewed. And
20 your, you have a problem vis-à-vis me, 'cause I've
21 only lived by the Park for 70 years. And I know
22 that the area used by the stable has been vastly
23 expanded over the years, vastly expanded, even in
24 the last few years. So don't tell me that it's
25 remained the same. Maybe in your tenure it's

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2 remained the same, I don't know how long your
3 tenure is. But it's been vastly expanded and
4 taken away. Years ago, there was enough room
5 there to have a nice sized cricket pitch, right
6 next to it, that you can't have a nice sized
7 cricket pitch anymore, 'cause they've taken so
8 much. And a lot more people play cricket than use
9 those stables. And I know it, that some people
10 use it for public riding. But you go by there,
11 and if you see more than two or three people--

12 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --using
14 the rings, you'd be surprised.

15 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Sum up,
16 Council Member.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Okay,
18 anyway.

19 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: You got your
20 point, you made your point, okay?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I have
22 asked the prior Commissioner, and maybe,
23 Commissioner, you could do something about it even
24 this summer.

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Well, it's

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coming up for--

ELIZABETH SMITH: Yes, it's--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: for new
contract.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No, no,
but I have another point, just one more point I
want to make.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, one
quick point. Lewis Fidler is next.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: My point
is that the prior Commissioner, year after year,
promised me that the concessionaire would provide
a pony ride that could be used by modest income
families for their kids, and there used to be a
pony ride there 20 years ago. No pony ride.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No pony
ride. It's just a great--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, I
think--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --
frustration, and one more, if I could make one
more comment. This is not a question. I--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I know you

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want a horse and carriage ride.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: What's that?

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: You want a horse and carriage ride.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [laughs]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I want a pony ride and I want the thing to be much smaller.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: The next-- but, going away from the stable and just mentioning one thing, there's a loud but in my view misguided and overemphasized quarrel about the Putnam Trail. And I just want to say, as someone who knows the issue, who's lived there as I say for 70 years, I want to compliment the Department. I think the plans for the Putnam Trail are good, and don't be intimidated by a loud, but in my opinion, very small contingent.

VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I support the Putnam Trail.

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VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right.

Can we see if we get the pony ride? It's very important. [background comment] Okay, we've been joined by Council Member Mealy, Council Member Cabrera, Council Member Greenfield, Council Member Oddo. Council Member Fidler.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon, Commissioner, it's--I see you're familiar with the good strategy of bringing people that we have great relationships with, to sit next to you. So, and bringing Commissioner Jeffrey, he does a great job in Brooklyn with you. I want to touch on three areas, one of which came up during a questioning, one of which came up in your testimony, and one of which hasn't come up at all. I want to, even though she skipped me, I want to be very much associated with the comments of Chairman Mark-Viverito, about the conservancies. This is not just a Manhattan issue. We see it in Brooklyn, I bristle every time the Brooklyn Bridge Park, which is one of the most well-funded parks in the world, comes to the Brooklyn Delegation and asks for more

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2 money, and they're being represented by people who
3 are from their conservancy. I represent
4 communities that cannot afford conservancies.
5 Certainly if we can, it won't be on anything like
6 the scale of Central Park or Brooklyn Bridge Park,
7 and I would certainly believe that if there's a
8 deal that's putting budget money back into the
9 conservancies, any of them, that that's totally
10 misguided and should be rethought. You know, the
11 equity for parks throughout the City demands that,
12 you know, some of our other parks that can't
13 afford those things, are given them by their tax
14 dollars. And I very much want to be associated
15 with her comments on that.

16 VERONICA WHITE: I just, I would
17 like to interrupt one second, to say that most of
18 our conservancies are about volunteer work,
19 including the Shore Road Conservancy in Bay Ridge,
20 Brooklyn, where I grew up. There was a
21 conservancy, it's about helping people get
22 involved in the park and the community. So, you
23 can talk about different kinds of conservancies,
24 whatever, but most of our conservancies are about
25 volunteer work and we try to actively fund parks

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in the process.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: You know what I'm talking about, I'm talking about the conservancies and communities where people have deep pockets. All right, and the idea that tax money would be coming back to them because of some kind of deal, which I'm hearing now for the first time, is outrageous. I don't begrudge any community that's able to do more for itself because they contribute. And I certainly don't begrudge any community that wants to volunteer on behalf of its parks. But understand that, you know, there is, there's got to be equity, as there are parks that cannot do the same things, and putting budget money back in to a park that has a conservancy, in the manner that was described this morning, is outrageous. That's my opinion.

Second topic. And I tell you the truth, I mean, I don't mean to be so negative, 'cause I actually think the Parks Department is doing a great job, but I am a little bit ticked off to read your testimony about pot workers and pools, I mean, you go so far as to say that the program is a key component to the maintenance and operation of

1 parks. And yet, you guys work for the Mayor. All
2 right, and he proposes a budget that doesn't
3 include what you consider to be his expert,
4 considers to be a key component of maintenance.
5 What would happen, please describe for us, if the
6 Mayor's irresponsible budget for Parks was passed,
7 because the Council couldn't be the cavalry, to
8 come over the hill again?
9

10 VERONICA WHITE: It's important to
11 recognize what we did ask the Mayor for was
12 additional, fulltime hires for year round funding.
13 And we were given money for 414 new hires,
14 including 81 PEP officers, by the Mayor, which
15 doubles the number of PEP officers we have, and in
16 addition brings 207 City Park workers, which are
17 the people that take care of the parks year round.
18 So this money, for the 414 workers, was put into
19 the budget in January, and we hired those 414
20 fulltime people.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: So you--

22 VERONICA WHITE: I am asking for
23 seasonal--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: So you
25 don't need the seasonal workers.

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2 VERONICA WHITE: --I'm asking for
3 your assistance with the seasonal workforce and
4 the JTP POP program.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Can I hear
6 that last sentence again?

7 VERONICA WHITE: TP POP.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Oh, I mean,
9 the whole sentence.

10 VERONICA WHITE: I am asking for
11 your assistance with the JTP POP program - -

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER:
13 [interposing] And did you ask the Mayor for, did
14 you ask the Mayor for that assistance, since you
15 consider it a key components of Parks operations
16 and maintenance?

17 VERONICA WHITE: We discussed which
18 parts of the budget would make sense for the Mayor
19 to help me with, and I'm very pleased that we have
20 414 new employees--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Look, I
22 understand you've got to say what you're saying,
23 but what was the Mayor's response when you said,
24 "And by the way, you know, these POP workers are
25 absolutely essential to my operating my

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Department"?

VERONICA WHITE: I have half the money for the POP workers, I have \$17 million to hire 1,700.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: And you told him, of course, that that was insufficient for your to operate Parks, right?

VERONICA WHITE: Every agency would like more money, including me.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: You know, that's terrific, but you know, most agencies don't come here, I mean, a couple of others are notorious for it, but they come here and say a critical element of my operating, you know, my core function, is missing from this budget. City Council, please put it in 'cause the Mayor won't. That is unique. And you know, it is, you know, this is my last rodeo. I'm sorry for all the horse references, Oliver. [laughter] This is my last rodeo--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing] Today's about the horses and the ponies.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: --but I'm a little tired, I'm a little tired of the budget

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2 dance where he figures, "Well, the Council will
3 put it in." All right? "So I don't have to, even
4 though I know it should be spent because my
5 Commissioner tells me it's essential." All right,
6 one of these years, some of these things are going
7 to get left by the side, because he's only going
8 to allow us to add so much money to the budget,
9 and you might be up against homeless people, or
10 you might be up against, you know, senior centers.
11 All right? He's got to make some of those
12 decisions and not put it on the Council. So, I
13 just want to--not at you, Commissioner, but to
14 express my annoyance at the fact that the Mayor,
15 his Office of Management and Budget, are not
16 taking their Commissioners seriously, when the
17 Commissioner says, "This is something that we need
18 to operate my department properly." And, you
19 know, I know you work for them, I don't expect you
20 to stand there and say, "Councilman, you're right,
21 this is disgraceful." But it is disgraceful. And
22 it really has to stop. My last topic has not been
23 brought up at all. And that is the issue of
24 capital construction of projects. I have found in
25 my 12 years that the Parks Department has

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2 essentially done a very good job of getting most
3 of their projects in on time and on budget. Of
4 course, there is one notorious exception in my
5 district that I will never live down, even though
6 it's a beautiful final result. But I am
7 concerned, and I'm sure those of my colleagues who
8 are in their final year, are concerned, about
9 moving things forward either to a groundbreaking
10 or to being shovel ready. Because the things that
11 aren't shovel ready, sometimes disappear when we
12 leave. I have been told in the past that one of
13 the most significant delays that the Parks
14 Department has, particularly during the design
15 phase, is the Arts Commission. Right? I want to
16 know, from you, whether or not you've been told
17 that by your people. If in fact it's true,
18 whether or not you think they play any valuable
19 role in the process, and what the delay factor
20 would be?

21 VERONICA WHITE: I think the Public
22 Design Commissioner does play a valuable role in
23 the process, in assuring that we do get a good
24 product throughout the five boroughs of the City
25 of New York, and what it builds across all City

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2 agencies. What we've attempted to do in the Parks
3 Department is get to the Public Design Commission
4 early, early in the process, and I think that this
5 is helping us in terms of trying to move the
6 capital projects forward. So, in having a meeting
7 with the Councilperson who as you know is often a
8 supporter of project financially, as well as other
9 ways, as well as the folks at the Public Design
10 Commission, early on, to work through some of
11 these issues. In addition, they'll be working
12 through ADS issues. The earlier we get in, the
13 better it is, with all parties concerned. And so
14 we are attempting to do that.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Well, I
16 would respectfully disagree with that. I think
17 your design department knows best how to design a
18 park, and a parks project. I think they do a
19 magnificent job. And I don't understand why
20 someone who's an art historian has a better
21 perspective on how to build a park than you're
22 design people do. And I have been told by people
23 affiliated with your department in the past, that
24 the single greatest delay in getting a park
25 project from soup to nuts is PDC. Okay? And that

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2 also has cost us dollars. I know there are
3 decisions that have been made in the past about
4 Parks projects in my district that have taken
5 things that I've allocated money for, and made the
6 money that I've allocated woefully insufficient,
7 because they refuse to allow certain things that
8 your design people say is perfect. So, I'm going
9 to be very parochial, as we go forward, on the
10 remainder of my term, and I'm not going to allow
11 any of my projects to stall at the Arts
12 Commission. If it should happen, I do have a bill
13 before this Council that would--I stole from Jimmy
14 Oddo and Chris Quinn, notice who I stole it from,
15 right--Jimmy Oddo and Chris Quinn, that would
16 eliminate the role of the Arts Commission, in
17 these things. And I think, frankly, whether they
18 screw with my projects or not, we ought to get rid
19 of it 'cause it's costing taxpayers millions of
20 dollars to the City of New York.

21 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Thank you,
24 Council Member. We'll go, before we call on
25 Council Member Liz Crowley, we've been joined by

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2 Council Member Danny Dromm and Council Member
3 Gentile. It's also, today, Council Member
4 Cabrera's anniversary, happy anniversary, Council
5 Member, to you and your wife. All right, we call
6 on Council Member Liz Crowley from Queens to ask
7 her questions.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you
9 to both of our co-chairs. Good afternoon,
10 Commissioner. I have a main concern today, as it
11 relates to a large park in Queens, which is in my
12 district, Forest Park. I bring it up because over
13 the past couple of weeks there was a sexual
14 assault there, and it's unclear exactly how many,
15 but there have been a few over the past couple of
16 years. And through understanding why or why that
17 would be an area that would attract criminals or
18 predators, we've met with various stakeholders who
19 use the par, the runners club, the community
20 board. And it seems in a lot of ways that it is
21 forgotten about. Like a lot of parks in this
22 City, there are a number of lights in the park
23 that have been out for years. We believe that
24 these attacks are happening right at dusk, that if
25 the lights were working, it maybe deter crime.

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2 What is the process of the work orders that are
3 put in for broken lights? How frequently--how
4 long would a light have to be broken before it
5 gets fixed?

6 LIAM KAVANAGH: Park lighting is
7 actually managed by the City's Department of
8 Transportation, it's part of the street lighting
9 contract.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: A lot of
11 these lights are in the trails, which are wooded
12 areas, and they're not under the jurisdiction of
13 the DOT. We've gone through this with local Parks
14 officials. We met with Debbie Cuhas [phonetic],
15 who is the Park Administrator.

16 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So, the
18 lights that I'm talking about, the reference, what
19 I'm referencing, are lights that are to be
20 maintained by Department of Parks. And even the
21 Administrator herself said that they've been out
22 for a number of years.

23 LIAM KAVANAGH: Okay. I'm unaware
24 of that situation, I will look into it after the
25 hearing. In general, we inspect every park

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2 property at least once every two weeks with a
3 formal written inspection. Lights are one of the
4 elements that do get inspected. It varies
5 depending on the cause of the problem, how long it
6 might take to repair it. But I will look into
7 this particular situation and give you my
8 information as soon as I can.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: How about
10 cameras? Do you have cameras in any parks?

11 LIAM KAVANAGH: We have cameras in
12 a number of parks, yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And that
14 is up to the Police Department to install the
15 cameras?

16 LIAM KAVANAGH: It's a combination.
17 We have some cameras that we install ourselves in
18 particular places, mostly to combat graffiti and
19 dumping problems.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Has the
21 Department thought about installing park cameras
22 in Forest Park?

23 LIAM KAVANAGH: I don't know if
24 we've specifically thought about installing them
25 in Forest Park. If there's an area that is prone

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2 to either illegal activity that makes sense to
3 install a camera.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: In the
5 budget, you have funding to hire approximately 80
6 some odd new PEP officers.

7 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And now,
9 currently they're being trained on Randall's
10 Island, is that correct?

11 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I would
13 think that it'd probably be better to train them
14 in a public park, right? Where you have officers
15 aware of visitors, where, you know, whether it be
16 Forest Park or another park in the City. You
17 could better utilize their training skills, just
18 as being eyes and ears, they are in a highly
19 populated park.

20 LIAM KAVANAGH: Well, Randall's
21 Island is a public park, and it does have many of
22 the same conditions that you see in parks around
23 the City, but for the sake of efficiency, like
24 other agencies, we do have an academy where we
25 concentrate our training, and to do it in the most

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2 effective and productive manner. But they will be
3 out in the all the boroughs, patrolling parks,
4 enforcing rules and helping people enjoy
5 themselves in the parks.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Would the
7 Department be inclined to moving the training
8 facility to better--how many visitors go to
9 Randall's Island?

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, Council
11 Member, this is a budget hearing? If you have a
12 budget question, dealing with the budget?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I think
14 because they don't have enough PEP officers in the
15 budget, especially for the demands--

16 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: They train--
17 Well, they just said, they're adding PEP officers,
18 she testified to that?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And how
20 many does 80 trickle down to? How many more PEP
21 officers will be working in a park, let's say,
22 Forest Park, Queens?

23 LIAM KAVANAGH: It will vary on a
24 daily basis. Our strategy is to provide daily
25 patrols. This level of staffing will allow us to

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2 have approximately nine patrols of two officers
3 each, working every day in Queens. Forest Park is
4 a large, very popular park, there will be regular
5 patrols by those teams in Forest Park. I'm not
6 prepared to say exactly how or where that will
7 occur.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But
9 there's no guarantee that the park will have any
10 patrol in a particular day, because there's only
11 two for the whole borough, correct?

12 LIAM KAVANAGH: There will be nine
13 patrols, thanks to the new staff that we're
14 having, nine patrol teams working every day in
15 Queens.

16 VERONICA WHITE: Just that there
17 will be 34 in Queens.

18 LIAM KAVANAGH: 34 total officers
19 in Queens.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay.

21 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And now,
23 when you have--

24 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Sum up.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: --new

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hires, you had 412 new hires this year--

LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And how many, is that the total or those are particular fulltime park workers?

LIAM KAVANAGH: Those are fulltime park workers.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And how does one become a park worker? How would one apply for that fulltime job?

LIAM KAVANAGH: We advertised in local newspapers.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And now, in light of the Daily News article, that said that women had to perform special tasks or there--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The Commissioner made a statement opening up about the Daily News article. All right? This is a budget hearing, we're talking about the budget. I have other Council Members that want to ask questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay, no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: - - sum it up. All right. Council Member Greenfield. Then

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to be followed by Council Member Oddo.

[pause, background noise]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Are you first? Please, be all means, Council Member Mealy, come on.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: We've been joined by Council Member Vacca and Council Member Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I will cede to my colleague, Council Member Mealy, who apparently was before me.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Council Member Mealy.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you. I just want to say thank you to the Parks 'cause a lot of my parks are fabulously done. And I want to thank, special to our Commissioner Jeffries in regards to being on point whenever I call, whenever I need. And to thank him for even thinking outside the box, because in my district we have the only two in the nation, imaginary playground in Brownsville, Betsy Park, and thanks to the Parks Department and especially

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2 Commissioner Jeffries. And one thing I wanted to
3 ask, to piggyback on my colleague: how many, you
4 say you have 34 new PEP officers. How many, how
5 much of your budget have increased with the
6 summonses of smoking in the parks?

7 VERONICA WHITE: How much money do
8 we get from the summons?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yes, what
10 kind of revenue has you increased--

11 VERONICA WHITE: Probably very
12 small.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Scuze me?

14 VERONICA WHITE: Probably very
15 small. Oftentimes what we do with our PEP
16 officers, is it's an education campaign first. We
17 ask people to stop smoking and most do, as I
18 understand it. So--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So have you
20 given any tickets in regard to smoking in a public
21 park?

22 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, we have.
23 We've--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: What
25 percentage?

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2 LIAM KAVANAGH: Percentage? It's a
3 very small percentage of the total number of
4 summonses that are issued by PEP officers in the
5 course of a year. I don't have the exact numbers,
6 the current numbers. I know that in the first
7 year that we issued summonses, began issuing
8 summonses, we issued a little bit more than 200
9 summonses for smoking in the parks. And, you
10 know, frankly at a, at an average summons value of
11 about \$50 per summons, it comes out to \$1,000.
12 And we don't, we're not sure whether every one of
13 those summonses is paid, because they're processed
14 by an agency outside of the Parks Department.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, then,
16 so, it's not really helping the City with smoking,
17 banning smoking in the park.

