

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE &
FEDERAL LEGISLATION 1
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL
OPERATIONS, STATE &
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

----- X

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2024

Start: 10:09 a.m.

Recess: 12:22 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Hon. Lincoln Restler, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Gale A. Brewer
David M. Carr
James F. Gennaro
Jennifer Gutiérrez
Shahana K. Hanif
Vickie Paladino
Lynn C. Schulman
Inna Vernikov

Other Council Members Attending: Marte

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE &
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

A P P E A R A N C E S

Louis Molina,
Commissioner of the Department of Citywide
Administrative Services (DCAS)

Shameka Overton,
Executive Deputy Commissioner for Asset and
Property Management at the Department of
Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Sharon Brown Jeter, Representing: Self

Christopher Leon Johnson, Representing: Self

Barbara Manu, Representing: Self

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE &
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

(BLANK PAGE)

1 COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE &
2 FEDERAL LEGISLATION 4

3 SERGEANT MORENO: This is a microphone check on
4 the Governmental Operations, State & Federal
5 Legislation recorded by James Moreno on October 29,
6 2024, located in the Chambers.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning, and welcome to
8 the New York City Council Hearing of the Committee on
9 Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation.

10 At this time, I need everybody to please silence
11 all electronic devices.

12 If you wish to testify, please go up to the
13 Sergeant at Arms desk to fill out a testimony slip.

14 At this time, and going forward, no one is to
15 approach the dais, I repeat, no one is to approach
16 the dais.

17 Chair, we are ready to begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Good morning, my name is
19 Lincoln Restler, and I am the Chair of the Committee
20 on Governmental Operations, State & Federal
21 Legislation. I would like to welcome my colleague,
22 Chris Marte, who has joined us today, and thank
23 Commissioner Molina and his team for being with us as
24 well.

25 The Department of Citywide Administrative
Services is the back office for our entire city

1 government, ensuring city agencies and workers have
2 adequate space, hiring the city workforce, via civil
3 service recruitment, managing procurement, overseeing
4 the 30,000 vehicle city fleet, and so much more. City
5 government simply can't function without the hard
6 work of DCAS. (New York City Department of Citywide
7 Administrative Services).

9 One of the agency's most critical
10 responsibilities is overseeing the City's real estate
11 portfolio and ensuring that every city agency has
12 space to do their work.

13 Over the past two decades, the City spending on
14 leases has grown dramatically. DCAS now oversees a
15 \$1.5, \$1.5, billion leasing portfolio, including
16 nearly 400 leases totaling 22 million square feet.
17 The City has long been the largest tenant in New York
18 City.

19 The size of the City's real estate portfolio and
20 the broad discretion assigned to DCAS leadership, has
21 historically made DCAS a target for corruption, both
22 from those within government and those outside of
23 government hoping to profit from misuse of the City's
24 public dollars.

1
2 During the scandals of the Koch Administration,
3 the City's Director of Leasing was convicted for
4 extorting \$1.2 million from landlords.

5 In 2015, developers took advantage of poor
6 internal controls at DCAS to lift the Rivington DCAS
7 restriction and increase their personal profits.

8 Sadly, it appears as though DCAS is once again
9 facing a significant corruption scandal. That history
10 does not reflect the many hundreds of honest,
11 dedicated, professional public servants at DCAS, who
12 work hard every day and have the best interests of
13 all New Yorkers at heart. I've worked closely with
14 many of them, and I admire and appreciate the
15 commitment of DCAS workers to our city. But their
16 hard work is being tarnished by questions of ethical
17 impropriety by agency leadership responsible for
18 managing the Real Estate Division.

19 These issues centered around the appointment of
20 Jesse Hamilton as Deputy Commissioner of Real Estate
21 Services, which is the real estate arm of the City
22 responsible for overseeing 37 million square feet of
23 space.

24 Mr. Hamilton does not have the commensurate real
25 estate experience nor leasing, acquisitions, or space

1 planning and management experience. It seemed his,
2 quote, "relevant qualification" was his personal and
3 political connection to the Mayor.
4

5 Two years ago, Mr. Hamilton's appointment raised
6 red flags. Today, those flags have turned into
7 criminal investigations. We have spoken with many
8 people inside and outside of the Administration who
9 have been deeply concerned by Mr. Hamilton's judgment
10 and lack of an ethical compass, including the close
11 direction he received from the Mayor's chief
12 political adviser, Ingrid Lewis-Martin.

13 Last week, it was reported that Mr. Hamilton
14 intervened to shift an 80,000 square foot lease from
15 the building that won a competitive selection process
16 to 14 Wall Street, a building owned by one of the
17 Mayor's top donors.