18 VERONICA WHITE: Yeah, it wasn't
19 really meant to help our budget, though I would
20 like things to help our budget, but it was really
21 meant to provide a healthier atmosphere,
22 especially for children in parks.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, I just
24 want--could you tell us how many outdoor pools or
25 indoor pools are scheduled to close? If not, do

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you have any information right now if some will be closed this summer?

VERONICA WHITE: There'll be four pools closed: Wagner Pool in Manhattan, Howard Pool in Brooklyn, Fort Totten--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Howard Pool in Brooklyn.

VERONICA WHITE: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: My pool.

VERONICA WHITE: Yes. That's what's--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Why would you close a pool that has a housing density so great in this City, and you would close where, that'd be recreation for so many young people in the housing developments. Could you explain why would you close that pool? For the summer.

VERONICA WHITE: We looked at attendance figures, as well as proximity to other pools and access to public transit, and location of other pools, vis-à-vis each pool, to see which ones that we could--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I think you should re--really, really reassess that. We have,

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2 that's a high density of housing developments.
3 The young people do not get on the bus or the
4 train to get there. They walk there, they have
5 lunch there. So, why would--I don't understand,
6 how could you even justify closing a park like
7 that? A pool such as that, in that area. So, I
8 feel we're going to do a campaign on that, in
9 regards to that, 'cause I don't see the logic of
10 closing that pool in the summer. And could you
11 give me the MWBE's percentage for DPR's contracts
12 for Fiscal 2011 and 2012?

13 VERONICA WHITE: We do
14 extraordinarily well in that category. In our
15 agency's utilization of MWBEs has increased in
16 each category from Fiscal Year '11 to '12, most
17 notably in the percentage of subcontracts awarded
18 to increase by 5.3 percent from 26.5 percent to
19 31.8 percent.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So it's
21 moving up.

22 VERONICA WHITE: It's moving up,
23 it's going in the right direction.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So what is
25 your projection of the percentage of Fiscal 2013

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now?

VERONICA WHITE: Through March of this year, we awarded a total of 2,118 contracts, of which--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: How many?

VERONICA WHITE: --22 percent were awarded to MWBEs.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Do you think that the new legislation, a Reso that I put in, with micropurchasing, will help these MWBEs?

VERONICA WHITE: Yeah, I believe it would. I believe we are doing pretty well in those categories, and we are very supportive of the goals of the program. And in addition, we've been very successful. I think probably two out of the last three years, we were probably the top in the City with these kinds of contracts. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. Thank you, Council Member. Council Member Greenfield, to be followed by--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: And thank

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you, my colleague, Greenfield.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Mighty nice
of you.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank
you, of course. Things we do for our co-chairs.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Council
Member Oddo's next.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank
you very much, Commissioner and staff. I, too,
would like to compliment the work of Commissioner
Kevin Jeffrey, he's been doing outstanding work,
he's working overtime especially on the areas that
were hard hit as a result of Sandy. He really
worked around the clock, and he worked hard to
reopen those bitches and the parks and the
efforts, and so if you give out gold stars, kindly
give him one. Do you give out gold stars?

VERONICA WHITE: We do give out
gold stars.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay,
excellent.

VERONICA WHITE: [laughs] And I

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2 think most people behind me today would be getting
3 a few. The entire team has been working literally
4 seven days a week, around the clock, since--or
5 actually probably two days before Sandy, when they
6 started actually trying to protect our facilities.
7 And it's been outstanding work, and it's been
8 amazing, the work that's been done, particularly
9 in our beach communities.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Well,
11 I'm sure many of my colleagues and myself would be
12 happy to be there for the gold star ceremony for
13 your staff, so let us know what is happening and
14 we will show up with cameras in tow. We're very
15 good like that. I want to ask you about a few
16 different things. The first thing is tree
17 pruning. Is there a set schedule for when trees
18 are pruned, like you know when you get a call,
19 like for example the pothole people tell us that
20 "We guarantee you our potholes will be fixed
21 within 30 days or your money back." When it comes
22 to pruning trees, it seems a little random,
23 honestly. So, is that something that you're
24 working on? Is there a plan? Can you give us
25 like a timeline? You call 311, you have a

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2 complaint, your tree will get inspected within X,
3 your tree will get reviewed within Y, and will get
4 pruned within Z. I see a lot of smiles on that
5 side of the table.

6 VERONICA WHITE: Well, the good
7 thing is we have \$2 million to be assigned in the
8 budget as of January, and First Deputy
9 Commissioner Kavanagh will take us through the
10 process.

11 LIAM KAVANAGH: We have
12 approximately 600,000 street trees, lining the
13 streets of the City of New York. It's an
14 enormously important resource, managing it so that
15 it is both safe for the public and healthy, and it
16 provides the environmental benefits that trees
17 confer to the public, is very important. The most
18 effective way of managing that resource is through
19 the block pruning program, in which we go block-
20 by-block, pruning every tree on the block,
21 removing deadwood, diseased, unsound limbs, limbs
22 that are either touching or becoming close to
23 structures, street lights, things of that nature.
24 It's cost effective, and it is, in the long term,
25 the best way to prune trees. The ide--

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: How
3 often does that happen, block by block?

4 LIAM KAVANAGH: The industry
5 standard for pruning trees is once every seven to
6 eight years, depending on species. Frankly,
7 because of the fluctuation in our budget, we have
8 not been able to maintain a seven or eight year
9 pruning cycle in the last couple of years.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So
11 what's been the cycle?

12 LIAM KAVANAGH: The cycle's
13 probably drifted up into the 15 to 16 year range.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yikes.

15 LIAM KAVANAGH: Thanks to the
16 funding that was baselined in our budget, we will
17 be approaching, I can't say we'll actually hit the
18 seven or eight year cycle, but we will be
19 approaching that cycle in the next couple of
20 years, thanks to that additional funding. Now, we
21 don't only rely on the block pruning program to
22 prune trees. There are two other primary
23 programs. One, we do inspect the trees when
24 people make complaints to 311. We have qualified
25 foresters make an evaluation of the tree. If the

1 tree has problems that can't wait for the block
2 pruning program, we'll prune it with our staff.
3 But that's a judgment that's made by a
4 professional who does an objective evaluation of
5 the tree. The other program, and it's thanks to
6 legislation, not that we didn't do this before,
7 but thanks to legislation passed by the Council,
8 we focus on trees that block traffic signals,
9 traffic lights, principally stop signs and other
10 signs that direct the public. So, through 311, we
11 receive calls that alert us to those conditions.
12 We inspect them within five to ten days, depending
13 on the severity of the condition, and we have to
14 prune them within ten to 20 days, again based on
15 the severity of the condition.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: That's
18 only for trees that are blocking a--

19 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --
21 utility.

22 LIAM KAVANAGH: Excuse me?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: That's
24 only for a tree that's blocking a utility or a
25 pole or a light, it's not like a private home.

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2 LIAM KAVANAGH: No, no, a traffic
3 light or a traffic signal.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:

5 Correct. So, my question is then can you extend
6 that program to the homeowners? Right, I mean,
7 for two reasons. Obviously, you know, the City,
8 when we deal with the DOT, my Chairman will tell
9 you that they have a regular schedule for repaving
10 the streets, as well, but they recognize that
11 streets sometimes have problems, aka potholes or
12 sinkholes or whatnot, and therefore they have to
13 make those repairs. For one, you haven't been on
14 the schedule, even though you're now getting on
15 the schedule, and I comment you and we're
16 applauding it and we're thrilled. The reality is
17 that we're suffering because trees have not been
18 pruned; and two, trees, as you know, and you've
19 said yourself, 600,000 with many varieties and
20 they have a mind of their own. And so, sometimes
21 these trees end up in some really strange places.
22 And plus, quite frankly, it's very different, it's
23 not like a homeowner can get up there on a ladder
24 and cut their tree down. If they did, you would
25 like them up and throw the key away, right. So--

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LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, we would.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --

you're very protective, I mean, but it's unfair when you think about it, though. You're very protective over your trees, right? Which would be fair if you said, "We're going to be, we're going to be taking care of these trees," but you're not, right, so you're basically allowing these trees to grow wild, and this is all over the City, right. And when we come and we ask for, when we ask for these trees to be pruned, it's pretty arbitrary. So what I'm asking is it possible that the same sign of schedule and program that you have for the traffic lights and the stop signs and the utilities, could you perhaps extend that to homeowners, as well, where we have a specific timeframe where a homeowner knows, "If I call, there is, within 30 days, someone's going to come and inspect my tree, and then I'll get a report that says, "Your tree is, you know, needs to be pruned/it doesn't need to be pruned," and that'll happen within a fixed amount of time. Because right now, it's pretty random.

LIAM KAVANAGH: Well, I don't think

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2 we're going to be in a position to provide a level
3 of service that we do through the traffic pruning
4 program. - -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:

6 [interposing] So then let us cut the trees down.

7 LIAM KAVANAGH: It's simply--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Then
9 give us a waiver as homeowners to get up there
10 with our, with our, you know, power saws and just
11 trim our own trees, because--so then you're not
12 really providing us with a fair solution. What
13 you're saying is, on the one hand, you can't do it
14 yourself; on the other hand, we're not willing to
15 come up with a reasonable way for you to figure
16 out how to do it.

17 LIAM KAVANAGH: No, I don't think I
18 said that at all, Council Member. And just let me
19 be clear--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm
21 paraphrasing.

22 LIAM KAVANAGH: Excuse me?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm
24 paraphrasing.

25 LIAM KAVANAGH: Okay.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I
wasn't quoting you.

LIAM KAVANAGH: Well, not quite.
But we do allow homeowners to hire contractors to
prune trees. Nobody should climb a tree if
they're not trained, a trained professional. It's
dangerous work and you're exposing yourself and
the public to potential, you know, accidents. So
we do allow people to hire contractors to prune
trees. There's, we issue a permit to qualified
companies. There's no charge for our permit. We
simply want to make sure that the company is
qualified, they have insurance, and they're
capable of doing the job properly.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: But you
have to sign off on that first, right? I mean, so
they have to process--

LIAM KAVANAGH: We have to approve
the work.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: And how
long does that process take?

LIAM KAVANAGH: It takes a matter
of a week to ten days.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

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2 LIAM KAVANAGH: To do something
3 like that. To approve a permit, absolutely.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: The
5 Chairman is not so convinced. [laughs]

6 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Listen, I
7 didn't want to get into this. My constituents got
8 hit hard by the Parks Department. And I don't
9 even want to get into this, 'cause they pruned
10 their own trees, they just couldn't wait. And it
11 was a matter of their houses being destroyed. And
12 I fought with you guys, and it, you know, don't
13 come here and say it takes ten days. They waited
14 months to get the approval, and the house was
15 being damaged. Finally they said, "You know what?
16 I'm cutting the tree down." So don't come here
17 and say it takes ten days. It doesn't take ten
18 days, number one. And number two, your tree
19 pruning division is the only division that will
20 let this City lose millions of dollars because
21 they won't cut a tree that blocks a billboard that
22 brought the City \$10 million. You imagine that
23 revenue, on \$10 million a billboard brought in,
24 and this City would not cut the top of a tree.
25 And the company, Coca-Cola said, "We're not doing

1
2 it. We'll pull that." Look at the revenue we
3 lost. You want money for pops? You know what?
4 They lost the money, 'cause they won't trim the
5 top of a tree. So that's where they lost money.
6 That's what your division does. And come here and
7 say ten days, no. They tried for months. And the
8 house was getting destroyed. And then they have
9 the nerve to give them a fine. That's what is
10 happening. I'm sorry. Go ahead. [background
11 comments] Go ahead.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So.
13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Move on.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I
16 think, we're not trying to beat up on you. And we
17 know that you're doing the best. And like I said,
18 especially with Sandy, and I think overall we're
19 very pleased, Parks Department does good work.
20 And if you're looking at, Commissioner, at a
21 legacy and you've been here for a short time, and
22 the reality is, as the political nature of these
23 things go, you're probably going to be here for
24 another short time. Right? So, if you're looking
25 at the items that influence and that really

1 frustrate New Yorkers, I'll give you two: the
2 first is the tree pruning, it's very frustrating.
3 And I do agree with the Chairman. I'm embarrassed
4 to say, and I won't say it publicly, 'cause I
5 don't want someone to then, you know, ask me where
6 they were, but I drove all across the City after
7 the storm, and there was a lot of illegal tree
8 cutting going down, and I would ask people why,
9 and they said, "Oh, we really couldn't get the
10 permits." And this was in Queens and Brooklyn, it
11 was all over. I mean, it wasn't honestly in any
12 particular neighborhood. So, I'm not--I think it
13 would be bad politics for you to try to go down
14 there and enforce it, quite frankly, go after the
15 Sandy victims. But realistically, you guys shot
16 yourself in the foot, because it wasn't a very
17 quick process. I think there needs to be a fair
18 process where homeowners know that there's a
19 timeline, that if you have a tree, we'll come out
20 and we'll look at it. And if it's, the tree's
21 sticking into your attic, you know, or you know,
22 or blocking your property, or sometimes actually
23 physically into the property, I think there needs
24 to be a quicker turnaround. It's something that
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1 we hear from across the City. And the other item
2 that I would add, as well, has to do with the
3 sidewalks, which also seems to be very willy-nilly
4 in terms of how that gets done, and there's some
5 sort of rating system. It's not very clear to us
6 on how that actually works, and obviously that's
7 something that's very costly, right, you know. I
8 have constituents, it's funny, 'cause you know we
9 participate in this tree giveaway program, we just
10 did it a few weeks ago and it's great, and you
11 give away trees. And some people say, "I'd love a
12 tree, but then it's going to rip up my sidewalk,
13 and then the, you know, the Department of
14 Transportation is going to send me a bill and
15 they're going to cost me thousands of dollars."
16 And so, I think there needs to be clarify on both
17 of these programs. Right? And particularly I'll
18 move on to the sidewalks issue, because I think
19 that's an issue as well. Same question, you know,
20 is there a process? What's the process? What's
21 the timeline? Do you have the funding? Are you
22 underfunded? I think these are important issues
23 that matter to average homeowners, especially
24 those of us who are not out, who are not living in

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2 Manhattan, you know, and I do know that, you know,
3 the parks, Manhattan parks, of course, get
4 preferential treatment. But, you know, those of
5 us in the outer boroughs, I think it is fair for
6 homeowners to have these very basic concerns. So,
7 do you have some details on how that sidewalk
8 program works?

9 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes. Simply call
10 311, report a damaged sidewalk, we'll send you a
11 brochure describing the program in detail, we'll
12 send out somebody to inspect it. We do have an
13 objective scale. We rate the severity of the
14 defect, we rate the busyness of the area, because
15 obviously we don't have enough money to go out and
16 repair every sidewalk immediately. But it is an
17 objective scale. We tell you what the results
18 are. And if it does rise to the level within that
19 community, of the most severely damaged sidewalks,
20 we'll repair it. We've repaired over 10,000
21 sidewalks through that program, there are many
22 more that will need to be repaired.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Is
24 there a timeline? Once again, my question also
25 comes out to timeline. Once again, I want to

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2 encourage you again, overall, I'll say it again,
3 Parks does a good job. I do think you're
4 Manhattan-centric, I won't even discuss the wi-fi
5 programs, that most of them are in Manhattan, when
6 most of the population of New York City is outside
7 of Manhattan, because we're running out of time.
8 But I'll say that in general, you guys do a good
9 job, your Brooklyn staff in particular are
10 outstanding. Commissioner Jeffrey is wonderful,
11 he's working 24/7, we're grateful. I'm just
12 giving you frustrations. We're not trying to be
13 "gotcha" over here, but two basic frustrations
14 that we have are tree pruning and sidewalk
15 repairs. If there can be some clarity on the
16 schedule, a timeline, I think it would go a long
17 way. Thank you very much.

18 LIAM KAVANAGH: You're welcome.

19 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Thank you.

21 Council Member Oddo.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman, and I apologize to you--

24 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Hold on,
25 we've been joined by Julissa Ferreras, Council

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Member from Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I apologize to the Chairman and Chairwoman for being late, I had a meeting across the hall with the Administration on a Sandy matter. And I just want to say at the outset, that there once was a time not too long ago, actually, that I would kind of revel in watching the Chairman go off on the Parks Commissioner, and my colleagues asked difficult questions. I don't anymore, I don't know if it's just a sign that I'm getting old, and mellowing. Or maybe it's a sign, Commissioner, that I--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: No, they're listening to you, Jimmy, they're very effective.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: --I admire and respect you and I'm very appreciative of the responsive approach you've taken, vis-à-vis Staten Island. And so, thank you for that. I have budget related questions, but specifically related to Sandy. My understanding is that the Department has spent around \$2 million in its repairs of the boardwalk in Staten Island. I assume that was Department money. Correct?

VERONICA WHITE: That, it's about

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\$2 million--

LIAM KAVANAGH: That was City funds.

VERONICA WHITE: --and the important part of it is that it was expense dollars.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: So \$2 million of expense dollars.

VERONICA WHITE: And it's from OMB.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: My other understanding on this point, is that there is around \$385 million allocated for Boardwalk and structure repair. My question is, how much of that is allocated for Staten Island? And when will that construction take place?

VERONICA WHITE: So, the original \$270, \$270 million has been allocated for Sandy repair, and has been spent on the beaches, in primarily the three boroughs, but some in Orchard Beach, as well. But primarily the three boroughs, and about half went to the Rockaways, frankly. Has, includes a tremendous amount for Staten Island work that's been going on. The \$385 million number is a budget that we put together

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2 just, I would probably say six to eight weeks
3 after the storm, to try to figure out what the
4 long term needs of the Department would be so that
5 we could get money into our capital budget for the
6 next two years. So we consider the beach opening,
7 that we've done so far, which is to get access to
8 the beach and provide concessions and provide
9 restrooms and lifeguard stations, is really Phase
10 I. And Phase II is starting now. And a big, big
11 part of Phase II, besides forced boardwalks, is
12 shoreline protection. So it's very important for
13 us to be able to weave that shoreline protection
14 right into the boardwalk reconstruction that we're
15 doing, particularly anything we're doing in Staten
16 Island, and in the Rockaways. As you know, the
17 boardwalk in Staten Island had issues prior to
18 Sandy, which is the reason that we really were
19 unable to--even a number of reasons that we had to
20 fund it that we've had to fund it. One is that
21 also that we're going to be working with the Army
22 Corp on figuring out berms, shoreline protection,
23 etc., for Staten Island, and so it's not likely
24 that the repairs that we're making will be there
25 for five years.