18 Thanks to Mr. Hamilton, a contract worth tens of
19 millions of dollars was taken away from the bid that
20 performed best under DCAS' rules and instead was
21 given to the bidder that donated the most to the
22 Mayor.

23 At the time, the Agency's former leadership,
24 including the general Counsel, advised against this
25 unilateral decision by Mr. Hamilton, successfully

1
2 delaying an apparently corrupt decision. But when
3 both the Commissioner and general counsel resigned
4 this summer, Mr. Hamilton was free to seemingly
5 prioritize rewarding a political donor over public
6 integrity.

7 It has also been reported that Jesse Hamilton
8 recently went on an international trip with Ingrid
9 Lewis-Martin and Diana Boutross. Miss Boutross was
10 installed in an extremely lucrative position at as
11 Cushman and Wakefield's broker for the City account,
12 managing a multi-million dollar account with the city
13 of New York despite her own lack of qualifications.
14 These actions by the Adams' Administration leave the
15 City Council, prosecutors, and New Yorkers with the
16 same basic question. Why?

17 Why did the Mayor put a completely unqualified
18 political ally in a job with the power to direct the
19 City's \$1.5 billion leasing portfolio? Why did Mr.
20 Hamilton undermine the contracting process appearing
21 to punish a qualified bidder and reward a mayoral
22 campaign donor? And why did Mr. Hamilton go on
23 vacation to Japan with Ingrid Lewis-Martin and a real
24 estate executive who benefits from DCAS real estate
25 deals?

1
2 It's the job of the City Council to provide
3 stringent oversight of the Mayor and City agencies. I
4 believe DCAS' first responsibility is not to the
5 Mayor nor as political advisors, but to the public we
6 all serve. That starts by answering questions in a
7 forthright manner and joining the City Council in
8 committing to advancing transparency, accountability,
9 and integrity in our city government.

10 With that, I want to thank our committee staff,
11 Jayasri Ganapathy and Erica Cohen for their work and
12 preparing for this hearing. As well as my team
13 Communications Director, Nieve Mooney, and I
14 especially like to thank Molly Haley, my Chief of
15 Staff, who is extraordinary.

16 I'd like to acknowledge Council Member Schulman,
17 who's joined us, and we will now call on
18 representatives from the Administration to testify.

19 We'll be hearing testimony from DCAS Commissioner
20 Louis Molina and are also joined by Executive Deputy
21 Commissioner, Shameka Overton.

22 At this time, I will ask committee counsel to
23 administer the affirmation.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council Member.

25 If you would please raise your right hands?

1 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth,
2 and nothing but the truth, before this committee, and
3 to respond honestly to council member questions?
4

5 [PANEL AFFIRMS]

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, you may begin.

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Good morning, Chair,
8 Restler, and members of the City Council Committee on
9 Government Operations, State, and Federal
10 Legislation.

11 My name is Louis Molina, and I serve proudly as
12 the Commissioner of the Department of City Wide
13 Administrative Services, more commonly known as DCAS.

14 Since joining DCAS in July, and today actually
15 marks my 90 day anniversary as commissioner, I have
16 taken the time to think both critically and
17 strategically about how we can improve our processes
18 across all divisions, including within Real Estate
19 Services. I've been carefully assessing the work we
20 do to identify opportunities to increase transparency
21 and ensure that all decisions are made in the best
22 interest of the City and all New Yorkers. One such
23 change has been to assign the authority to execute
24 leases with the Executive Deputy Commissioner for
25 Asset and Property Management, ensuring that one of

1
2 my direct reports has an active role in reviewing and
3 signing each deal. With this new process, it ensures
4 increased oversight into our leasing practices and
5 enhances the awareness of The Office of the
6 Commissioner on the City's real estate transactions.

7 At DCAS, Real Estate Services is charged with
8 acquiring, disposing, and reallocating the City's
9 real property. Additionally, we oversee the City's
10 commercial, rental and surplus real estate portfolio
11 through short and long term lease outs as well as
12 sales at public auction. Combined our private long
13 term and our short term leases drives nearly \$40
14 million in annual revenue. We also oversee the
15 tracking of lease space and liaison with the
16 comptrollers, Bureau of Contract Administration for
17 the registration of all real property agreements,
18 including new leases, renewal, renewal options,
19 amendment licenses and more.