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COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Okay, so, is that--

VERONICA WHITE: So, it would become eligible.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: There's a lot in that answer. So, let's parse it a bit. So, first off, thank you for the work on the temporary berm. Hurricane season starts Saturday, I believe, and these communities are wide open still. So, that work is extraordinarily important. As you know, Midland Beach was specifically left out. Not your decision, not the City's decision, Army Corp., FEMA. It's tough as a representative of Midland Beach to accept that, because when you look at a map, and you see where the deaths occurred in the City, and you see how many happened in Midland Beach, you just scratch your head and say, "Government doesn't work." Now, as you know, Senator Schumer and I have written to the Army Corp. and to FEMA asking for them to change their mind. In the instance that they do, the City still has an obligation, and we're going to, you know, and that's why Senator Lanza, Assemblywoman Malliotakis and I wrote you a

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2 letter and said, "Let's dual track." I can't have
3 Midland Beach without any sort of protection. So,
4 that's an issue that we will discuss offline,
5 separate and apart from this. But from your
6 answer, I am, I'm sensing that there is no money
7 specifically allocated for the boardwalk
8 restoration.

9 VERONICA WHITE: We do have money
10 allocated for the boardwalk restoration, for the
11 \$386 million that's out in the next two years.
12 It's probably only some twenty--in terms of the
13 boardwalk, \$21 million for what I thought, which
14 is probably not enough. Again, these are numbers
15 that we put together shortly after the storm, and
16 then we moved quite rapidly into Phase I to make
17 sure we could get all 14 miles of beaches open.
18 So the \$21 million I believe is split between
19 Fiscal Year '14 and '15, about \$10.5 each. I will
20 check that and get back to you on that, but that's
21 my recollection.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: How much do
23 you--

24 VERONICA WHITE: Subsequent to
25 that, though, we found additional problems, we may

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need more money for that portion.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: So how much--
is there an estimate on how much it will take to
fully restore?

VERONICA WHITE: No, I don't have
that estimate at that time.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Okay. And
with the '14 money, Fiscal Year '14, when would
construction or reconstruction start? When do you
anticipate?

VERONICA WHITE: It's an evolving
process for us right now, and First Deputy
Kavanagh's been working very closely with the Army
Corp. and with FEMA to think about the shoreline
protection, and it's woven into that, so maybe he
could take the question. Thank you.

LIAM KAVANAGH: Council Member, as
you know, the Army Corp. is completing their study
of the Staten Island coastal protection. I
hesitate to say when we would build, because it
has to be integrated into that plan. I think it
would be shortsighted of us to go out and rebuild
in advance of the Army Corp. completing their
study, and knowing how either a boardwalk or some

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2 elevated, other elevated promenade along the
3 ocean, fits into the plan to protect the
4 communities on the other, adjoining the beach.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Let's just be
6 clear. And let me preface my comment by saying
7 this: I appreciate, and I respect and I honor the
8 work done by Parks Department employees since the
9 storm and the lead up to the opening of the
10 beaches. A lot of people worked really hard to
11 get there. I dissented from the mindset that we
12 had to have beaches open by Memorial Day. I don't
13 know where along the line we have this shortcoming
14 in thinking we have to continue to prove our
15 bravado in that we have to get things open by a
16 certain date. If they were open, great; if they
17 weren't open, so be it. Historic storm, people
18 still not in their homes, it really wasn't high on
19 my priority. And I don't want to diminish any of
20 the work done by your agency. People did yeoman's
21 work. And yeo-lady's work. It was phenomenal. I
22 appreciate it. So, my priority is protecting my
23 community. But here's where I get a little
24 irritated. I think it's incumbent upon the agency
25 and the Administration to talk straight with

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2 Staten Island. Every day I get questioned about
3 the boardwalk, and again, not my top priority.

4 But I say, "Well, extensive damage, damage that
5 predated the storm, a little bit more serious.

6 We're working on it." We have yet to hear in
7 definitive terms exactly what the game plan is.

8 And frankly, let's just shoot straight with
9 people. Let's just be honest with people. Right

10 now, what you're saying to me, Commissioner, is
11 that it's not a matter only of money, and we don't

12 have the money yet; you're saying that we are
13 rethinking the whole boardwalk structure. It may

14 be incorporated into the shoreline protection.

15 Let's tell the, let's tell Staten Islanders that.

16 Let's be honest, because I don't want to be
17 complicit in stringing people along on a boardwalk

18 repair that isn't funded and frankly may never

19 happen in the current form. So, we need to work

20 together, and I'll stand right next to you and

21 speak honestly to Staten Islanders and say some of

22 the things that you've said today, and let's be a

23 little bit more expansive. So that people

24 understand the extent of the problems and

25 understand the timeline. Because this sort of

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2 stringing folks along, all it does is irritate
3 them. And if the answer is, in order to protect
4 the residents of Midland Beach and South Beach and
5 Ocean Breeze and New York Beach, we have to take a
6 step back from the boardwalk. Be honest with me,
7 and I will stand with you, because that's my top
8 priority.

9 VERONICA WHITE: I appreciate that.
10 And we are being as straightforward as we can, we
11 don't have all the answers. So, for example, when
12 we first went out to Staten Island, it did not
13 look like the Rockaways. The boardwalk looked
14 okay. It was hard to know that once we dug four
15 feet of sand off of it, what was going to be
16 underneath, and the deterioration of the pilings
17 and everything that was underneath the boardwalk,
18 which did not look so deteriorated on top. So,
19 initially we had many, many issues with Staten
20 Island, but we did not think that the Boardwalk
21 was one of the major, major issues. That's the
22 first step. The second step, I was dumbfounded,
23 and I think you were, also, to discover that the
24 Army Corp. of Engineers could not do anything on
25 Staten Island because they'd never done anything

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2 there before. It seemed, that seems government at
3 its worst, but I, you know, I discovered this
4 probably days after the storm, when we tried to,
5 you know, we talked to the Army Corp. They're not
6 allowed--it's not a decision made at the Army
7 Corp., that's the way it works, they did not work
8 on beaches on Staten Island before. They were
9 able to bring Coney Island up to its Moynihan
10 level of 1994 and restore the beach to its design
11 level in Coney Island, they could do the same in
12 the Rockaways, they were beaches they had worked
13 on before. Since they had not done work there, we
14 were dismayed. We went, as you know, and you
15 supported us and helped us to get the dollars, we
16 had to get through then the State Emergency--our
17 City OEM to sign off, which was easy enough, and
18 then onto the State emergency services folks, and
19 onto to Washington to get FEMA dollars to do and
20 get any dollars at all for the shoreline
21 protection that we at the Parks Department are now
22 doing, on Staten Island with the berm, etc. At
23 the same time, we're focused on the long term,
24 because we don't want everything we do, you know,
25 we want it to be integrated in, and we're also,

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2 it's a longer planning process. So we're waiting
3 for this Army Corp. study, while we're patching
4 up, which is literally what we're doing, patching
5 up the existing boardwalk so that people can have
6 access to it. We felt it was important, and you
7 know, we heard from the community and everywhere
8 was "protection, protection, protection." And
9 then it was, "Where's my boardwalk?" not
10 necessarily in Staten Island, but I'm talking
11 across the three boroughs, at this point. And
12 then, also, you know, this is our beach, this, for
13 some of us, this is where we go. We don't go to
14 the Jersey Shore, we go to Staten Island, we go to
15 Coney, we go to Rockaways. And it was about also
16 the economic development of the stores and shops
17 and some of the communities, again, speaking
18 across the three boroughs. So we felt it was
19 vital, and not because of bravado, I'm not the
20 kind of a person, that wasn't my mission. It was
21 to get them open for people to use them, that is
22 their summer house, that is their vacation, those
23 beaches are tremendously important to people. We
24 have 20 million people come to those beaches in
25 the summer. Those are primarily New Yorkers. And

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2 not to get them open, or to open them in one
3 borough and not another, would've been just very,
4 I think a terrible decision. And I'm really proud
5 of the work the agency did to get them open. And
6 I know you disagree with them on parts of that,
7 but at the same time, I didn't want to do work
8 that would be undermining at the same time we're
9 planning for the future and try--and awaiting the
10 Army Corp. study, to figure out a) protection and
11 how we can weave a new boardwalk into that
12 protection, rather than building it independently.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Commissioner,
14 I think you could respect the fact that the notion
15 that we were going to do 24 hour pile driving, you
16 know, and the people who were ravaged by the
17 storm, those who have been able to return would
18 have to deal with that so we could open the
19 beaches for folks from other parts of Staten
20 Island or the City to come to the beaches. You
21 can understand why I resisted that. A couple of
22 points. Let's just be clear, it's, we patched the
23 boardwalk and it's what, 90 percent of it is still
24 offline, correct?

25 VERONICA WHITE: That's correct.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Okay. And
3 in, with respect to my point about not, not being
4 told in great detail of the concept that maybe the
5 boardwalk is going to be incorporated, we've been
6 hearing a lot about Armor Dune, we haven't been,
7 you know, rocks with sand, not that the boardwalk
8 would be, you know, in front of the boardwalk.
9 So, that's why I'm saying we need to communicate.
10 And then the last point is, Commissioner, and I
11 will end with this, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate
12 your indulgence. Do we have a commitment,
13 Commissioner, from the Department, that if FEMA
14 and the Army Corp. reject our request to change
15 their mind on the emergency berm, that the Parks
16 Department will step to the aid of the folks in
17 Midland Beach.

18 VERONICA WHITE: We will look to do
19 what we can do. We will try to get money, we will
20 try to get money, we will try to design. We
21 believe, like you, that Midland Beach needs
22 protection. It's sort of obvious from going out
23 there.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Commissioner,
25 you just said that you didn't want to open the

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2 beaches in some areas of the City and not open the
3 beaches in others. How does it look that parts of
4 the City have some sort of temporary protection,
5 and the community has suffered probably, some of
6 the--one of the top areas that's suffered in terms
7 of fatalities, isn't going to have any protection?
8 That's unacceptable, it's sort of
9 counterintuitive, isn't it?

10 VERONICA WHITE: I agree with you,
11 completely agree with you. I'd like to meet with
12 you and the community, as you know, on Staten
13 Island quite often, happy to be out again, to sit
14 down with you, perhaps with the Army Corp at the
15 same time. I think it would be a very useful
16 conversation, and there needs to be more regular
17 updates so that we're all continue to be on the
18 same page.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: We will do
20 that.

21 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Thank you,
23 thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Just to
25 follow up: when is the report going to be

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complete by the Army Corp. of Engineers?

LIAM KAVANAGH: Pardon me?

VERONICA WHITE: It's on the Army Corp. report. When--they say shortly, but it's not our report.

LIAM KAVANAGH: The Staten Island report I don't think is due until 2014 sometime.

VERONICA WHITE: But, oh, I'm sorry, I thought he meant the others.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The report's not going to be done till 2014?

LIAM KAVANAGH: For the Staten Island shore protection program, I don't think it's due until 2014.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah.

[background comment] So, during this hurricane season, what are we doing as a City to protect the residents of Midland Beach? That is what the Councilman wants to know. We don't have to wait for the Army Corps. of Engineers. So what are we doing?

VERONICA WHITE: We got money for some parts of Staten Island, and we're working on

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2 trying to get money for all of Staten Island. I,
3 it's, you know, it obviously was not left up to--
4 we didn't leave it up to the Army Corp. or there'd
5 be nothing happening on Staten Island.

6 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Well, at
7 least there's great concern, and I think that the
8 residents of Midland Beach and the residents that
9 live along Father Capodanno are really worried.
10 There's still, I mean--

11 VERONICA WHITE: We agree and we're
12 working on it.

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I mean, it's
14 like so what we're saying, if we get hit with a
15 storm, we're back to, you know, instead of us
16 being protective, I mean, could we build dunes?
17 Could we put piles of sand up for now? Could we--
18 you know, what could we do? There has to be
19 something that we could do?

20 LIAM KAVANAGH: Well, in--

21 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I mean, just
22 saying "Wait for the Army Corp. of Engineers," I
23 mean, what are we doing to protect people? I
24 mean, if--if a neighborhood kept on getting
25 burglar every night, we would send the police out

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there and stop the burglar. So, if a neighborhood get hit, storm after storm, I mean, we have to do something to protect them. So, what are we going to do?

LIAM KAVANAGH: As the Commissioner said, we will meet with the Council Member very shortly to discuss options for - -

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing]
Well, I think we have to meet like as soon as possible, like tomorrow, and set this up--

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Meet me with a bulldozer. Let's just do what we did before, before Sandy, when you guys were out there with the front loaders. Give me something. Give me something--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: You have to--

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: --and Saturday's the day, you got to give us something.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Right. There has to be a way that we can protect them, for now.

VERONICA WHITE: We will work with you on it.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right.

VERONICA WHITE: I really agree.

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CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: And the report will, won't be done until when in 2014? The fall or the summer?

LIAM KAVANAGH: The Army Corp. report is not due until 2014.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: When? The spring, the fall?

LIAM KAVANAGH: I don't remember specifically.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Did anyone ask the Army Corp. of Engineers when?

LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, I don't remember exactly when in 2014.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right, I mean, this is really unacceptable, and this is something that we have to move on and--Okay.

VERONICA WHITE: Can I add just one point to that? We are also working with the Sefton's [phonetic] PSIR team as they put forth their report which is due in two weeks, and not in 2014, to think through some of these options, as well.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Listen. With no disrespect to Mr. Pinsky, I like Mr. Pinsky, he

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2 does a good job, okay. We don't want to hear
3 about resiliency. We don't want to hear what
4 you're going to do in the future. We don't want
5 to hear about new businesses coming in with new
6 ideas and let's give them the money. You know
7 what we want to hear about? How we're going to
8 protect the businesses that are there now. No one
9 has a question for that. How are we going to
10 protect the residents of Midland Beach who are
11 there now. That's what we want to hear. Seth
12 Pinsky's not going to address that issue. You
13 know what he's going to address? Resiliency.
14 What we're going to do five, ten years from now.
15 I know, we're--how are we--let's give more money
16 to new businesses with new ideas to come into our
17 communities. And the people--'cause I have the
18 same thing in Coney Island. People saying, "What
19 about us? Who's helping us?" And that's what we
20 have to focus on. And I, and in my paperwork that
21 I submitted for the money to be given out to
22 community block grants, that's what I put in
23 there, but this is a major problem. It has to be
24 acted on. And I think now, because if we have to
25 do something maybe we have to put some money in

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2 the budget to get something done. Okay. Council
3 Member Gentile. Oh, we've been joined by Council
4 Member Diana Reyna and Council Member Gentile.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chairman, and Commissioner, again, I thank
7 you, too, for your responsiveness. Responsiveness
8 of Commissioner Jeffries. Certainly, it's been a
9 pleasure. I know that Councilman Oddo and
10 Councilman Recchia have talked extensively about
11 the issues on the waterfront in Staten Island.
12 And those are definitely very serious issues. But
13 what I want to do now is take you across the
14 narrows to the other side, and talk a little bit
15 about the shorefront issues in Brooklyn. And see
16 where we are with some of those shorefront issues
17 in Brooklyn. Particularly, let's start with the
18 restoration of the pedestrian bike path and
19 railing along the waterfront leading up through
20 Bay Parkway. Is that now fully funded by the FEMA
21 money? Or is there more funding necessary?

22 LIAM KAVANAGH: It's fully funded
23 to repair the damage caused by Sandy.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Okay. And
25 so, I assume that the project, there was some talk

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2 about the project being done by the end of this
3 month, which today's the 31st. Are we, how is
4 that going?

5 LIAM KAVANAGH: I think the project
6 has been slightly delayed because of some
7 technical issues involving the capstones, which we
8 were not able to salvage and had to be procured
9 from elsewhere. We had hoped that we could
10 salvage the capstones that support the railing. I
11 think that, I may be mistaken there, but I think
12 that's the case. It took a little bit of time,
13 but it will not be substantially delayed.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Great.
15 So, we can anticipate full use of the bike path,
16 the pedestrian path, the fishing area, for
17 everyone during the summer months.

18 LIAM KAVANAGH: That is our goal.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE:
20 Commissioner?

21 VERONICA WHITE: Yes, absolutely,
22 you can--you could see those people working out
23 there every day when you go past.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Right.
25 Okay. That's good to hear. Let me take you just

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2 a little further down the shorefront, into Bay
3 Ridge. And that waterfront also has certain
4 concerns, not the same as the Sandy or the damage
5 from Sandy, but something that dates back further
6 than that, and that certainly has to do with
7 pruning. Now we heard a lot about pruning, but
8 particularly about individual trees. What I'm
9 talking about is a collective pruning in the parks
10 that line the narrows on the Bay Ridge side of the
11 water, that we've talked about this that have
12 totally obscured, because of the foliage, have
13 totally obscured the view of the narrows from the
14 park for practically everybody that either lives
15 there or uses the park. You cannot see any of the
16 scenic views that that park was originally built
17 to provide, because of the foliage. Now, we have
18 put that money in the budget for those tree
19 pruners. I think we may be slipping here in terms
20 of addressing that issue along the Bay Ridge
21 parks, because we're already into June. And I
22 hate to go another season where we have no prune--
23 no collective pruning of that area along the Bay
24 Ridge, those Bay Ridge parks. Can you help me
25 with that issue?

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2 LIAM KAVANAGH: Council Member, we
3 can look at specific locations where we can open
4 up vistas. I don't want to mislead you and think
5 that we can prune thoroughly the whole stretch of
6 shore road to open up all of the, you know,
7 sitting areas to view the waterfront. You know,
8 we do prioritize our tree program, most of our
9 money gets spent on street trees, because that's
10 where the risks are most severe, and that's where
11 the conflicts with the public are most apparent.
12 We have been able, thanks to the additional
13 funding received, to prune more park trees this
14 year than we have in the past. But Shore Road is
15 a long stretch, with a lot of trees, and it would
16 be difficult for us to make a commitment at this
17 time to prune the entire length of it. As I said,
18 we can look at specific, you know, critical
19 locations, to provide those view corridors, and if
20 you have suggestions as to where that might be
21 most appropriate, we'd be happy to hear them.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Right.
23 And particularly, beyond the view issue, the
24 scenic view issue, the foliage and the trees
25 really create dangerous places within that, within

1
2 the park itself, because of just the nature of the
3 overgrown trees and foliage that you have there.
4 So, it's in safety issue as well as an aesthetic
5 issue, too. I think you understand what I'm
6 saying.