20 Our Leasing and Acquisitions Unit is responsible
21 for identifying and negotiating agreements for
22 private space for city agency operations on behalf of
23 the City of New York. We oversee a portfolio of more
24 than 22 million square feet of privately owned leased
25

1 space, including sites selected to accommodate dozens
2 of city agencies with their unique space needs.
3

4 This important work demands that we balance
5 securing real estate that the city agencies need to
6 carry out their daily operations by developing
7 program specifications, researching the market of
8 available space, preparing test fits, preliminary
9 plan and scopes of work for building and tenant space
10 improvements, and overseeing construction,
11 renovation, and relocations, responsibly stewarding
12 the city of New York's financial resources by
13 negotiating lease terms with private landlords and
14 obtaining approvals from the Office of Management And
15 Budget (OMB) for all cost related to rent, operating
16 expenses, real estate taxes, and tenant improvements.
17 And ensuring that City tenancy support citywide and
18 neighborhood planning goals, including supporting
19 client agencies. This work is accomplished by in
20 house staff and by contracted tenant representative
21 brokers guided by our advisement and oversight.

22 The leasing process is a multi-disciplinary
23 effort that involves multiple steps and review for
24 DCAS. The process begins when the City Of Office Of
25 Management and Budget, also known as OMB, approves a

1 new need for space. With that approval, we assess
2 city owned properties to determine if there is an
3 existing property that meets the need.
4

5 When there is no existing city property that best
6 meets the need identified, we work with our tenant
7 representatives, also known as brokers, to assist us
8 in putting out a solicitation to potential landlords
9 for space that may a good fit for the best price
10 possible.

11 At the same time, we work with the client agency
12 and our tenant representatives to determine what
13 equipment, design, and square footage may be needed
14 to best meet agency needs. That notification to the
15 commercial market sent out by our tenant
16 representatives may be referred to as a request for
17 proposal or RFP.

18 To be clear, this RFP is not a solicitation for a
19 City procurement. In other words, it is not an RFP as
20 defined by the Procurement Policy Board, also known
21 as PPB Rules, and it is not subject to the PPB Rules
22 of Competition, given the legal framework that
23 governs the City's real property transactions, the
24 goal of this notification is to cast a wide net and
25

1 drive competition in the commercial market such that
2 the City gets the best offer possible.

3
4 Once we receive responses, DCAS reviews the
5 proposals received to narrow in on the best possible
6 options before beginning with negotiation with
7 potential landlords in concert with our tenant
8 representatives. We exchange term sheets, compile
9 site reports that assess building conditions, develop
10 scopes of work that outline the required design and
11 construction plans, take measurements and develop
12 cost estimates for each project.

13 Once we have decided on the terms of the lease,
14 with the selected vendor, DCAS attorneys draft the
15 lease and it goes through OMB and Law Department
16 review and approval.

17 In addition to those internal reviews, every City
18 lease goes through a public review process as
19 required by the New York City Charter. The City
20 Planning Commission reviews the City's identified
21 need for space, the location proposed to meet that
22 need, and the square footage allocated. A public
23 hearing is then conducted, and the City Council is
24 given the opportunity to review the City Planning
25 Commission's Decision.

1
2 It is only after those public approvals are
3 received that the transaction can be finalized for
4 Mayoral approval and finally lease execution by DCAS.

5 The City cannot enter into a lease without first
6 going through this public review process. Real Estate
7 Services has been consistently working towards
8 improving internal working flow of the leasing
9 process and the tracking of space utilization in an
10 effort to improve internal operations and save
11 taxpayer dollars.

12 To that end, we built a database, called
13 Archibus, documenting all non-court office spaces in
14 our portfolio to attract mayoral agency tenants,
15 square footage, and seating capacity at each
16 location. Since the database was established, we've
17 had the tools to comprehensively and strategically
18 manage the City's office portfolio in collaboration
19 with OMB and City Hall.

20 This initiative to right right-size office
21 portfolio, better known as the Space Savings Program,
22 began in November 2023 with the collection of space
23 utilization data from 46 mayoral agencies, and is now
24 starting to pay off as we're able to make informed
25 decisions regarding consolidations to optimize the

1 use of space and relinquish surplus space without
2 affecting agency operations.
3

4 In parallel to improving the active management of
5 the office portfolio, Real Estate Services has been
6 working to streamline the leasing process internally
7 and reduce the amount of time it takes to go from
8 site search to an executed lease while increasing
9 oversight of space needs and complying with all
10 mandated regulatory requirements from sister
11 agencies. This is in part being done by increasing
12 communication with OMB early on with regards to
13 project parameters and providing high level estimates
14 of the projected costs on projects so that decisions
15 can be made at the onset of the project rather than
16 after significant time and resources have been spent
17 on projects that have to be reworked.

18 In addition, we are working with our tenant
19 representatives and other internal City partners to
20 cast a wider net when combing the market for suitable
21 properties for our needs by reaching out to landlords
22 who might not have done prior business with the City
23 and conducting searches for space in neighborhoods
24 where the City has historically not had a strong
25 presence.

1 We hope these adjustments to our internal process
2 help to facilitate client agency operations by
3 providing them the space they need to serve the
4 public within a more reasonable timeline while also
5 reducing the City's expenses through a more strategic
6 use of internal resources.
7

8 Through all these efforts, we remain committed to
9 deliver the best and most cost effective outcomes on
10 behalf of all New Yorkers. Thank you for your time
11 and attention and the time to share some brief
12 remarks; I am happy to answer any questions you may
13 have.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you so much,
15 Commissioner. Congratulations on 90 days.

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And I'll start by asking
18 some questions and then kick it over to colleagues to
19 jump in.

20 I just want to start by asking a... probably the
21 question that's on everybody's mind. It's been widely
22 reported that the FBI, the Manhattan District
23 Attorney's Office, are investigating the work of
24 DCAS' Real Estate Division.
25

1
2 Can you confirm if they have conducted any
3 searches at DCAS' offices at One Center Street or
4 interviewed any DCAS employees regarding ongoing
5 investigations over the past two months?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, thank you, Chairman,
7 for your question.

8 I have not been notified about any investigation
9 by those authorities into DCAS' leasing practices.
10 And there has not been, to my knowledge to date, any
11 searches of DCAS offices at One Center Street.

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, thank you.

13 I know you're relatively new, as you discussed,
14 in this role. So, I just wanted to start with a few
15 questions to better understand your awareness of some
16 of the events that have transpired over the past two
17 years.

18 When you signed off on the lease agreement moving
19 forward at 14 Wall Street, were you aware that the
20 building was owned by large donors to Mayor Adams?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I was not aware of that.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Prior to September 26th,
23 were you aware that Deputy Commissioner Hamilton was
24 on an international trip with a lead agent of a
25

1
2 multimillion dollar tenant rep contract that he
3 oversees?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I had not been aware of
5 that.

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You were not aware the trip
7 was taking place?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was not aware the that the
9 trip was taking place.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you.

11 Are you aware that Ingrid Lewis-Martin, the chief
12 advisor to the Mayor, is a close, personal friend of
13 that same tenant rep, Diana Boutross?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was not aware of that
15 relationship.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You were not aware of the
17 relationship? Are you aware that Jesse Hamilton
18 played a instrumental role in installing her in this
19 position as the tenant rep for Cushman and Wakefield
20 on the DCAS contract?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was not aware of that.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Are you aware that DCAS
23 reduced the MWBE (Minority and Women Owned Business
24 Enterprises) goal on the Cushman and Wakefield tenant
25

1
2 rep contract from 30% to 10% after Diana Boutross
3 took over the account?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was not aware of that.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

6 It is hard for me to understand what the
7 justification would be for lowering an MWBE goal when
8 the Mayor has reportedly said that this is such a
9 critical priority for his administration.

10 Are you familiar with the monetary compensation
11 packages that tenant representative firms, like
12 Cushman and Wakefield receive, for the transactions
13 they make on behalf of DCAS?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes, in my transition to the
15 role, I am aware of what the max percentages tenant
16 representatives can receive as commissions through
17 leases or acquisitions.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right.

19 So just for awareness and for the public record,
20 for lease acquisitions like the 110 William deal, the
21 account manager for the for the tenant rep on that
22 deal makes \$6 million over five years.

23 If the Bronx Logistics Center site that Jesse
24 Hamilton has been very focused on were purchased by
25 DCAS as he as he has hoped, that would generate \$13.4

1 million for the tenant rep if it were purchased at
2 the price that had been discussed.
3

4 So we're talking about very large sums of money.
5 These are extremely lucrative contracts.

6 Okay. I just want to pull back a little bit,
7 some broader questions around the DCAS Real Estate
8 Division.

9 The DCAS Real Estate Services Division is
10 responsible for the space planning and management of
11 37 million square feet, 22 million of which are
12 leased, citywide acquisitions, architectural design,
13 project management zoning, land use analysis,
14 property valuation, financial analysis of real estate
15 transactions, and more.