7 VERONICA WHITE: Yes, I completely
8 understand what you're saying. And my mother
9 lives in - -

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The
11 Commissioner lives in Bay Ridge. You know she--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I know she
13 does. [crosstalk]

14 VERONICA WHITE: Almost as much as
15 I go to Coney Island, Rockaways and Staten Island,
16 but--

17 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: That's why we
18 have so many trees in Bay Ridge.

19 VERONICA WHITE: My mother would
20 say I don't. [laughter]

21 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. Any
22 more questions about Shore Parkway?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: [laughs]
24 One other question about Bay Ridge. And I know
25 I'm meeting with Commissioner Jeffrey, my staff is

1
2 meeting with Commissioner Jeffrey tomorrow. And
3 unfortunately, I can't make that meeting, but I'll
4 tell you about it. About reclaiming the parts of
5 the park that have been used by Transco, by
6 Williams and by others, and we talked about you
7 even saying, "When am I getting my park back?"
8 Are we getting our park back?

9 VERONICA WHITE: We will get our
10 park back. And we will ensure that the gas
11 companies do what they need to do.

12 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: She has six
13 months to get the park back.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Okay.
15 [laughs]

16 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Where she
17 grew up. Okay.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chair.

20 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Council
23 Member Vacca, Dromm and Ferreras, then we have to
24 close it down 'cause I have sanitation waiting for
25 me outside.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you,
3 Commissioner, and thank you for meeting with me
4 yesterday, and with your staff.

5 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Oh, so you
6 have to have her answer the questions.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I'll ask a
8 question, give me a minute. You people had 20
9 minutes each, give me two minutes. Let me ask you
10 something. I did want to confirm our conversation
11 about tree stumps. You are seeking money from the
12 Council for tree stump removal?

13 VERONICA WHITE: Every year, in
14 your generosity, you've given us \$2 million for
15 numerous years, for us to do tree pruning. We
16 were able to get \$2 million in the January plan,
17 January budget, from the Mayor, so we're not
18 asking for that this year. So we came in with a
19 different request, which is \$2 million for tree
20 stump removal, so we can try to get on top of that
21 problem.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: How many
23 tree stumps do we have awaiting removal? I know
24 in my district I have hundreds, some of them you
25 can stand on top of, they're like eight feet tall.

1
2 VERONICA WHITE: Thousands and
3 thousands. We--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thousands of
5 tree stumps.

6 VERONICA WHITE: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay,
8 because there are some that now the sidewalk is
9 coming up, and they themselves are eight feet
10 high. So, I'm, you're asking for \$2 million, will
11 that reduce the backlog? Or what is the backlog
12 now? You said several thousand, but how long does
13 it take to remove a tree stump? Are you removing
14 tree stumps? Is there a contract right now--

15 LIAM KAVANAGH: When you're doing a
16 tree stump--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --to remove
18 tree stumps?

19 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, we do remove
20 tree stumps, we remove tree stumps when we plant
21 new trees, of course, and we do remove them for
22 other purposes. We remove in the neighborhood, I
23 would say of about 3,000 in the course of a year.
24 We have a backlog in the neighborhood of 25,000-
25 30,000 tree stumps around--

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: 25,000-
3 30,000 tree stumps backlogged.

4 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: That's a
6 lot.

7 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, it is.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: \$2 million
9 will make a significant dent in that, or do you
10 have an estimate of what kind of dent we're making
11 with that \$2 million, should the Council come up
12 with the money?

13 LIAM KAVANAGH: \$2 million will
14 make a significant dent. I can't do the math in
15 my head, but [laughs] but it--

16 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: It will make
17 a difference.

18 LIAM KAVANAGH: It will make a
19 difference, yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay, well
21 we're going to look at that, but we need more
22 specifics from you, because before we allocate--

23 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

24 VERONICA WHITE: It's about \$250 a
25 stump. So, the more money there is with it, the

1
2 more we can get out, but we thought that was a
3 reasonable request and could get us on track to
4 like getting--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Yeah.

6 VERONICA WHITE: --to start dealing
7 with this problem.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I'd like to
9 go--

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The Bronx has
11 the least amount of tree stumps.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: No. I'd
13 like to know where that gets us, if we give the
14 money. My next statement to you is this: I
15 wanted to talk about PEP. I've always felt that
16 my borough did not receive its fair share of
17 allocation of PEP people; yet, we have the largest
18 park in the City of New York, Pelham Bay Park, and
19 a whole host of other local parks and playgrounds.
20 I especially have a barbecuing problem in my
21 district. We have signs saying "No barbecuing,"
22 because it's dangerous to do so, and in some parks
23 we have designated barbecuing areas, and other
24 parks we don't have them for very specific
25 reasons. Getting enforcement has been very

1
2 difficult, I'm talking specifically of Bronx Park
3 East, north and south of Pelham Parkway. So, what
4 can we do this year, now that you've gotten an
5 increase in Parks enforcement people, are you
6 committed to better enforcing the barbecuing
7 regulations that exist.

8 VERONICA WHITE: Absolutely. We
9 currently only have twelve, but we'll be adding 16
10 to the Borough of The Bronx, for a total of 28,
11 which is going to vastly improve our ability to
12 monitor the situation, to educate people and to
13 issue summons - -

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA:
15 [interposing] You'll have 28 in The Bronx.

16 VERONICA WHITE: That's right.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: How many
18 will you have in Manhattan?

19 VERONICA WHITE: 28.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Oh.

21 VERONICA WHITE: But let me clarify
22 that. There's 28 that are in city funded
23 positions. There are also grant funded positions,
24 for example, in the Hudson River Park and the
25 Battery Park City Authority grant funded

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2 positions. But we in the Parks Department are
3 funding 28 in The Bronx, 28 in Manhattan, 28 on
4 Staten Island, the good Council Member's not here,
5 because then he would have to say that we're
6 giving 30--

7 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: That's what
8 I'll relay to him.

9 VERONICA WHITE: --34 in Brooklyn,
10 no, it's good he's not here, 34 in Brooklyn and 34
11 in Queens. So, based on obviously utilization of
12 parks, numbers of people, numbers of parks, etc.,
13 etc.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay, I need
15 you to look at those statistics from last year,
16 the 311 complaints that went in at Bronx Park
17 East, especially because that was my main concern.

18 VERONICA WHITE: We'll prioritize
19 these.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: And in
21 Pelham Bay Park, I do have designated areas, which
22 are fine, but outside the designated areas, we
23 want enforcement. So we call upon you to look at
24 that this summer before we get into the summer.

25 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: If we wait
3 too long for the summer to go, then it becomes an
4 uncontrollable situation. We have to lay down the
5 law early on in the season.

6 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you,
8 Commissioner.

9 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right,
10 Council Member Vacca, thank you very much. And
11 lesson we learned is don't barbecue in Council
12 Member Vacca's district. [laughter] Council
13 Member Dromm.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: In the
15 undesignated areas, Mr. Chair.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you
17 very much. I have a few questions regarding
18 Flushing Meadows, Corona Park. Number one, in
19 previous hearings we've heard that the United
20 States Tennis Association contributes
21 approximately \$2.5 million to the City, that--or
22 returns to the City, I'm not exactly sure how you
23 get that money. Can you explain to me how you do
24 it? And what it is used for?

25 LIAM KAVANAGH: It's a license

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2 payment, as part of their license agreement with
3 the City. It's based on attendance and revenue
4 and it goes to the City's general fund.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: But it's
6 always \$2.5 million?

7 LIAM KAVANAGH: I think there's
8 some variation depending on those factors, on
9 attendance and--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: But in that
11 area.

12 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, and
14 how is that money used? Is that money used
15 directly for reconstruction in Flushing Meadows,
16 Corona Park?

17 LIAM KAVANAGH: No, it goes to the
18 City's general fund.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So it's just
20 distributed throughout the whole system.

21 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So, what
23 type of reconstruction plans are included in the
24 capital budget? I noticed that overall, you have
25 a \$1 billion budget up until 2017. \$237.6 million

1
2 in '14. Of that \$237.6, how much will be used in
3 Flushing Meadows, Corona Park?

4 VERONICA WHITE: I don't have that
5 number in front of me, and I will look it up.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, 'cause
7 you know, we're going to be having a hearing in
8 the next week or so--

9 VERONICA WHITE: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And I would
11 hope that by that time you'd be able to give us--

12 VERONICA WHITE: We'll have it all.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --some of
14 those figures.

15 VERONICA WHITE: We'll have all the
16 information.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay. What
18 is the annual budget for Flushing Meadows, Corona
19 Park? Is there a budget for the flagship parks
20 that you dedicate to resources? The reason why
21 I'm asking this is because as you know, it's been
22 discussed in the media, etc., so forth and so on,
23 the park is completely run down and really is in
24 desperate need of reconstruction in many, many
25 areas, and I'm very concerned about how they, the

1
2 \$2.5 million from the tennis, the Shea Stadium, or
3 I should say, the Citi Field, the Mets, how that
4 money's being used, and when we will take some of
5 that money to put back into the reconstruction of
6 Flushing Meadows, Corona Park.

7 VERONICA WHITE: Most of the
8 resources for our parks are shared across the
9 borough. So, it's, for example, people could be
10 working in the park. Not everyone is committed to
11 being in a particular park for maintenance and
12 operations all the time. But I will get you the
13 number and especially for the next hearing next
14 week, for each of the operating expenses for that
15 park.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And next
17 week you'll have some information in terms of what
18 your future plans are for the use of that park?

19 VERONICA WHITE: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Will that
21 include any revenue that is coming in from Major
22 League Soccer? Is there any plan to have any
23 revenue coming in from Major League Soccer? For
24 the building of a stadium in Flushing Meadows,
25 Corona Park?

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2 VERONICA WHITE: So, the Economic
3 Development Corporation's leading conversations
4 with soccer and with that, and they've made other
5 conversations, including with some Council people
6 and with the community, and with our Parks
7 Administrator, Janice Melnick, about forming a
8 conservancy for Flushing Meadow, and what that
9 would mean and how we would be able to raise money
10 and support the additional city funds for the
11 park.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So at this
13 point, there is no discussion in terms of any
14 contribution from Major League Soccer to the Parks
15 Department budget? That's include in your
16 projections for 2014?

17 VERONICA WHITE: I wouldn't say
18 there's no discussion, there are many discussions
19 going on about soccer, and - -

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM:
21 [interposing] But there's nothing concretely in
22 the budget in terms of expected revenue--from
23 either sale of the land for, to the soccer stadium
24 for this use of the soccer stadium?

25 VERONICA WHITE: Been nothing

1
2 finalized for building the soccer stadium in the
3 park at this point.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So there's
5 no plans at this point.

6 LIAM KAVANAGH: And there will not
7 be a sale of land.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, and
9 what is the actual--what?

10 LIAM KAVANAGH: There will not be a
11 sale of land.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: There will
13 never be a sale of that land. Okay. Will there
14 be a usage?

15 LIAM KAVANAGH: Yes, I think the--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And what's
17 the amount of fee for that?

18 LIAM KAVANAGH: The plan
19 contemplates a lease to allow the construction of
20 the stadium.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: How much
22 would that lease be?

23 LIAM KAVANAGH: With the term of
24 the lease, I don't know how long a lease would
25 have to last.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: More than a
3 dollar?

4 LIAM KAVANAGH: Oh, no, in terms of
5 the dollar amounts, no, I don't know.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And so but
7 will the lease for the use of the land, in
8 anticipation of what you're putting into the
9 budget, your considerations for the budget, will
10 leasing of that land be for more than a dollar a
11 year?

12 LIAM KAVANAGH: I don't know what
13 the terms of the lease would be.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: What about
15 for Shea Stadium and Citi Field? What are they
16 paying in rent to the City?

17 LIAM KAVANAGH: They no longer pay
18 revenues to the City under the agreement under
19 which City Field was built. There is a series of
20 agreements in terms of shifting the maintenance
21 responsibilities for the stadium from the City to
22 the Mets.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So the Mets
24 pay nothing for that land.

25 LIAM KAVANAGH: As far as I know,

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they don't.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And what about for the parking lot?

LIAM KAVANAGH: Excuse me?

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: The parking lot adjacent to Shea Stadium, do they pay any money for the use of that parking lot? That's still considered parkland, that's still part of Flushing Meadows, Corona Park.

LIAM KAVANAGH: It's still, right to the parking lot were assigned to the Mets as part of the agreement to rebuild, to build Citi Field.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Council Member, could you sum up?

VERONICA WHITE: We thought this was next week's hearing.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Could you sum up--

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: - -

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing] I've got Sanitation waiting, I'm running way behind schedule.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Sure. Just

1
2 to sum up, these questions will be brought up
3 again at the next hearing. But I would, I'm very
4 interested in knowing if in fact the City plans to
5 move forward with a mall on the Citi Field parking
6 lot, what would the rent be to the Wilpons or to
7 related, I guess, for the use of that parking lot
8 to build a mall?

9 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, thank
10 you.

11 VERONICA WHITE: Well, that would
12 be an EDC question.

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: This is not
14 for this hearing, this is the budget that is - -

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: No, this is
16 all budget related, 'cause if they would get the
17 money in the budget.

18 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah, but
19 it's all--it's all a land use issue that will be
20 negotiated. It's not in the budget, you can't
21 forecast for something that's not in the budget,
22 you can't forecast something that might happen.
23 This is all projections, it's something that is
24 nowhere in the budget, and it's--that's why we
25 have--

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Well, that's
3 what I thought the budget is, is a forecast for
4 the future.

5 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: No, it's not
6 a forecast for things that could or could not
7 happen, it's--we don't know what's going to happen
8 yet, and they're in negotiations with the--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, well
10 I'd have to disagree with you on that, Chair.

11 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.
12 Council Member Julissa Ferreras is not here,
13 Council Member Tish James has a quick question.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yeah. Some
15 comments, because we don't have time for
16 questions. One, I'm obviously concerned about the
17 fact that the Executive Budget does not include
18 approximately \$19.2 million provided by the City
19 Council to restore cuts to the seasonal workers,
20 as well as to the job training participants, the
21 Playground Associates, as well as for employees to
22 cover the City pools. And I would hope that the
23 Administration would reconsider. I want to also
24 ask you whether or not there's funds in the budget
25 for the maintenance of green streets citywide. I

1
2 know there's funds, there's capital funds for
3 construction. Is there funds, increased funds for
4 maintenance?

5 LIAM KAVANAGH: There are funds for
6 maintaining green streets in every borough.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. And
8 second question, is with regards to pruning of
9 trees--

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Oh, we had a
11 whole thing on this, we're back to tree pruning.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Well, let me
13 just say that I hope that this City Council, we
14 join together and honor your request for \$2
15 million for the treening of prune--the pruning of
16 trees, which is a priority in my district. And
17 last but not least, I received a number of calls,
18 I think it was two weeks ago, regarding a major
19 event in Prospect Park, called Ooga-Mooga
20 [phonetic] or Mooga-Wooga [phonetic], whatever it
21 was called. And they tell me that the park was
22 destroyed, they tell me that there was a lack of
23 access to the park, they tell me that it was the
24 privatization of a public park. The question that
25 I have is, how much did we, did the Parks

1 Department receive for Googa-Mooga [phonetic].

2 VERONICA WHITE: The Parks

3 Department itself didn't receive anything. And
4 basically the event was held for some, I believe
5 close to 40--

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: What was the
7 title? What was the title of that event? Was it
8 Googa-Mooga?

9 VERONICA WHITE: Yeah, I think you
10 have it right.

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay.

12 VERONICA WHITE: Some close to
13 40,000 people were there, enjoying the food and
14 the music. Other people don't, much of what we do
15 at the Parks Department I think at times is try to
16 make those decisions and help people in terms of
17 different areas where people want music and areas
18 where people don't want music, and enforcement of
19 where there's barbecues and no barbecues, etc., in
20 many of those decisions. The Prospect Park
21 Alliance, which is a nonprofit that helps us run
22 the park, came forward and asked if they could
23 hold this event, which they had hosted last year,
24 and we approved them hosting that event. It was
25

1
2 not done for money, very small sum of money went
3 to the Prospect Park. Basically, the event was
4 hosted because it was a way of certain people
5 coming in and joining the park and it's the
6 responsibility of the organizers to put the park
7 back in the shape it was when they started the
8 event.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And as far as
10 you know, did they do that? My understanding is
11 that they did not.

12 VERONICA WHITE: No, they are doing
13 that.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. So, all
15 that I'm saying is I know it was very popular,
16 it's very popular in my district, it's popular in
17 Park Slope, it was, it's a wonderful event. There
18 was just some concerns from residents from Park
19 Slope, as well as in my district, with respect to
20 the condition of the park after the event was
21 over. And in addition to that, the concept of
22 privatizing our parks. So, obviously, that
23 continues to be a concern. I know the Chair,
24 Melissa Mark-Viverito, in our absence has held
25 hearings on it. I recognize it's a balancing act

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2 and I also recognize that it's an attempt to raise
3 some funds for a not-for-profit, but at the same
4 time, denying access to the general public, which
5 continues to remain an issue and a concern of this
6 Council Member. And I thank you for your public
7 service.

8 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. All
9 right, I want to thank you, Commissioner, but
10 before you go, I just want to thank you, the
11 entire Parks Department, for what you have done in
12 Super Storm Sandy, especially in my district, and
13 across the City, we appreciate all that you do. I
14 know we get a little carried away at times, you
15 know, my apologies, but it's very sincere to my
16 heart about what goes on. You do a good job, and
17 I just want to thank my Borough Commissioner
18 Jeffries, he does spectacular job in Brooklyn.
19 And we want to thank you, we'll take a two minute
20 recess, and we'll begin Sanitation. Thank you
21 very much.