16 This is a complex and critical role that DCAS
17 plays for the city of New York. Do you believe Jesse
18 Hamilton is qualified to serve as the Deputy
19 Commissioner for Real Estate Services at DCAS? And if
20 so, why?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, Deputy Commissioner
22 Hamilton was already the Commissioner Real Estate
23 Services prior to my appointment. And based on his
24 credentials - that he does have a law degree, he has
25 an MBA in finance, he has a BS in finance, he served

1
2 as the Chairman of the New York State Senate Banking
3 Committee, and he's also certified as a real property
4 tax assessment in New York's assessor in New York
5 State. So I feel that he meets the qualifications of
6 the position.

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: As far as I understand, he
8 has zero experience in commercial real estate. Is
9 that accurate based on your understanding of his
10 resume and experience?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I don't have his
12 entire professional history memorized, so I can't
13 speak to whether or not he... what is real estate
14 commercial experience has been to date (INAUDIBLE)
15 DCAS experience he has had.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right, prior to his work at
17 DCAS, he has had zero experience in commercial real
18 estate.

19 And the Real Estate Services Unit at DCAS now
20 reports to Executive Deputy Commissioner Overton, is
21 that right?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: That is correct.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And could you speak to
24 Executive Deputy Commissioner Overton's
25 qualifications for the role, specifically what

1 experiences does... or do you have, I will just ask
2 you the question directly, in real estate, facility
3 management, or construction?
4

5 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: Thank you
6 for the question. Specific to the program areas that
7 you asked about, I don't have extensive knowledge
8 about any of those areas, but I manage a team of
9 professionals that do. So, no one person in an agency
10 has subject matter expertise in all areas, but we all
11 rely on a team of this (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Yes. And you are a longtime
13 public servant at DCAS... (CROSS-TALK)

14 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: I am...

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: of 30 years, is that right?

16 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: That is
17 correct (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You started as an intern, is
19 that true?

20 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: (LAUGHS)
21 Yes...

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And, so, worked your way
23 all the way up to Executive Deputy Commissioner,
24 extensive experience in Human Services and Employee
25 Relations? Is that right?

EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: Correct,
as well as... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right, so...

EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: DCAS,
police, and the Administration.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Great. So, no particular
experience in real estate, facilities management, or
construction, but longtime employee at DCAS.

And, Commissioner, I am familiar with your many
years of government service. We worked together a
longtime, uhm, particularly your long experience in
law enforcement. Do you have any experience in real
estate?

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes, I have extensive
experience in managing very highly complex and matrix
operations which would include facility operations,
not directly negotiating real estate deals...

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right.

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But, I have managed big
operations across multiple jurisdictions across this
country.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I just think that it is
worth noting that the senior leadership team at DCAS
- Commissioner, Executive Deputy Commissioner, Deputy

1 Commissioner is responsible for a overseeing \$1.5
2 billion leasing portfolio. And that chain of command
3 has no experience in commercial real estate.
4

5 Considering the active state and federal
6 investigations into the work of the DCAS Real Estate
7 Division, how can New Yorkers have confidence that
8 their tax payer dollars are going to spend honestly
9 and efficiently, when we don't have that particular
10 experience in the leadership team at DCAS today?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Got it. So, I would like to
12 just reiterate that I have not been made aware of any
13 investigation by any of those bodies that you have
14 mentioned into DCAS' real estate leasing process.

15 What I can tell you is this, like Executive
16 Deputy Commissioner Overton stated, who is a very
17 high level strategic thinker and executive, there are
18 a number of mitigations measures, and no one person
19 has complete autonomy and authority to bind the city
20 of New Yorker, or its tax payers, in any of the real
21 estate deals.

22 Managing the real estate portfolio of this City
23 not only includes many experts that exist within DCAS
24 Real Estate Services, but also members from City
25 Hall, The Office Of Management and Budget, City

1
2 planning is involved, as well as this body, the
3 Council is involved in those processes.

4 So, there are a number of mitigation measures to
5 ensure that the City taxpayers are getting the best
6 deal, and that we are doing the strategic work needed
7 on behalf of the city agencies to make sure we find
8 them the best locations to serve their clients.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right. I appreciate that...
10 And I just want to acknowledge that Council Member
11 Brewer, Council Member Carr, and Council Member
12 Powers, thank you all for joining us this morning,
13 and Council Member Hanif is online, thank you for
14 joining us.

15 But, there is significant delegation authority
16 that is placed on the Deputy Commissioner, you placed
17 it also in the Executive Deputy Commissioner that is
18 within the Charter, that allows for those individuals
19 to make license agreements on behalf of the City.

20 There are some oversight mechanisms, there is
21 also a great deal of power that is embedded within
22 these senior officials within DCAS. And I am just
23 concerned about the lack of specific experience in
24 this area that has such broad latitude on spending.

1
2 I'd like to just shift to the, you know, reports
3 that on Friday, September 27th, Deputy Commissioner
4 Hamilton had his phone seized by investigators when
5 returning from the trip abroad that we've referenced.

6 When did you first become aware of that?

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I became aware of that the
8 week of September 30th.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Week of September 30th?
10 Okay, I'm gonna just bring up my calendar as we're
11 doing this so I can understand things.

12 And since September 30th, have you have... so
13 that's 30th was the following Monday after the... the
14 following week after the incident occurred.

15 Since that time where you became aware of his
16 phones being seized, and others' phones being seized,
17 that that handle contracts he oversees, have Mr.
18 Hamilton's responsibilities been modified at all?

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, they have not.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Did you consult with the DOI
21 on what actions to take in light of this news?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I consulted with my
23 human resources and my general counsel, review, if
24 based on public reporting, and what I knew the week
25 of September 30th, if DC Hamilton had violated any

1 DCAS policies or conference of interest rules, and he
2 had not.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So... Okay, well, that's a
5 leap, so we will get to that.

6 What authority... so, no change in authority, no
7 change in responsibilities, have any additional
8 guardrails been put in place to ensure that he's
9 acting with integrity in light of his phones being
10 seized?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, the there were no
12 guardrails placed upon the Deputy Commissioner of
13 Real Estate Services. As you pointed out a few
14 minutes ago, historically, the Deputy Commissioner of
15 Real Estate Services have been (INAUDIBLE) with the
16 delegation authority of the Commissioner to bind the
17 City to real estate transactions. And during my
18 transition that occurred 30 days prior to me
19 officially becoming the commissioner, and during my
20 first 30 days of assessing overall agency operations,
21 I felt that it was important for the Office of The
22 Commissioner, way before any of the events took place
23 here, that a direct report to me should have that
24 delegation of authority. So, that delegation of
25

1 authority does not lie with the Deputy Commissioner
2 of Real Estate.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. So since his phones
5 were seized, we've seen no change in
6 responsibilities, no authority stripped from his
7 portfolio, no additional guardrails put in place.

8 I just want to ask, you mentioned consulting with
9 your general counsel and Human Resources Division
10 around how to handle this this situation. Did you
11 consult with City Hall about whether to take any
12 action regarding Deputy Commissioner Hamilton?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I did not consult with City
14 Hall. I mean, City Hall, I've had discussions with
15 the First Deputy Mayor about what my opinion is on
16 the work that he has been doing, but I did not
17 consult about guardrails.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Does DCAS have official
19 protocols for how to treat employees who are subject
20 to ongoing law enforcement investigations?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Could you repeat that?

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Does DCAS have official
23 protocols for how to treat employees who are subject
24 to ongoing law enforcement?
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'd have to follow-up with
3 you on that and what may be in place for DCAS
4 employees. I know that the City in general has a way
5 to address those issues.

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You previously ran the
7 Department of Correction as we all know, which
8 unfortunately, has a number of employees who are
9 often subject to different types of investigations.

10 Were there policies that were in place at DOC
11 that you were responsible for implementing when a
12 correctional officer or other member of your staff
13 was subject to an investigation by legal authorities?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I mean, there are a
15 number of steps that a commissioner can take. I think
16 they have to be based on the situation at hand. In
17 some instances, if we feel as an agency that we were
18 gonna formally charge an employee, there may be steps
19 that we could take to modify that person, suspend
20 that person, depending on the person's civil service
21 status, could provide us with other limited or more
22 wide options.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Have you conducted... I know
24 you mentioned that when you came in, in the initial
25

1
2 30 days, you conducted some changes in the
3 organizational chart.

4 Have you conducted a review of the leasing
5 decisions that Deputy Commissioner Hamilton has made
6 over the previous two years since he came into this
7 role?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I have not reviewed
9 every leasing decision, but I reviewed the leasing
10 decisions related to 14 Wall Street.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, in light of his phones
12 being seized, and all of the attention around this,
13 you didn't think it was necessary to conduct a formal
14 review of the actions that he's taken in this role.

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I'm conducting an
16 overall review of just a real estate process and how
17 we do things at DCAS. And, I think there are always
18 ways to find ways to be more efficient and increase
19 and enhance transparency.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I appreciate (INAUDIBLE)...
21 (CROSS-TALK)

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) not related
23 directly to Deputy Commissioner Hamilton.