22 VERONICA WHITE: Thank you, Chair
23 Recchia, and all Council Members.

24 [pause, background noise]

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

1 [pause, background noise] Everybody ready? Okay.
2 We will now resume the City Council hearing on the
3 Mayor's Executive Budget, FY 2014. The Finance
4 Committee and the Committee on Parks and
5 Recreation have just heard from the Department of
6 Parks and Recreation. We now have been joined by
7 the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste
8 Management, chaired by my colleague, Council
9 Member Tish James, to hear from the Department of
10 Sanitation. I will forego an opening statement
11 and will recognize my co-chair, Councilwoman Tish
12 James.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you, Mr.
15 Chair. Good afternoon, my name is Letitia James,
16 Chair of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid
17 Waste Management. Welcome to our hearing on the
18 Fiscal 2014 Executive Budget. Before we begin, I
19 guess we'd like to acknowledge some of my
20 colleagues: Council Member Nelson, from
21 Manhattan; Council--from Brooklyn, excuse me;
22 Council Member Reyna from Brooklyn; and Council
23 Member Greenfield from Brooklyn; and Council
24 Member Koppell--

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Brooklyn is

1
2 in the house.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Well, and
4 excepting one from The Bronx. Today, we will hear
5 testimony from the Department of Sanitation about
6 its expense and capital executive budget actions,
7 and general agency operations. The Department's
8 May capital commitment plan includes \$1.5 billion
9 in Fiscal 2013 to 2017, including City and non-
10 City funds. This represents 3.4 percent of the
11 City's total \$44.5 billion planned for Fiscal 2013
12 to 2017. The agency's May capital plan for Fiscal
13 2013 to 2017 is \$4 million less than their
14 February commitment plan, less than a one percent
15 difference. The Department's Fiscal 2014
16 Executive Expense Budget is approximately \$1.4
17 billion, including City and non-City funds, which
18 is \$71.7 million more than the Fiscal 2013 adopted
19 budget. This largely reflects the costs
20 associated with the North Shore Marine Transfer
21 Station in Queens, and the Hamilton Avenue Marine
22 Transfer Station in Brooklyn, which shall begin
23 operation in mid- and late-2013, respectively. It
24 also reflects the end of a multi-year civilian
25 hiring freeze and the ability of the Department to

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2 fill positions made vacant by attrition, and I'm
3 happy about that. The \$1.4 billion Fiscal 2014
4 Executive Budget is \$2.4 million more than was
5 anticipated in the Fiscal 2014 Preliminary Budget,
6 which is less than one percent change, which is a
7 less than one percent change. The Committee looks
8 forward to hearing from the Department about
9 several critical issues, including any updates on
10 Super Storm Sandy repairs and federal
11 reimbursements, how operations will change when
12 the two marine transfer stations come online, and
13 an updated construction timeline for the remaining
14 marine transfer stations required as part of the
15 2006 solid waste management plan. And with that,
16 Commissioner Doherty, you may begin your
17 testimony. And I thank you.

18 JOHN DOHERTY: Thank you. Good
19 afternoon, Chairman Recchia and Chairman James.
20 I'm John Doherty, Sanitation Commissioner. With
21 me today is to my extreme right is Ron Gonen,
22 Deputy Commissioner for Sustainability and
23 Recycling; Buddy Sullivan, the Deputy
24 Commissioner, First Deputy Commissioner for
25 Operation; and to my left is Larry Cipollina,

1 Deputy Commissioner for Administration and
2 Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify
3 on the Department's expense and capital portions
4 of the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2014 Executive Budget.
5 The Fiscal 2014 Executive Budget allocates \$1.4
6 billion in operating funds that will allow the
7 Department to continue its delivery of high level
8 core services to residents and the public without
9 any service changes and necessary staffing. The
10 Department's capital portion of the FY'14
11 Executive Budget is approximately \$537 million, of
12 which \$412 million is for construction, \$87.7
13 million is replacement of equipment and \$37
14 million is for new technology. In addition to our
15 ongoing capital projects that are funded in prior
16 years, funding for new, large scale apartment
17 projects in FY'14 will include the construction of
18 a new garage for Manhattan District 6, 6A and 8 on
19 East 25th Street; demolition on the East Side;
20 demolition of the Ganzer [phonetic] Street Marine
21 Transfer Station; and refurbishment of the West
22 59th Street Marine Transfer Station. In long term
23 planning and sustainability, New York City's
24 managing the largest waste stream, and requires
25

1 innovative excellence in performance and
2 continuous improvement in everything we do. In
3 its way over the next seven--over the next seven
4 months, it's why over the next seven months, we
5 will be putting forth an aggressive recycling
6 sustainability agenda to significantly update the
7 Department's curbside recycling. Collection
8 programs, which as you know, serve more households
9 and more high rise, multi-family dwellings than
10 any other program in the nation. And while it is
11 exciting for us and for the public, it also
12 creates some challenges that will require ongoing
13 discussions and collaboration with the Council in
14 order to accomplish these initiatives, some of
15 which you are already familiar with. By
16 committing to advancing our sustainability
17 development initiatives over the next seven
18 months, together we will transform New York City
19 into a global model for sustainability and
20 recycling, and create a proud legacy for the next
21 generation of New Yorkers to build upon. Going
22 forward in FY'14, we will continue our ambitious
23 recycling/sustainability agenda that will include
24 expanding recycling pickups to now include rigid
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2 plastics, as Mayor Bloomberg announced last month;
3 expending organic and food scrap drop-off points
4 at green markets; improving recycling diversion
5 rates in low income areas. Launching this summer,
6 a new program called, "eCycle," that will become
7 the most expansive e-waste collection service
8 provided by any city in North America at no cost
9 to taxpayers, adding more public recycling bins to
10 all five boroughs. Right now, we have just over
11 1,200 sets of bins out there, and we're going to
12 continue expanding beyond that. So we've made
13 major accomplishments this past this six months,
14 and getting more baskets out there. We'll also be
15 increasing the number of textile and clothing
16 drop-off sites in buildings and public spaces,
17 holding at least one safe disposal event for
18 household hazardous waste in each borough, and
19 seeking legislation to restrict the use of
20 expanded poly-Styrofoam, prompt separate organic
21 collection from food establishments, and create
22 extended producer responsibility and stewardship
23 programs. As you know, this month we began
24 voluntary pilot residential organics collection
25 program in a portion of Staten Island 1, the north

1 shore of Staten Island. There were over 32
2 households were furnished with special collection
3 bins by the Department at no cost to them. We
4 will continue this important pilot in FY'14 and
5 plan to extend the voluntary program to other
6 boroughs, studying the amount of tonnage
7 collected, the household participation rates,
8 together with implementations that implements in
9 this program, impediments to this program, will
10 demonstrate to us whether we can successfully
11 implement an organic successful separate program
12 citywide, in a cost effective way. We'll also
13 expand a similar pilot organics collection program
14 that we are presently conducting in 68 public
15 schools in Brooklyn and Manhattan at 25 schools on
16 Staten Island. So far, the diversion percentage
17 in the participating schools has more than
18 doubled, with diversion rates in Manhattan schools
19 increasing to 34 percent and Brooklyn schools to
20 38 percent. We've also, we are also collecting
21 organics voluntarily at two homeless service
22 locations in Brooklyn, and the Helena high rise
23 residential building in Manhattan. And will soon
24 add the Morningside Garden housing complex on
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124th Street and Morningside Heights to the program. We will continue to add additional schools in Fiscal '14 and as the demand for other high rise apartment buildings for organics collection continues to grow, we will capitalize on this momentum and opportunity to further expand the programs. I am pleased to report that this August, the new South Brooklyn Marine Terminal Recycling Processing Facility, operated by Simms Municipal Recycling of New York, will begin processing metal, glass and plastic and mixed paper delivered by the Department pursuant to a long term contract. Most of the material delivered to this facility and the processed material that leaves it, will be transported by barge. Department's long term and interim export operations maintain, is maintained ongoing. During the first seven months of Fiscal '13, the Department collected and exported 1.925 million tons of Department managed waste at a cost of \$177.9 million. The FY'14 budget allocated \$336 million in exporting tipping fees for the Department to continue its current export operation. Advancing in a long term export

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2 infrastructure of the solid waste management plan
3 continues. We anticipate construction of both
4 Hamilton Avenue Marine Transfer Station and
5 Brooklyn, in Brooklyn, and the North Shore Marine
6 Transfer Station in Queens, and we will completed,
7 it should be completed by the first half of Fiscal
8 2014. Construction of the East 91st Street Marine
9 Transfer Station has commenced and we expect
10 construction of this facility to be completed in
11 2016. The Department of Design and Construction
12 has also issued a competitive bid solicitation for
13 construction of the Southwest Brooklyn MTS, and we
14 expect an award to be made in the near future. A
15 demolition contract for the existing facilities on
16 the site of the new Ganzer Street Marine Transfer
17 Station and environmental center is expected to be
18 awarded in Fiscal '14, which will take
19 approximately 24 months to complete. As far as
20 our green fleet goes, as you know, the
21 Department's fleet is among the greenest in the
22 United States. In FY'13, Department purchased and
23 is awaiting delivery of 18 pure electric Nissan
24 Leaf passenger vehicles, and 23 new CNG powered
25 Mac collection trucks that will be in service in

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2 early 2014. We also put into service 15 new
3 diesel powered production based hybrid, hydraulic
4 collection trucks, with 32 additional trucks on
5 order. In FY'14, Department will install 18
6 additional electric voltage chargers at the
7 district facilities for a total of 49 for fleet
8 charges for our electric vehicles. That will be
9 available at Department facilities citywide. We
10 will also continue to phase out the--phase in the
11 B20 diesel fuel citywide, as a seasonal basis on
12 all district, at all our district facilities from
13 April to November, and from November through March
14 during our winter season we'll be using B5, which
15 will test on B20 and add to, so that we see how it
16 works, and I'd like to go all year round with
17 that. The FY'14 Executive Budget ensures that the
18 Department, to continue maintaining the City's
19 highest level of street cleanliness, the City
20 began tracking it 38 years ago. Through April of
21 the current fiscal year, the scorecard rating for
22 the City averaged 94.6 percent, exclusive of
23 November rating, in the hurricane impacted areas
24 which were not related to the--were not rated in
25 the month of November. Also during this period,

1 no district had a rating that averages less than
2 80 percent of the streets being acceptably clean.
3 During Hurricane Sandy clean-up operations,
4 Department removed approximately 474,000 tons of
5 debris from the impacted areas of the City, in
6 addition to an additional 27,000 tons of tree
7 debris. We are continuing to seek reimbursement
8 from FEMA for all eligible costs and to-date we've
9 submitted to them \$129.4 million in claims.
10 Currently, the Department has received \$28--\$82,
11 rather, \$82.8 million from FEMA. The FY'14 budget
12 also allocates \$57.3 million for snow operations.
13 During the past winter of 2012/2013 winter snow
14 operation, we had 24 inches of snow and overall
15 the Department spent \$38 million for snow plowing,
16 road deicing and overtime to handle seasonal,
17 season ten snowstorms. In closing, I would like
18 to thank you for the opportunity today to discuss
19 our current programs and our proposed initiatives
20 to advance the Administration commitment to
21 promoting and ensuring sustainable New York City
22 long into the 21st Century. We also appreciate
23 that the Department, that the Sanitation and Solid
24 Waste Committee, and particularly Chairman James,
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1
2 has always acknowledged and recognized the
3 importance and vital role which the dedicated men
4 in the Department perform daily to keep the
5 communities across New York City clean, healthy
6 and safe. With your assistance and support in the
7 coming months, we also, we can also implement
8 meaningful and groundbreaking changes to our
9 recycling and sustainability programs, that will
10 usher in a new era of environmental stewardship
11 and advance New York City as a global
12 sustainability leader in years to come. My staff
13 and I will be happy to answer any questions you
14 may have.

15 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, thank
16 you, Commissioner. And I'll let my co-chair start
17 off with the questions, and my colleagues have
18 questions. We've been joined by Council Member
19 Koslowitz, Council Member Koppell--

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Gennaro.

21 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: --and
22 Gennaro.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So let me thank
24 you for your kind words. The men and women of
25 DSNY are truly the unsung heroes and clearly

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2 during the Sandy storm, they were the true heroes.
3 And deserve every bit of praise that I have
4 showered them with, as well as you, and all of my
5 colleagues here in the City Council. And in
6 regards to Hurricane Sandy, how much of FEMA
7 reimbursement funds have come through? And how
8 many do you anticipate?

9 JOHN DOHERTY: We got, what'd I
10 tell you before, \$83-\$82 million, \$82.8 million so
11 far. We've asked for \$124 million, so we got \$129
12 million. We're currently working to provide the
13 information that FEMA will need to reimburse us.
14 So, as we get some in, we send it to them, they
15 review it then we get re--we get money back.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Do you
17 anticipate 100 percent reimbursement?

18 JOHN DOHERTY: I definitely do.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. I'm, if
20 you're confident, I'm confident. The waste export
21 budget is now estimated at \$336.2 million a year.
22 What can we do to bring down these costs in the
23 short term and/or in the long term?

24 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, I think you,
25 when you talk about the cost of waste in this

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2 City, the only real long term approach to reducing
3 that \$336 million, or whatever it may be in the
4 out years, is to get more people to recycle. If
5 we can recycle, we don't have to export it, and we
6 reduce our solid waste export budget. So that's
7 where we really have to go. We've made some
8 little changes working with the, our vendors to
9 reduce our budget by about, I don't know, \$6
10 million. But that's only, you know, loose change
11 on the table. We really got to get, reduce the
12 amount of garbage we generate in this City. And
13 that's through recycling.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And what is the
15 status of the RFP on the waste-to-energy proposal?

16 JOHN DOHERTY: The waste-to-energy
17 we're still looking at that. We had two proposals
18 come in, we're still reviewing it, we're working
19 with the vendors that submitted their proposals.
20 But we're not quite ready to come out and
21 announced anything yet. It's been a slow process,
22 we didn't, didn't see as many vendors coming in
23 with new ideas or innovative approaches. There
24 are approaches that we have to look at it closely.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And

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2 Commissioner, last, I think, I believe it was last
3 week, or the week before that, I held a hearing on
4 recycling in public housing. I'm sure you've
5 heard, I was very disappointed, and with the NYCHA
6 administration, because basically they've done
7 absolutely nothing. And wanted to know what we
8 can do to improve the recycling rates in public
9 housing.

10 JOHN DOHERTY: It's an area we know
11 we have to work on, and it has been difficult. I
12 think a lot of it goes to the structure of the
13 buildings that where they are built, and they
14 don't really have the room to store material on
15 the floors. But I'm going to let Ron Gonen talk a
16 little bit about what he's been trying to do with
17 the Housing Authority, and improve recycling.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: How you doing?

19 RON GONEN: You're correct to
20 recognize that there's a major issue. They're one
21 of the reasons that our--

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Could you
23 please state your name for the record, and your
24 position?

25 RON GONEN: Ron Gonen, Deputy

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2 Commissioner of Sanitation for Recycling and
3 Sustainability. Low income neighborhoods in New
4 York City pose a significant issue to us from a
5 recycling and diversion perspective. There's a
6 number of things that we're trying to do. Number
7 one is, we would like a closer partnership with
8 NYCHA, which we're doing our best to work on. To
9 do some other things, we've partnered with
10 Sustainable South Bronx in the South Bronx, and
11 we've been able to form a public/private
12 partnership with Coca-Cola and Sustainable South
13 Bronx, to start trying out a number of different
14 programs in low income neighborhoods that we hope
15 if successful, NYCHA and other areas in the City
16 can emulate.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So I'm not
18 marketing their brand, I'm just, it's kind of warm
19 in here. One of the suggestions that I put out
20 was perhaps selling the recyclables and creating
21 an economic incentive to, for residents, to
22 improve recycling in public housing. What do you,
23 what are your thoughts about that?

24 JOHN DOHERTY: I would, I'd like to
25 answer that. I actually, I mean there is concerns

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2 about that. My personal opinion is that if that
3 helps in getting more recycling out of the Housing
4 Authority, and the people there, we definitely
5 should consider it very seriously.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I would be
7 enthusiastic in joining you with a pilot program,
8 to create economic incentives for residents in
9 public housing, through this, by selling off
10 recycling. And I think it would, I know that it
11 would increase recycling rates. When I brought it
12 back to some residents in Manhattan, as well as
13 Brooklyn, they said if there's some financial
14 incentives, they would definitely recycle.

15 JOHN DOHERTY: I think it's
16 something we can work on with the Housing
17 Authority, and look at it and see how, we can set
18 up a structure to see how that would work. It's
19 not an easy program, but it's something I think we
20 should look at.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I look forward
22 to working with you on that. What is the status
23 of discussions on the ban on Styrofoam?

24 JOHN DOHERTY: Excuse me, I'm
25 sorry.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: The ban on
3 Styrofoam, where are we in negotiations?

4 JOHN DOHERTY: The Administration's
5 looking at it and discussing it with counsel.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: In regards to--
7 back to the waste export budget, which increased,
8 could you explain which waste export contract will
9 be ending once the two MTSS come online, and how
10 they will be phased out as the MTSS are phased in?

11 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, we're not
12 going to stop or end the contracts we have with
13 the vendors right now. A number of them are in
14 Jersey anyway, and we're not looking to go over
15 there, that's for sure. Once the marine transfer
16 stations are opened up. We want to maintain the
17 ability to have, especially in the beginning when
18 we're testing these new marine transfer stations,
19 to make sure the mechanics of it work well, and
20 everything flows, garbage goes in, it's
21 containerized, put on barges, shipped out,
22 containers come back. So we want to test that
23 first before we eliminate them. But there will be
24 a number of transfer stations in Brooklyn and
25 Queens, that we will not be going to, once we are

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2 assured that the transfer stations are oper--I
3 think we'll probably have a couple of months
4 break-in period, before we say, "No more trucks"
5 to a particular cotton vendor we have, at transfer
6 station. But we also want to be careful that we
7 don't run out of capacity should we have an
8 emergency in the City. So we're looking at that.
9 But there'll be big changes in the neighborhoods
10 that are currently seeing the white trucks go to
11 these transfer stations, they won't be seeing 'em
12 shortly after these facilities open up.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Are you
14 concerned about the increased costs related to the
15 MTSSs?

16 JOHN DOHERTY: Do what? I'm sorry.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Are you
18 concerned about the increased costs related to the
19 construction of MTSSs?

20 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, you know,
21 you're always worried about costs, there's no
22 question about it. I mean, we're here to talk
23 about the budget today, and one would like to keep
24 the cost down as much as possible. But you know,
25 we all agree on the solid waste management plan,

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2 we all agree how we're going to address it. And
3 the exporting of marine transfer stations is
4 something that we're going to have to live with
5 for quite a while, I think, until we come up with
6 a better system for waste disposal in the City.
7 Which is going to be a tough haul.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: The Fiscal 2014
9 capital commitment plan includes \$200 million for
10 the construction of a Manhattan district garage on
11 the east side of Manhattan. How is that project
12 being funded and what approvals should--are
13 required?