24 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I mean, I appreciate those
25 broad commitments, but considering the very

1 concerning allegations that relate to the specific
2 role that Mr. Hamilton has played, I would have
3 thought a review of his previous leasing decisions
4 would be merited.
5

6 Are you aware of First Deputy Mayor, Maria
7 Torres-Springer, or is conducting a comprehensive
8 review of the transactions or leasing decisions that
9 Jesse Hamilton has been responsible for?

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have not been notified of
11 any such review.

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. I'd like to ask
13 briefly about the trip, and then we'll shift over to
14 14 Wall. We've got a few folks who would like to ask
15 questions as well.

16 Before September 27th, you mentioned that you
17 were not aware the deputy commissioner was on an
18 international trip. Is that what you testified to
19 earlier?

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was not aware prior to the
21 September 27th?

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, you were not aware that
23 he was on this trip with Diana Boutross, the lead
24 broker for Cushman and Wakefield?
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Prior to the September 27th?

3 No.

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. And since returning,
5 have you asked Mr. Hamilton who paid for the trip?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I've had a number of
7 personal conversations with Deputy Commissioner
8 Hamilton, uh, I did not ask him who paid for the
9 trip.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Do you think... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The trip was not paid for by
12 the city of New York. It was not a business trip. It
13 was a personal vacation.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It was a personal vacation
15 that he took with somebody who handles a multimillion
16 dollar contract that he oversees.

17 Do you think it's appropriate for someone in
18 charge of such a significant, lucrative contract that
19 he oversees to vacation with that person?

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Based on what I have been
21 informed and what I know up to date, there has not
22 been anything internally that the Deputy Commissioner
23 of Real Estate has done that has violated any DCAS
24 policy or a conflict of interest.

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And have you consulted
3 with... okay, will dig into this further.

4 But did you consult with DCAS' is general
5 counsel, uhm, or COIB (Conflicts of Interest Board)
6 when you were informed about this trip?

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I consulted with the DCAS
8 general counsel and our human resource personnel.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, and...

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Being that it was not a City
11 trip, there would not have been a reason for me to
12 consult with... for the agency to consult with COIB
13 on the issue. It was a personal vacation.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: A personal vacation that he
15 took with a representative of a contract that's worth
16 many millions of dollars annually to the account
17 holder that he is responsible for overseeing. He
18 oversees the procurement process for determining
19 whether she continues to have that contract. Uhm, he
20 went on a trip with her, we don't know who paid for
21 it according to your testimony today.

22 And, you can say it was not... you don't believe
23 it was illegal based on the conversations you've had
24 with the general counsel, but it was clearly unseemly
25 and highly inappropriate. Uh...

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But we should point out that
3 Deputy Commissioner Hamilton, or whoever is the
4 Deputy Commissioner of Real Estate, does not solely
5 on their own oversee the procurement process of any
6 City lease. (INAUDIBLE).. (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Yeah, but from your...
8 (CROSS-TALK)

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) internal
10 (INAUDIBLE) body... (CROSS-TALK)

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: long experience in
12 government, you know, as well as I do, that a deputy
13 commissioner has important influence in determining
14 the vendors that they work with on contracts that
15 they oversee. There's a competitive process and that
16 they play an important role.

17 So, Mr. Hamilton's... we've seen no change in Mr.
18 Hamilton's responsibility, including his oversight of
19 this contract with Cushman and Wakefield since the
20 trip was taking place.

21 I know you mentioned there was no change in his
22 responsibilities, but he still oversees the same
23 Cushman and Wakefield contract?

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: He oversees both of the
25 tenant representative contracts that are Cushman and

1 Wakefield and CBRE Group. (INAUDIBLE).... (CROSS-
2 TALK)
3

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And have you met with Miss
5 Boutross since this trip when her phones were seized?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I've met with the Cushman
7 and Wakefield team, and I believe that was, yes,
8 post their... (CROSS-TALK)

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Yes

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: personal vacation... (CROSS-
11 TALK)

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: My understanding is that on
13 October 8th, you hosted Mr. Hamilton and Miss
14 Boutross in your office regarding the purchase of a
15 large facility that would, uh, if the purchase were
16 to move forward, or the lease were to move forward,
17 it enormous it would enormously benefit Miss Boutross
18 for many millions of dollars. Is that right?

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No. I've met with the
20 Cushman and Wakefield team, which... (CROSS-TALK)

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Led by a Miss Boutross...
22 (CROSS-TALK)

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: is apprised of about ten
24 people, which included Mrs. Boutross. But, that
25 was...

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: In your... (CROSS-TALK)

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) present a possible acquisition that's in the early stages of consideration... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: The Bronx Logistics Center...