14 JOHN DOHERTY: That is being funded
15 through the sale of a property where we originally
16 had the garage for Manhattan 6 and 8 on 73rd
17 Street off the East River Drive. We sold that
18 property, the revenue from that is going to fund
19 the construction of the new garage on 25th Street.
20 We currently have to get the ULURP through, and we
21 also have to get approval by City Planning.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And the
23 individual who represents that district is Council
24 Member Garodnick?

25 JOHN DOHERTY: Yes, ma'am.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And have there
3 been discussions with Council Member Garodnick?

4 JOHN DOHERTY: Yes, we have.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. And I
6 noticed in 2014 capital budget, that my sanitation
7 garage is nowhere to be found. Shocking.

8 JOHN DOHERTY: Unfortunately. I
9 wish we could be saying that, the two of us.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So do you think
11 that how--how long will it take before the garages
12 will be funded in the capital plan?

13 JOHN DOHERTY: You know, you know,
14 it's going to fall into the next administration.
15 There's going to be a lot determined by how the
16 revenue goes in New York City. You know, what are
17 we going to look like from a financial point of
18 view. I think if things improve in the City, like
19 in the country, we're going to be in a little
20 better shape, the City itself will be in a better
21 shape. And that'll something that'll be addressed
22 at that time, I think. You know. But right now
23 it's not in our budget, it's not in the out years,
24 and actually some of the capital numbers are
25 getting a little smaller for us, too, on the

1
2 equipment side.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Commissioner,
4 we, you and I have had a great relationship and I
5 wanted to work together on our, on the garage in
6 my district. It's rather unfortunate that it's
7 going to have to carry over to the next
8 administration. But I wish you the best of luck.
9 Council Member Greenfield.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank
11 you, Madam Chairman. Thank you, Commissioner.
12 First I just want to start off by saying that I
13 love the Sanitation Department. Overall, I think
14 you guys do great work, you work very hard, you're
15 underpaid.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That sounds
17 like a setup.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: You
19 need more--it sounds like what?

20 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah, now he
21 loves them after the snowstorm. Hear you say that
22 two years ago! [laughter]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: No, I
24 don't think I was that kind two years ago. We
25 should go to the tape. And I certainly don't see

1 Council Member James and her chains, so [laughter]
2 I think we're having a better day. Not to worry.
3 I think she framed it. What did you do with those
4 chains, Tish? [background comment] You gave them
5 back to Sanitation. Good. Commissioner wants to
6 know exactly who in Sanitation gave them to you in
7 the first place, but we'll have that conversation
8 offline. No, seriously, I think you guys do great
9 work, especially in my district, overall,
10 community board 12, district, the district 12,
11 district 11, district 14, not so happy, but we'll
12 chat about that in a moment. But overall, they
13 really work very hard and I'm really very
14 grateful. And so I want to--I certainly want to
15 thank you for that. I, my, one of my biggest
16 concerns, this is a little bit more pragmatic, and
17 I know this is one of your big concerns, as well,
18 has to do with cleanliness of the actual streets.
19 In my district, it's very challenging. I actually
20 believe the reason it's so challenging is we, it
21 goes back to some old zoning regulations, which
22 allowed for a massive population growth within the
23 community, and so we literally have, you know, ten
24 people living in two bedroom apartments, and so
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2 really what we're doing is we're manufacturing
3 trash. And today, we're really struggling to keep
4 up with that, and we have the traffic issues and
5 whatnot. And we really have tried to work on it.
6 We started a program, first time in my district,
7 where we have folks that we've hired, Midwood
8 Development, to come out and to clean certain
9 areas, in terms of the commercial areas. As you
10 know, I put in money for the big belly trashcans;
11 unfortunately, and I still don't understand this,
12 but somehow OMB rejected it, even after I put it
13 in. But I just saw that in Times Square, the
14 Mayor announced that the big bellies were being
15 introduced. So, on that particular point, do you
16 know what happened with that big belly? Did OMB
17 change their mind? I'm happy to put it in again.
18 Are you familiar with that?

19 JOHN DOHERTY: I'm familiar with
20 it. That's a, the Bond Council's issue, at OMB.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: It's
22 the what? I'm sorry.

23 JOHN DOHERTY: It' the Bond Council
24 issue in OMB on whether that money you want to put
25 in for the purchase of them would be covered under

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the capital budget.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

JOHN DOHERTY: I believe the money you were going to spend on it was capital money.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Sure. So the money that was going in Times Square, there was that big press release where Mayor Bloomberg was there--

JOHN DOHERTY: That was--

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: That wasn't city money?

JOHN DOHERTY: No, that was purchased by--there was funding given to them by Alcoa, who has a logo on it, in conjunction with the Times Square Alliance, the Times Square BID.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay, I do say it's a little bit ironic, though, that as a Council Member, I've tried repeated years to put the money in and they say no, and then the Mayor holds a bit press conference to announce how great it is that big bellies are coming into Times Square. But you know, in Brooklyn, we're rejecting them. I know it's not you, it's OMB, so I'll, I am not, certainly not complaining to you.

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2 But to the extent that OMB listens to this stuff,
3 I know they send spies to these meetings. They
4 could take it back that we'd like for big bellies
5 to capitally eligible. I think that would be
6 good. But I do have concerns specifically about a
7 couple of specific issues. The first is, and also
8 I'm not convinced that it's your agency, it has to
9 do with the ratings, I guess we call them
10 scorecards of the different sectors in the
11 districts. And so, one of the sectors in my
12 district that consistently gets rated the lowest.
13 I believe is a sector, Sector 3, in BK 12, and you
14 know it well, 'cause I'm sure you know it by heart
15 which districts are clean or not. And it's
16 consistently scored one of the lowest in New York
17 City. Now what's interesting about this is, we
18 looked at that and it was a little bit surprising,
19 'cause my office is, you know, is sort of right on
20 the corner of the sector of this district. And
21 recently, we actually did a walkthrough with
22 Sanitation officials, and what we actually found
23 was that overall, in terms of the area, it's
24 actually not bad. I mean, pretty clean. And I
25 walk through, what I found was, which is

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2 interesting, is that the sector's a very large
3 sector. And it's actually made up of different
4 neighborhoods. Right? And so, I'm not being
5 critical, god forbid, of anyone else's
6 neighborhood, but the neighborhood that I actually
7 represent, which is predominately BK12, was pretty
8 clean. But the neighborhood that was a little
9 further up, and I'm not going to call them out,
10 but it's not in my district, and so obviously I
11 have a limited impact on what I can do there, it's
12 actually, this is not so clean.

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Council
14 Member--it's a budget hearing. Talk about the
15 budget.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: This is
17 related to the budget, because we, it's a resource
18 question in terms of the resources necessary.
19 Counselor, as a fellow attorney, do you really
20 think you can ask me any question that I will not
21 somehow get it back to being on a budget issue? I
22 could--believe me, I will link it back I assure
23 you, Mr. Chairman. But I guess the question is a
24 very serious question. Is it possible to break it
25 down more than just that sector? 'Cause it seems

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2 like in that particular case, in my district, it's
3 sort of all getting wrapped up into one
4 neighborhood, and I am a little bit concerned
5 about that.

6 JOHN DOHERTY: No, I don't think
7 so, I mean, it's all based on historical data
8 we've been collecting over the years, and we've
9 really broken the district down into, in that
10 case, in District 12, into four sections. So,
11 we've--we can't really subdivide it any more than
12 that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.
14 I would just ask, and I understand that, I would
15 just ask to keep in mind that consideration. And
16 I would once again welcome your staff to come and
17 check it out. If you will notice that our
18 section, my district, as part of that sector, is
19 actually relatively clean. I think the other
20 portion, and I think we're just getting thrown in
21 with the mix, and therefore I'm concerned that as
22 a result, and this relates to the budget, Mr.
23 Chairman, that that sector of the district is now
24 being targeted for fines, because I understand
25 that's a normal practice where obviously a

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2 neighborhood that's not clean, the Sanitation
3 Department will then target it for fines. And I'm
4 concerned that that's happening. And I'm not
5 convinced that that's fair because I do believe
6 that at least that portion of the sector, the
7 Borough Park portion of sector three is actually
8 relatively clean. So I'd ask that you look into
9 that.

10 JOHN DOHERTY: I want to continue
11 to work with you on those issues over there you
12 just brought up, so we'll continue looking at it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: And
14 I'm, and as you know, and I commend you on that,
15 I'm committed to it as much as you are, and I'm a
16 big believer in keeping our streets clean, and I'm
17 willing to put as many resources in. As you know,
18 I've actually put resources in, in terms of trucks
19 and the like. My next question is the basket
20 collections. Very big issue, a lot of complaints,
21 and honestly, I'll tell you, you know, in BK12,
22 Superintendent McElroy has been very responsive
23 and BK11's superintendent, Superintendent Mondella
24 [phonetic], very responsive. BK14, I hate to do
25 this to talk, but honestly, we haven't had much

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2 response here or cooperation from this on this
3 issue. We've got massive overflowing garbage on
4 Avenue J and Avenue M. And my understanding is
5 that it is a budget issue, Mr. Chairman, as to why
6 it is that these are not regularly picked up and I
7 routinely see bags and bags that are lying there.
8 It's a commercial district, it impacts people's
9 interest in going out for coffee or ice cream or
10 restaurants. You know, if you have to walk down
11 the street, quite frankly, and you walk into a
12 restaurant, and you have to jump through trash,
13 and there is a rat scurrying through it, it's not
14 a very appetizing situation, of course. Is there
15 any--I mean, is it really completely budget? Is
16 there anything else that we can do about it? I
17 mean, what can we do, myself as a Council Member?

18 JOHN DOHERTY: I mean--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Can I
20 do anything? Can we purchase another truck? I
21 mean, I'm being serious about this. I want to
22 work with you. I'm not blaming you, I just really
23 want to work with you to see what we can do about
24 the situation.

25 JOHN DOHERTY: The issue is not the

1
2 truck so much as it is the personnel, and having
3 that in the budget. I mean, unfortunately, I
4 agree with you that we probably would like to have
5 more basket service there, and there's a number of
6 areas around this city I'd like to see more basket
7 service. One of our biggest problem is the misuse
8 of the litter baskets, not, you know, not used
9 just for, you know, light litter that people would
10 have. A lot of people throw their residential
11 waste in there, and in some cases that we even get
12 business waste in there. And that's one of our
13 problems. But having said that, unfortunately
14 there's nothing in the budget. If you can get a
15 little money in the budget, I'd greatly appreciate
16 it.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah, I
18 don't speak with the Mayor as often as you do.
19 [laughter] So, you might want to put in a good
20 word. But seriously, I mean, that leaves--and to
21 speak to your other point, I have no problem
22 actually funding things like cameras to catch
23 people who are violating and dumping trash in the-
24 -residential trash. I think that's perfectly
25 legitimate and quite frankly, if that's something

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2 that you wanted to do, I don't want to have, like
3 we had last year, where I put money and the money
4 went nowhere. If that's something that you're
5 willing to do, I'm happy to do it with you. Could
6 you use sort of like cameras to capture the
7 violators to prevent that? But are there any
8 other possibilities? I mean, 'cause the situation
9 right now is really just not acceptable. And I
10 understand that there's a budget crunch, but these
11 folks are paying crazy amounts of money for
12 commercial rents, and people are trying to go out
13 for dinner, and it's just really impacting, and
14 people are actually telling me, "I don't want to
15 have dinner in my own district, I want to go
16 Manhattan, because in Manhattan it's clean."
17 While on Avenue J, I got to walk through trash to
18 go get some pizza. So, it's bad for the economy.

19 JOHN DOHERTY: Yeah. I'd like to,
20 you know, work with you, try a camera. Not that
21 we're going to be able to give 'em a summons,
22 because we'd need a whole new violation for that.
23 But I think just to see what people are doing out
24 on the street, may lead us into some new ideas.
25 It's worth probably doing. The other thing of it,

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2 we've got to continue to work with the business
3 people on the Avenues where there's a problem, to
4 see if they'll adopt a basket, where we'll give
5 them the liner to put in that basket, and when it
6 becomes, you know, almost full, take it out, tie
7 it, leave it next to the basket. Or at least make
8 the neighborhood look a little better than an
9 overflowing litter basket.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Well, I
11 would certainly appreciate the opportunity to
12 review that with you. And then the final question
13 I have has to do with the mechanical broom and
14 BK12. We obviously have cleanliness issues, I
15 think at night, we would benefit from one. I am
16 once again offering, if it's a, I don't know if
17 it's a manpower issue, manpower, we don't have
18 that ability, as you know, with the Mayor, to put
19 those things in. But certainly if there's a
20 capital issue, I'd be happy to fund a broom for
21 the district, 'cause that's something that's
22 doable for the nighttime routes, because we--
23 that's obviously a good time to clean our streets,
24 in the night, or close to the day.

25 JOHN DOHERTY: Yeah.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Or
3 weekends, Saturday, for example, my district is a
4 very good day to clean the streets.

5 JOHN DOHERTY: You know, currently
6 that's, you know, it's a budget problem again. We
7 have to hire personnel to do it. The district has
8 been working and when they have an additional
9 person available, they will assign them to that
10 broom. We found it to be helpful, but
11 unfortunately I don't have the funding to promise
12 I can continue it yearlong.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.
14 Well, listen, I appreciate it, I thank you, and--

15 JOHN DOHERTY: Thank you, too.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --I do
17 want to follow up. I'm--concrete offer on a
18 camera, let's do a pilot, let's get a couple of
19 cameras, let's put 'em out in front of those
20 garbage, and let's see what the result is. And if
21 you can work with us, with OMB, I don't want
22 another one of these situations where, you know,
23 we have a good idea, but you know, the bureaucrats
24 like to kill good ideas. So, if we can work
25 together on that, I'd be grateful.

1
2 JOHN DOHERTY: Maria Tremaney
3 [phonetic] will be in touch with you quickly.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: We love
5 Maria. Thank you very much, take care.

6 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Thank you,
7 Council Member David Greenfield. Commissioner, I
8 have a few questions. First of all, with the
9 Styrofoam issue, that the Administration proposed,
10 to do away with Styrofoam and go to these paper
11 cups. Okay. The Simms plant in Brooklyn does not
12 take those paper cups. So, where are these paper
13 cups going to go?

14 JOHN DOHERTY: No, the Simms plant
15 is not taking paper right now. They're not taking
16 the cups. But paper cups will be taken by Simms
17 as they are taken by the VC facility on Staten
18 Island.

19 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All right,
20 and what's going to happen to them?

21 JOHN DOHERTY: They will recycle
22 'em.

23 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: So they will
24 start taking paper?

25 JOHN DOHERTY: They will start

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2 taking pa--in August, we will be sending paper
3 there to be processed. Some of it will come, most
4 of it will come barges from areas such as The
5 Bronx, where they have a facility, Queens where
6 they have a facility, some will be trucked in from
7 the local districts in that area, to be processed
8 in the facility. And the processed material will
9 be going out by barge to their facility in New
10 Jersey.

11 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay, but
12 Simms, they just take it and they ship it out? Or
13 they take it and treat it?

14 JOHN DOHERTY: No, they're going to
15 ship it out, they're going to ship it out and sell
16 it as a recyclable. They will separate it, for
17 example, the plastics, they have optical scanners
18 now so they can separate colored glass and
19 plastic, by grade. That way it makes it easier
20 for bailing and for marketing it. And the same
21 thing will happen with the paper.

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: And how much
23 is that going to cost?

24 JOHN DOHERTY: Right now, we're
25 paying about \$75 a ton to have metal, glass and

1 plastic processed. The paper will--we'll be
2 receiving \$20, I think we're going to get \$20.
3 [background comment] \$14, I'm sorry, I went too
4 high. There's always a fluctuating market,
5 anyway, with paper.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. The
8 waste transfer stations, you spoke about them and
9 the one in my district, Southwest, requires the
10 installation of a king pile wall [phonetic], to be
11 built. It's construction and the cost has not
12 been determined and it doesn't appear anywhere in
13 the budget. Where is that money coming from and
14 how much is it going to be?

15 JOHN DOHERTY: When, we'll know
16 when Department of Design and Construction lets it
17 bid out and they get the response to that
18 proposal.

19 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: But before it
20 happens, how are we supposed to know? I mean, the
21 cost, I mean, if the cost is--

22 JOHN DOHERTY: There's money in the
23 budget for that. I don't really know--

24 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Not for the
25 wall.

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JOHN DOHERTY: For a walk?

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: No, for the installation of the king piles, to be built. There's no funding in there for that.

JOHN DOHERTY: This is Walter Czwartacky from our Resource--from our Engineering Group. Walter, what is - -

WALTER CZWARTACKY: The king pile wall is a component of the Southwest MTS project. It is part of--the construction of that project will include the king pile wall. It was part of the bid package, and the bid we received for the project includes the construction of that.

JOHN DOHERTY: So it includes--

WALTER CZWARTACKY: The origin of the king pile wall is that the neighbor of the property who has the long jetty and marina, ardently demanded something to protect his rock jetty from prop wash.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah, because once you guys come in there, it's going to destroy the whole marina.

WALTER CZWARTACKY: This was the design that we agreed upon, and he accepted. And

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2 it's been an element of the project since now two
3 years after the process started.

4 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: So, the, to
5 build this piles, the installation is included in
6 the bid? It's not--

7 WALTER CZWARTACKY: Yes, it's an
8 element of the overall deck.

9 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: And the total
10 bid, is that within the cost--how much is the
11 total bid?

12 WALTER CZWARTACKY: I, you know, I
13 can't speak to it, DDC took the bids, I know it
14 came in lower than the engineer's estimate. But
15 they haven't made an award yet, so I, we can get
16 you the number, I just don't have it off the top--

17 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah, I would
18 like that number. In addition to that, under
19 State law, you're supposed to update, modify the
20 plans and you have to keep up with the
21 modifications. And when was the last time this
22 was modified and the paperwork was submitted?

23 WALTER CZWARTACKY: The Southwest
24 project plant?

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah.

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2 WALTER CZWARTACKY: It was not
3 modified since--the project we're building is the
4 project we permitted. We have not changed the
5 project at all. The king pile wall has been part
6 of that, it was part of our submission to DC, it's
7 been an element of the project all the time.

8 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: So you're
9 saying that the original plan, has not, is the
10 same plan that you're going to do.

11 WALTER CZWARTACKY: That's it, it's
12 correct. We have not modified it.

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: There've been
14 no modifications.

15 WALTER CZWARTACKY: No.

16 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. Just
17 state your name for the record.

18 WALTER CZWARTACKY: My name is
19 Water A. Czwartacky. I'm the Director of Special
20 Projects, for the Department's Bureau of Long Term
21 Export.

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. Thank
23 you, for that. What, Commissioner, nowhere in
24 your budget is for, in Community Board 1, in
25 Staten Island, for the garage. What's happening

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with that and--?

JOHN DOHERTY: Well, there's no money in the budget for that. We're still looking at a site. I mean, we haven't gone too far with the elected officials on Staten Island, but we have to find a site out there, there was a site at one point, one thought is possibly out on the Fresh Kills complex there someplace, we might find a spot. But it's been difficult as in many cases other than three [laughs] to find a site. And it's still in the works, and there's no funding for it at this point.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: When do you think the funding will be in there?

JOHN DOHERTY: It's, you know, it falls into the same category as Brooklyn 3, you know, we just, it's not in the capital budget over the next number of years.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. In addition to that, in '13 in my district, a number of years ago, we did a ULURP for property that's now in the City for to build a sanitation garage and a salt marsh. When is that project going to be built?

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2 JOHN DOHERTY: The--we finally
3 reached agreement, or we're getting close to
4 agreement, with the National Grid for their role,
5 piece of property out there. We're trying to work
6 with them. There are still some issues over the
7 working with them, over the liability and
8 addressing contamination that may be below the
9 surface from the, from the old gas tanks that were
10 there. So there's no date on that, it's really
11 something we've been negotiating for a long, long
12 time.

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I know.

14 JOHN DOHERTY: You know being over
15 there. When I worked Brooklyn in the '70s, we
16 were looking for a site. We still don't have it.

17 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: You know,
18 it's like I said, the garage, every storm, it goes
19 under water. You know.

20 JOHN DOHERTY: I agree. I don't
21 want to be in there.

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Every storm,
23 you know, I go there, these poor guys, they, with
24 half the work and it's not right. The conditions,
25 the atmosphere, it's just right. You know, and I

1
2 just don't understand how come this is not a
3 priority, how come, you know, why it's taking so
4 long. And what was the last time you had a
5 meeting with National Grid about this?

6 JOHN DOHERTY: I don't recall when
7 the last meetings were, but I know that they
8 continue to work on it. I can get back to you on
9 that.

10 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Yeah, I mean,
11 that's very important, 'cause then I'm going to
12 get in touch with National Grid, because the
13 community, you know, they feel bad for these
14 sanitation workers. And Super Storm Sandy, they
15 did a great job, but the place was flooded. And a
16 few weeks ago when we had another storm, the
17 garage was flooded. It's not right. So, this
18 should be a priority to that, and I'm, and I'm
19 said that it's not funded in the budget. Council
20 Member.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I just want to
22 end with a couple of additional questions. Is it
23 possible that you could, someone from your staff,
24 could provide me with the additional--and I
25 understand that you are expanding the organics and

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2 the food scrap drop-off points at green markets.
3 Could someone provide a list of those green
4 markets? As well as where the textile and used
5 clothing drop-off sites and buildings and public
6 spaces will be located. Again, I'm trying to make
7 sure that we expand beyond the Borough of
8 Manhattan to all five boroughs. And also, an
9 expansion of the--I understand we have the
10 organics collection program at 68 schools and you
11 plan on expanding that, if I could have the list
12 of those additional schools, that would be greatly
13 appreciated. Commissioner, in your testimony, you
14 indicated that in terms of street cleanliness, we
15 are doing a good job. And so do you anticipate
16 that there will be more requests for community
17 boards to reduce their street parking
18 requirements?

19 JOHN DOHERTY: There will be, I'm
20 sure. People that own cars don't like to move
21 'em, so they're going to be sure. I'm just kind
22 of watching it. We've seen a couple little dips
23 here and there, where we've cut the cleaning down
24 once a week, so I want to monitor it closely. But
25 I don't have anything on the table right now.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. And I
3 understand the--I can relate to the sentiment of
4 Council Member Greenfield, everyone would like the
5 big belly trash cans, but it's not capital
6 eligible. You, one would have to purchase it from
7 their expense budget and they are rather costly.
8 And so, we are continuing to have discussions with
9 OMB so that we can buy and purchase in bulk,
10 'cause a number of Council Members are interested
11 in purchasing them. In addition to that, in my
12 district, a number of constituents have asked me
13 for those high neck trash cans, as opposed to the
14 open rim ones. And so, does that require
15 additional funds from a Council Member's
16 discretionary account? Or is that something the
17 Department of Sanitation can provide?

18 JOHN DOHERTY: They, yes, in the
19 past, the, they were more expensive, they're more
20 expensive. I think they're running \$500-\$600,
21 depending on which model you get. But we will be
22 coming out later this year with a new trashcan
23 along with the new recycling bins that will be
24 going on the street corners. We'll be getting
25 them in, starting later this year, and continuing

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2 over the next couple of years, to get more
3 recycling bins on the street, along with a new
4 style litter basket. The three containers that'll
5 be out there have bins that'll be out there, all
6 look very much the same except they'll identify
7 what has to go in each container.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So are you
9 advising us to wait and not set aside--

10 JOHN DOHERTY: I would wait and
11 take--

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay.

13 JOHN DOHERTY: Let's see what they
14 look like at this point, yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And I too am
16 part of the cheering section of Maria Timini
17 [phonetic]. And I hope--Commissioner, are you
18 going to stay on with the next Administration?

19 JOHN DOHERTY: I don't know.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay, okay.

21 JOHN DOHERTY: [laughter]

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So,
23 Commissioner, now I'm going to morph into Council
24 Member Lappin, who unfortunately--

25 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: If you were

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2 running for Mayor, then you could do it.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yeah, Council
4 Member Lappin is stuck in traffic, and her staff
5 and she has asked me to ask some questions. And
6 so, at this time I'm going to ask some questions
7 that have been submitted by Council Member Lappin.
8 It's four questions. And it's primarily related
9 to the 91st Street MTS. And it's, and the first
10 question is, "While the City has failed to request
11 a full accounting of the change in circumstance
12 and cost since the inception and approval of the
13 original swamp, I am confident that your
14 department has kept a full accounting of the
15 differences in operating and capital costs of the
16 current plan, versus the original swamp. Please
17 explain for the Council some of the variances in
18 expenses, and also take into account any
19 contingencies, including storm cost impacts, such
20 as the increase in cost from \$50 to the
21 conservatively budget \$181 million street MTS."

22 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, I mean, we've
23 talked, and I've talked with the Councilwoman many
24 times at this hearing, these hearings, about 91st.
25 You have to realize that 91st Street is an

1
2 integral part of the solid waste management plan.
3 It's a plan that was submitted, the Mayor's plan,
4 submitted to the Council, approved by the Council.
5 And the 91st Street marine transfer is an integral
6 part of that. Each borough is supposed to have
7 some ability, or all the ability, if they can, to
8 handle their own waste. This facility is sited to
9 service the four communities around it. And
10 provide the export of waste through that. So,
11 it's something that we feel strongly should be
12 there, will be there, and we're going to work hard
13 to work with the community in addressing any of
14 their concerns, if at all possible. Yes, there
15 may be some course changes, as we look at issues
16 as we go through the construction. But here
17 again, nobody said getting rid of this garbage in
18 New York City was going to be the cheapest thing
19 to do. It is expensive, unfortunately. And we
20 have to look to recycling to address that expense.
21 But it's something we're working on, something
22 we'll look at, but it's important to keep that
23 there so that we have the solid waste management
24 plan that we all agreed upon.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Following again

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2 on the line of questioning submitted by Council
3 Member Jessica Lappin who's stuck in traffic, "One
4 of the driving forces of the swamp plan is to
5 prevent to as great an extent as possible, the
6 movement of refuse and make each borough deal with
7 their own garbage without impacting other
8 boroughs. As your Covanter [phonetic] contract
9 shows, you plan on barging Manhattan garbage to
10 Staten Island to another facility, and then
11 putting the garbage on a train, sending it
12 hundreds or even thousands of miles away. Please
13 explain why sending Manhattan garbage to Staten
14 Island is okay, as well as why it makes more sense
15 to ship our garbage to far away states when we
16 continue to drive it over the river to nearby
17 waste-to-energy facility."

18 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, we have to
19 take it outside of New York, in some cases it may
20 go upstate, yeah, too, and with some of the
21 contracts. But, as some of it does now. But I
22 mean, we don't have the technology in New York
23 City. Siting facilities have been very difficult.
24 We all know that. We've all been through the
25 pains of trying to site garages and facilities.

1
2 And that's a difficult thing to do in New York
3 City, as much as we'd like to do it. So, you
4 know, to say why are we sending it out of town?
5 We don't have much of an alternative now. What's
6 the alternative to not driving it out of town?
7 Yes, it's going to Staten Island, because Staten
8 Island has a container port to take it, and there
9 has been no objection that I have heard of from
10 the Staten Island people. It's going to be
11 containerized, it'll be like any other cargo
12 that's put in a container. When you look at the
13 container ships coming in and out of these city,
14 the city or the trucks that are moving around the
15 city with containers on 'em, you don't know what's
16 in there. And the only way you might notice
17 what's in ours, because there'll be some kind of a
18 marking or--say it's a garbage container. Most
19 people won't even recognize that. It's
20 unfortunate, I'd love to have something in the
21 city here, but realistically I don't know when
22 it's going to happen.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Next question
24 is, "As the Sanitation Commissioner, as you have
25 stated previously, the 91st Street MTS is being

1
2 built for capacity, well beyond the needs of the
3 residential district it serves. You have stated
4 the excess capacity will most probably be reserved
5 for commercial carters. How will the City entice
6 commercial carters to use this facility? And what
7 is the estimated rebate or incentive per ton on an
8 annual basis in extra costs for the taxpayers?"

9 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, we haven't
10 reached that point with it. It's something that's
11 in the solid waste management plan to reduce the
12 mileage through the streets that the carters were
13 collecting from those neighborhoods, can bring it
14 to one of our locations. I think, as we get down
15 the road and we get these facilities built, we
16 will continue to work with BIC and the carting
17 industry, to attract into our facilities. One of
18 the issues going to be how do we structure the fee
19 we paid them? And to do that, I think we
20 definitely have to be competitive with their
21 alternative disposal sites. So, I think in the
22 long run, even their sites that they're currently
23 using, will start to increase in price. So we're
24 not ready to quote a price yet, because we got to
25 see what the market'll bear.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And last
3 question, Commissioner, is "Please explain why
4 under current permitting and traffic of garbage
5 disposal, the goals of the original swamp plan are
6 not achievable without the construction of the
7 91st street MTS, or for that matter the Southwest
8 Brooklyn MTS, as well."

9 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, I think when
10 you look at it, you have to have an interlocking
11 plan, so that you do have redundancy in your
12 system. If you only built one or two facilities,
13 if there's some kind of a failure in one of those
14 facilities, you need additional capacity. One
15 hopes we never have to shift waste from one
16 facility to the other, because of the failure, but
17 as the Commissioner of the Department, I am
18 responsible to ensure that the waste in this City
19 can be picked up and disposed of on a daily basis.
20 WE don't want to see garbage laying in the street
21 because we have, don't have any place to bring it.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Are there any
23 other question from any other member? Council
24 Member Reyna.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you so

1
2 much, Madam Chair. Commissioner, I know you and I
3 have had extensive conversations on the swamp plan
4 and the commitments that had been made according
5 to the swamp plan. In addition to what would be a
6 sound borough self-sufficiency and borough equity
7 for waste transfer facilities, in our neighborhood
8 in community board one, we host three different
9 community sanitation garages, hosting it for other
10 sanitation garages, as well as 16 waste transfer
11 facilities that host what would be the capacity
12 for 20,000 tons per day. Part of the swampland
13 was the provision that we would see reduction in
14 capacity; as of yet, we haven't seen that. What
15 is the delay/

16 JOHN DOHERTY: At one time, we had
17 conversations, we looked at that. We were working
18 with the transfer stations, the companies to look
19 into what was possible. We never reached a final
20 conclusion. Sandy hit, and that was something
21 that opened my eyes and the Department's eyes to
22 how to we get rid of all this material quickly and
23 clean up those areas? And we realized, we need,
24 in an emergency, in this city, all the capacity
25 that's available. Having said that, as we open up

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2 the marine transfer station, in this case Hamilton
3 Avenue, the facilities that we're going to,
4 currently going to, in that area, except for the
5 Varick, which will be one of the long term
6 facilities, they will not see our white trucks
7 going there anymore. So, there's going to be a
8 reduction, but to say to reduce their capacity,
9 we're really putting the stranglehold on a city,
10 should that emergency arise, and we have to get
11 rid of our waste quickly. So, at this point, I am
12 not open to reducing capacity. What I'd like,
13 what I want to do is reduce the number of trucks
14 we send there, so that puts, relieves the
15 community, and that was part of the solid waste
16 management plan. But reducing capacity can be
17 very difficult and one concern I would have about
18 the, addressing emergencies in the City.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Prior to
20 Hurricane Sandy, there was productive
21 conversations around reducing capacity because
22 capacity, as far as emergency situations, were
23 already factored into the swamp plan, as our
24 discussions in reference to building what would be
25 MTSS throughout the City of New York, and voting

1 on a plan that had already calculated that in.

2 So, how is this any different from what was
3 already voted for?
4

5 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, I think once
6 you take the capacity away, is that going to drive
7 the companies to reduce their space? Reduce their
8 capacity, what they need. And--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Isn't that
10 the whole plan as far as borough self-sufficiency?

11 JOHN DOHERTY: That's what it was,
12 until we ran across Sandy and we realized--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Which could
14 happen once every 100 years.

15 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, if it happens
16 next year, I want to find a place to put that
17 waste, because - - Coney Island--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:
19 [interposing] So we are going to continue to be
20 host to 20,000 tons per day?

21 JOHN DOHERTY: We need to have that
22 capacity--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: 20,000 per
24 day.

25 JOHN DOHERTY: We need that

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capacity in an emergency.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So, the Administration is violating the swamp plan as we know it.

JOHN DOHERTY: I don't know that we violated that, I don't believe we did.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It seems like you've already said you are intending on violating, considering now because of Hurricane Sandy, you will have to not reduce capacity.

JOHN DOHERTY: We were, agreed, we would look at the capacity, and whether it could be reduced. We never reached a full agreement on it. Sandy came along, and at this point, I'm not ready to reduce capacity, and short change this City in the long run, should they need that capacity.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Well, we waited for a hurricane to not reduce capacity, and now there's validity behind what you're presuming is going to happen again, regarding another Hurricane Sandy.

JOHN DOHERTY: Well, we need to be prepared for it.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Not in, as
3 far as 20,000 tons per day, in one community,
4 doesn't have to be the case. You could also turn
5 around and increase capacity in the MTSS that you
6 have that haven't been activated.

7 JOHN DOHERTY: We will inc--we
8 will, in an emergency, we'll go to our facilities
9 first, no question about it. We'll load them out
10 as much as we can.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: That was
12 supposed to take into consideration emergency
13 situations.

14 JOHN DOHERTY: But if there is an
15 emergency, I need that capacity to be available.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It is very
17 disappointing, and I want the record to show that
18 this Administration has violated the spirit and
19 intent of the swamp plan as it was voted for.

20 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay. Sounds
21 good. Thank you, Council Member Diana Reyna.
22 Commissioner, I just want to pick up on some
23 things. With the swamp. You said something--with
24 Super Storm Sandy, looking back, the two transfer
25 stations that have not been built yet--91st Street

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2 and Southwest--because of the storms, is this
3 going to change the way you're going to construct
4 these two transfer stations?

5 JOHN DOHERTY: We are reviewing
6 that right now. We have a consultant, I expect a
7 report out shortly. But some of the things we
8 have already looked at on considering, just like
9 buildings around this City that were in the flood
10 plain--

11 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Right.

12 JOHN DOHERTY: We're raising the
13 mechanical and the electric units up higher, so we
14 can view that. We will, if necessary, raise the
15 lower deck, if need be. When one is, you know,
16 concerned about a storm hitting there, the
17 structures will be built to exceed any
18 expectations from a surge that one could expect in
19 the future. So they'll be strong enough to handle
20 it. The provisions will be, if we know a storm is
21 coming, containers will be moved out of there, so
22 that in any case, there won't be containers on a
23 deck to worry about. We will, the garbage that
24 may be in there is going to be at least whatever
25 deck it is, going to be, whatever the lower deck,

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2 there's going to be 16 feet above that. So you're
3 not going to get a 16 foot rise to - - garbage - -

4 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing]
5 No, I understand that. And that was not the
6 original plan.

7 JOHN DOHERTY: No, no, they were
8 designed, the transfer stations was designed in
9 three levels: one where the container will be;
10 the next for where the garbage would be; the
11 third's for--

12 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: - - truck.

13 JOHN DOHERTY: --is for the trucks
14 to come in and dump it.

15 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Right.

16 JOHN DOHERTY: They'll go into the
17 containers and block it, that'll go down and go
18 out the back door.

19 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Right. Now,
20 you're waiting for this report, and so this could
21 increase the cost of building these transfer
22 stations.

23 JOHN DOHERTY: It's possible, as I
24 said before, getting rid of garbage is not going
25 to be cheap. We got to recycle and reduce the

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cost.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: You know, you said something before and I didn't want to interrupt my colleague when they ask questions, but you said, you know, there's going to be some cost changes--

JOHN DOHERTY: There may be, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay.

JOHN DOHERTY: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The last time we heard that was CityTime. And that's 'cause my colleague sitting to my left brought this up two to three years before it went out of control. This can never happen again. We don't need another CityTime. We keep on hearing, "We don't know what the cost is, we don't know what this could be, we're waiting for a report." Shouldn't we just wait till we have all the reports in, let's see what is the real number, because financially it might not be wise for us to build these two transfer stations, for some outrageous number. There might other alternatives that we could implement in getting rid of our waste.

JOHN DOHERTY: The Council at the

1
2 time agreed this was the best plan. Now we want
3 to change it, and that's your--

4 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Let me
5 correct that.

6 JOHN DOHERTY: What's the
7 alternative?

8 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: The Council
9 agreed 'cause that was the only plan presented to
10 the City.

11 JOHN DOHERTY: What's the
12 alternative?

13 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I voted
14 against it. Okay? But it was the only plan
15 presented to us. No one is talking about
16 alternatives, such as converting garbage into
17 energy. The Japanese do it, the Italians do it,
18 different countries do it. But there are so many
19 other alternatives out there.

20 JOHN DOHERTY: Where do they put
21 their facilities?

22 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: And we--
23 listen--

24 JOHN DOHERTY: In the middle of
25 their cities. Are you going to build a facility

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in New York City?

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Listen, we could borrow--

JOHN DOHERTY: In your borough? We'll build it down at the Southwest Marine Transfer Station.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: All I'm-- Listen. Listen, we already had one incinerator there. Okay? And many people have died because of that.

JOHN DOHERTY: It's--you know it doesn't work. We closed that down - -

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: But there are other alternatives. Okay? That we should look at and examine and to build for--it might be less, it might be more efficient. Okay? So, this is other issues that we have to look at, all right. And they keep on bringing it up, you know, the City Council voted on this. The only reason we voted on this, because it was the only plan. And there were many of us who said we should put this on hold and look at all alternatives. And say, "This is plan one, two, three." But that wasn't given to us.

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JOHN DOHERTY: And--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: What was given to us was just one.

JOHN DOHERTY: And tell the people in Brooklyn that we're getting all the waste from around the City to their transfer station, that you want to hold it up.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: I want to hold it up?

JOHN DOHERTY: Okay, yeah, well, that's where it's going.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Listen, listen, I'll be a hero, I'll be a hero, I'll tell you that right now.

JOHN DOHERTY: It is going to the South Bronx, it was going to South Bronx--

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [applause]
I'll be a hero!

JOHN DOHERTY: It was going to South Bronx, and - -

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing]
And I'm just trying to say is that there are other alternatives, okay. And the cost. All right, once they hear that we're building something, and

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2 we don't know the exact cost, is going to be, I'm
3 sure they would agree with me, to hold up these
4 transfers --

5 JOHN DOHERTY: [interposing] The
6 exact cost, whatever changes they're going to make
7 is loose change. You build any project in a city,
8 there's always a little extra that has to be
9 changed once in a while. It's rare that a
10 construction project comes in below--

11 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: And, and
12 CityTime cost us millions of dollars more, because
13 of that statement, there'll be some costs - -

14 JOHN DOHERTY: Try and pick out an
15 engineering project - -

16 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: [interposing]
17 I'm saying, I just think we should hold it up and
18 see what the costs are. I just want to put in the
19 record, an additional, there was another study
20 done by the residents for a sane trash
21 development, a report, I'm submitting this report
22 on the record, and I'd like to--where's the
23 Sergeant-at-Arms? Could we give the Commissioner--
24 --you can read this in your spare time. And we
25 could talk about this.

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JOHN DOHERTY: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay? And my colleagues would like a copy. Okay? I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We've been joined by Council Member Jessica Lappin, I'll give her time to brief her staff. Let me just say that as we close, I know that a number of individuals have expressed concerns to you with regards to the 91st Street MTS. And obviously, in the aftermath of Sandy, a number of individuals have asked that the Administration take a second look at that proposal. Let me just say that I recognize that this is really a balancing act, because I know communities, underserved communities for a very long time, have had to bear the brunt of accepting garbage from residents all over the City of New York. And I know that the swamp was an attempt to try to balance that out and make sure that we are fair to all five counties, and that everyone should accept their garbage. But I do know that there is some concern in this City, and I plan on taking a tour of that site, and joining with Council Member Jessica Lappin, and to understand a

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2 lot of the concerns that have been expressed by
3 the residents. And now, Council Member Lappin,
4 I've danced enough for you, are you ready?

5 [laughter; background comment] No, that's okay,
6 I'll dance some more, we love Maria Timini, we
7 love the Ron--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: We do love
9 Maria Timini.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I wish I knew
11 everyone's name that I can give her more minutes.
12 But I--[background comment] We're happy about the
13 organics collection, anything else we're happy
14 about? [laughter] We're not happy about the fact
15 that I do not have a sanitation garage in Bed-
16 Stuy. Yes, Council Member Lappin, are you - -

17 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Imagine that
18 being the chair and you can't get your garage.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So, oh, so,
20 I wanted to ask again about, since you mentioned
21 earlier, the Council had passed the solid waste
22 management plan. Where is 59th Street in the
23 process, the one that's actually going to take
24 garbage, commercial garbage out of the other
25 boroughs?

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2 JOHN DOHERTY: 59th Street, we're
3 doing work at 59th Street, some minor construction
4 work we need to do in redesigning the scale area.
5 Right now, the only proposal we received for the
6 use of 59th Street was from Simms for a
7 construction and demolition transfer station. But
8 that can't happen until Ganzer Street is built and
9 we move the paper down to Ganzer Street. And
10 that's a couple years off yet.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So where
12 are we of the--what are you waiting for with
13 Gansevoort Street, exactly?

14 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, first of all,
15 I have to get Garage One out of that building and
16 move it down to the new garage on Spring Street,
17 which won't be ready until I think early in Fiscal
18 2015. So I can't move, I can't move everybody out
19 there.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And then,
21 so January of 2015, you're going to then open
22 that? There are no impediments? Don't you need
23 something from the State Legislature that you
24 don't have? Or correct me if I'm wrong.

25 JOHN DOHERTY: There are issues

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2 there about the Hudson River Park, and at Park
3 itself, I think funding is needed for that, that's
4 something the Administration and the State is
5 working on. But as far as Department's operation,
6 is we plan when we get out of there to demolish
7 the marine transfer station that's there, demolish
8 the old incinerator and clean the place up. And
9 then leave that for the construction of a new
10 recycling transfer station, metal, glass and
11 plastic out of Manhattan, as well as an
12 environmental center. And the last plans I saw
13 was for the park to be in that area, that could be
14 used by the local residents.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So, you're
16 many years away, optimistically, 'cause as far as
17 I can tell, and I've been to a lot of meetings
18 about the Hudson River Park, they have major
19 financial problems and I don't think there is any
20 plan in place to rectify that at the moment,
21 anyway. So, you're really not moving forward with
22 Gansevoort, and you said--so, is it that when you
23 issued the RFP, nobody really bid on 59th Street?

24 JOHN DOHERTY: Did anybody bid on
25 it? [background comments] We had several

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2 responses, we just didn't award anything yet.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Could you
4 repeat that?

5 JOHN DOHERTY: We had several
6 responses, but we didn't make an award yet.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I can't
8 hear you. You had several responses, but what?

9 JOHN DOHERTY: We didn't award
10 anything yet. It'll start with the demolition
11 first, but there's been no real rush for that
12 because we can't do anything till we move out of
13 there. But there's money in the budget for the
14 demolition. And the construction, the new
15 transfer station.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I guess I
17 just, what I don't understand is this talk about
18 the solid waste management plan, the solid waste
19 management plan, and how you have to move forward
20 with that, and that's how we're going to really
21 take garbage out of the communities that have been
22 overburdened. And yet, the parts of it that are
23 going to do that, aren't really moving forward,
24 but you're guns blazing full steam ahead with the
25 part that isn't. So, just to reiterate, how much

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2 of Manhattan's residential waste is going to go to
3 91st Street and how much is going to continue to
4 be trucked, if the solid waste management plan
5 comes together, which clearly it isn't. But I'm
6 just curious.

7 JOHN DOHERTY: The waste from
8 community board or from districts 5, 6, 8 and 11,
9 will go to 91st Street.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So is that
11 a third, is that still the number we're working
12 with, a third of Manhattan's residential waste?

13 JOHN DOHERTY: That's a good part
14 of the residential. I don't know the percentage
15 off the top of my head, but there's heavy tonnage
16 districts up there, 6 and 8 are very heavy.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So, what's
18 been said in the past was a third, so unless you
19 correct me, I'm going to assume it's about a
20 third. And two-thirds will still be trucked to
21 New Jersey. Is that correct?

22 JOHN DOHERTY: Yes, the remaining
23 will go to Jer--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And after--
25 I'm still not clear why we're spending so much

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2 money to build a station, when the Manhattan part
3 of the plan is clearly not coming together. That
4 is only going to deal with one third of our waste.
5 Once that's built and the trucks take it there, as
6 opposed to taking it in New Jersey, where is it
7 going to be barged to? I hope not New Jersey.

8 JOHN DOHERTY: It may be, it'll be
9 barged to an unloading facility where it'll go
10 from a barge, the containers go from a barge to a
11 railcar. Or possibly barge going up the Hudson
12 River to upstate.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So do we
14 know where it's going? Or we don't know where
15 it's going?

16 JOHN DOHERTY: We haven't awarded a
17 contract for the service yet, so I can't tell you
18 exactly where it's going.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So we don't
20 know where it's going. Okay. I know some of my
21 colleagues have already asked questions, and I
22 want to thank you, Mr. Chair, for including in the
23 record a document that was provided by Sane Trash
24 Solutions. What would happen if at some point the
25 City had to cancel its contract with Covanta

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[phonetic]?

JOHN DOHERTY: I don't know why we would cancel 'em.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Well, if for some reason, much better or cheaper or better disposal methods were out there and adopted. What happens then?

JOHN DOHERTY: We would have to get somebody else in to do the work.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Are there penalties that the City would incur, financial penalties?

JOHN DOHERTY: Depends on why the contract would end. If they weren't doing their job, just like any company or business we do business with, you have to comply with the contract. If you don't comply it, there's fines and there's action that can be taken.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: That would, they would have to pay us, you mean.

JOHN DOHERTY: I don't know what the situation is, so I can't determine exactly what you're talking about.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: The

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2 situation is, it becomes very clear that this is
3 not the most cost effective way or even part of a
4 plan that's actually happening, and so you have to
5 come up with a new plan. I mean, if the 59th
6 Street and Gansevoort doesn't happen, and the
7 whole Manhattan piece doesn't happen, then what
8 happens to your contract? Nothing would happen?

9 JOHN DOHERTY: Well, I don't know
10 that that's going to happen, but the plan was for
11 waste disposal in Manhattan, with the East 91st
12 Street to handle the four districts; the other
13 east eight districts would be going to Covanta
14 Waste Energy Facility in New Jersey, which they
15 are going to now.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay, I'm
17 going to move on. Well, can you tell me exactly
18 how this facility at 91st Street helps with your
19 emission reduction goals? I mean, instead of
20 having--especially because you have said multiple
21 times, I'm not sure how you're going to do this,
22 but you're not going to allow the trucks to queue
23 up.

24 JOHN DOHERTY: Right.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: They're

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2 going to go back to their garage.

3 JOHN DOHERTY: Right.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Which isn't
5 that close, in fact the new garage you're planning
6 for Board 6 I think is down on 25th Street.

7 JOHN DOHERTY: Correct.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And you've
9 told them, by the way, that the trucks will not
10 ever go into that facility with garbage in them.
11 So I'm not sure how you guys have it both ways.
12 But having those trucks go from 25th to 91st to
13 25th to 91st until they can actually come in,
14 doesn't really reduce truck trips or air quality.
15 So, I want to know specifically how this facility
16 is going to help improve air quality.

17 JOHN DOHERTY: You're taking one
18 position, that we're not going to be able to dump
19 on shift, because there'll be a queue there. Our
20 position is that we will not have a problem there,
21 we will be able to dump the trucks, on shift,
22 without ending up with a queue, on 1st Avenue.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: But I'm
24 operating from a logical standpoint, and from one-

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JOHN DOHERTY: So am I.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --with historical evidence, you could never do that before. And you're not going to make this ramp like up to the sky and back. So where are these trucks going to queue in--I don't understand where you think these trucks are going to queue.

JOHN DOHERTY: This, this is not the same type of transfer station we had this--

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: It's going to be much bigger, we're well aware.

JOHN DOHERTY: Much bigger--

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: There are going to be even more trucks.

JOHN DOHERTY: It's a different design, we can unload dump trucks quickly, we have a longer ramp to get 'em on, should there be a little bit of a delay, we'll get 'em in, dump 'em and get 'em out.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So when the truck is told to go back to 25th Street, and he doesn't want to, because he can wait ten minutes on York or 1st to dump, as opposed to spending 45 minutes driving back to the garage to then of

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2 course be told, "Oh, turn around, go back 'cause
3 now they can take you," so he's been driving
4 around for an hour-and-a-half, that's not helpful
5 in terms of emission reduction. And--

6 JOHN DOHERTY: Well--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --we
8 certainly aren't going to allow him to just stay
9 there for ten minutes, right? You're going to
10 have somebody there, aren't you, dispatching them?
11 Sending them back to the garage?

12 JOHN DOHERTY: As I have indicated
13 in the past, we would have an officer there to
14 address any queuing situations that came up, would
15 lead the trucks out on 1st Avenue. I said that a
16 number of times from the get-go. Should we have
17 to send a truck back, they're not going to go back
18 and come back again. They go back to the garage
19 and they're in there. I do not believe that that
20 will happen. I think we, from what I see, we can
21 handle the trucks properly and dump them on shift.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Well, we do
23 not see eye-to-eye on that one. Do you want me to
24 ask this - - ? [background comments] Okay. I
25 wanted to ask about the community advisory board

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2 that is, exists, to discuss construction. Do you
3 know when they met last?

4 JOHN DOHERTY: Let me just check.
5 [pause, background noise] I don't have anything
6 on it. I know DDC was supposed to be working with
7 them, because they're going to--Department of
8 Design and Construction is going to build, is - -

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN:
10 [interposing] DDC is not working with them.

11 JOHN DOHERTY: Then I'll have to,
12 I'll have to look into it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: In fact,
14 DDC--but regardless, there is in the statute, a
15 community advisory group, that is in existence.
16 There are people who I have appointed to the board
17 of that group, and others who sit on that
18 organization. Especially since construction has
19 begun, I think there is absolutely no excuse, they
20 should meet, they should meet Monday morning. So-
21 -

22 JOHN DOHERTY: Have they asked for
23 a meeting?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I'm asking
25 for a meeting.

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2 JOHN DOHERTY: Oh, okay. I got no
3 problem.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. I'd
5 like to pull that meeting together next week.
6 And--

7 JOHN DOHERTY: We will schedule a
8 meeting with you. No problem, we'll get the
9 appropriate people.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. The
11 technical memorandum indicates that some 12,000
12 persons live within a quarter mile radius of the
13 facility. Several schools and two public housing
14 projects are also in close proximity. Asphalt
15 green, which you know very well, is also right
16 there. There is no other industrial activity in
17 the area, and it seems evident from a review of
18 the site's history, that it is a remnant of a
19 formerly larger industrial zone. So, I wanted to
20 ask if ... this is a long question. In fact, such
21 proximity of transfer stations to sensitive uses
22 is one feature of the current waste transfer
23 system that the swamp was designed to mitigate.
24 Moreover, the City's waterfront revitalization
25 plan, which is required under the federal coastal

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2 zone management act, and the State coastal zone
3 program, does not include a port facility at this
4 location. Whether it is for trash or for any
5 other freight. The City's finding that this
6 facility does not material conflict with the
7 current waterfront revitalization plans, goals and
8 policies, seems confusing and hard to justify.

9 Can you explain how these costs and other
10 potential risks were included in the analysis of
11 the 91st Street waste transfer station?

12 JOHN DOHERTY: All the
13 environmental reviews for the transfer station
14 have been done, we met all our requirements, and
15 we received or we will receive permits for
16 everything moving forward. So I'm not sure why
17 there's a problem with that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. You
19 know, I know there's been a lot of discussion,
20 this is my last question Mr. Chair, about the
21 cost. But I just, I really have to kind of bring
22 it back to this concept that trucking to Essex
23 costs \$75 a ton, approximately, and the cost of
24 this station is going to make it about \$240 a ton,
25 which is a bad deal for the taxpayers. I was

1
2 heartened to see Comptroller Bill Thompson come
3 out in opposition to this plan today, and you know
4 how I feel. I agree with him. And given that the
5 Manhattan part of the plan is not happening, as I
6 said it never would, I certainly hope you would--
7 it's not too late, it's not too late to take this
8 off the table, and to continue the demolition and
9 end there. And I certainly would ask you to
10 consider that and to take that back to the
11 Administration. This is a real waste of taxpayer
12 money.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Commissioner,
14 this is our last budget hearing together. I just
15 want to say that it's been an honor and a
16 privilege to work with you. I wish you the best
17 of luck in your future endeavor. I would hope
18 that you would continue to work in the next
19 Administration. And I just want to thank your
20 team for their professionalism and all that they
21 have done to assist all of the constituents in the
22 City of New York. Again, I thank you.

23 JOHN DOHERTY: Thank you, Chair.

24 CHAIRPERSON RECCHIA: Okay,
25 Commissioner, I want to also thank you and your

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2 staff and this Sanitation Department, the men and
3 women who worked during Super Storm Sandy,
4 especially on Coney Island. Have to tell you
5 something, they worked around the clock and it was
6 good. And thank you and your staff, always being
7 there and taking my phone calls, and helping us
8 out. So this concludes our hearing for today, the
9 finance committee will resume the Executive Budget
10 hearing on Monday, June 3rd, at 10:00 a.m. The
11 hearing will be held here in the Council Chambers.
12 On Monday we'll have Cultural Affairs, Libraries
13 and International Group Relations, Select
14 Committee on Libraries, the Committee on Civil
15 Rights, and the Committee on Public Housing, to
16 hear from the Libraries, Department of Cultural
17 Affairs, Human Rights Commission, the Equal
18 Employment Practice Commission and NYCHA. As a
19 reminder, the public will be allowed to testify on
20 June 5th, the last day of the budget hearings,
21 beginning at 4:00 p.m. And the public session
22 will be held here in this chamber. For members of
23 the public who wish to testify but cannot make it,
24 you can fax your testimony to my attorney, Tanisha
25 Edwards, at (212) 788-7061. Thank you, this

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2 hearing's now adjourned.

3

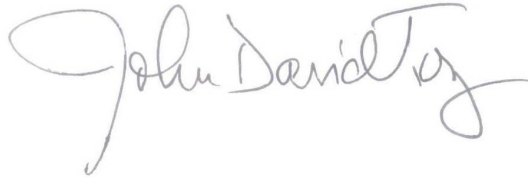
[gavel, blank until end]

4

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed word "Signature".

Date June 21, 2013