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The Bronx Logistics Center, which may or may not be acquired... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Move forward...

And so this was, just to be clear, this meeting was hosted in your office on October 8th on the... with the Cushman and Wakefield field team, that Miss Boutross leads, and Mr. Hamilton after their phones were seized coming back from Japan... (CROSS-TALK)

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: It... Other members of the DCAS Real Estate team were also at that meeting, and it was in our DCAS office conference room at headquarters.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. We'll come back to that a little bit more.

I'm gonna just ask a couple 14 Wall Street questions. We'll then kick it to Council Member Marte and other colleagues who have questions.

1
2 So you referenced this a bit in your testimony
3 that at the beginning of the Administration, DCAS
4 implemented a new competitive request for proposals
5 process to identify office leasing opportunities.

6 When was an RFP issued for space for DFTA and
7 when were responses due?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I haven't noted the date for
9 you. I just wanna look it up here.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I'm happy to ask you to
11 confirm (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So the pilot RFP in question
13 that you're referring to was issued in September of
14 2024... 2023.

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right. And responses were
16 due?

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: In November of 2023. It was
18 about eight weeks.

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And which building did DCAS
20 select as the finalist and begin lease negotiations
21 with?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, we selected 14 Wall
23 Street in the end.

24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, a finalist was selected
3 and lease negotiations ensued with a particular
4 building. Could you clarify which building that was?

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So at stages of the
6 framework of the request for proposal process, the
7 two best and leading candidates were 250 Broadway and
8 14 Wall Street.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: A best and final offer was
10 made to 250 Broadway. Is that correct?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I would not characterize it
12 as a best and final offer. I would characterize it
13 that we had some agreement in what 250 Broadway's
14 position was, but these negotiations, like the
15 majority of real estate negotiations, are very fluid.
16 And we are always seeking the best price for the City
17 taxpayers of this city. And 14 Wall Street, from the
18 onset, was always the cheapest option for City
19 taxpayers.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, just so I understand,
21 DCAS entered into negotiations with 250 Broadway,
22 made a best and final offer to 250 Broadway, which is
23 a technical term, a best and final offer was made to
24 that tenant, uh, to that building owner, excuse me,
25 for a deal to be transacted. And Deputy Commissioner

1 Hamilton unilaterally reached out to DCAS officials
2 and informed them that he was no longer interested in
3 moving forward with 250 Broadway, that he was
4 redirecting the transaction to 14 Wall Street.

5
6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I think it's important
7 to frame things in the proper way. First of all, 14
8 Wall Street was always the preferred location for the
9 Department of The Aging. And we give a lot of
10 deference to agencies as to where they best feel that
11 workers can do their work and then serve the clients
12 that they serve. With that, we then begin to
13 negotiate with a number of parties that want to do
14 business with the City and 14 Wall Street was part of
15 that consideration process.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Commissioner Molina, I've
17 been... I've worked for the City for a long time as
18 you know...

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And I cannot recall an
21 instance where an agency makes a best and final
22 offer, and then unilaterally walks away from it for
23 no apparent reason. So I'm confused. When was the
24 BAFO made for 250 Broadway?

25 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: When was the what made?

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: When was the best and final
3 offer made for 250 Broadway? Do you have a date? You
4 said you reviewed this case... (CROSS-TALK)

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) We can provide
6 you (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: you've reviewed the emails?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: when we communicated with
9 250 Broadway... 250 Broadway. But again, this was not
10 a binding lease. This was a fluid negotiation process
11 that we have to ensure that we have the best price
12 possible for City taxpayers. And at the end of the
13 day, 14 Wall Street represented was 30... over \$31
14 million cheaper than locating the Department of the
15 Aging at 250 Broadway, which was not the location
16 they wanted to be in they wanted to be in 14 Wall
17 Street.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, I just wanna make sure I
19 follow this right. That's... the final offer was made
20 250 Broadway was selected. Right? So, best and final
21 offer was made, if I have this right, tell me if this
22 is correct, 250 Broadway and 14 Wall Street, and DCAS
23 selected 250 Broadway. And then... (CROSS-TALK)

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, 250 Broadway was under
25 serious consideration, but there was there... was not

1
2 a binding agreement made with the ownership group of
3 250 Broadway. It is a fluid situation to make sure
4 that we get the best price for the City taxpayers of
5 the city. And 14 Wall Street represented an over \$31
6 million savings by placing the agency there, where
7 they wanted to be versus 250 Broadway, which was a
8 location that they did not like.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, just so I understand,
10 DCAS selected 250 Broadway based on its best and
11 final offer, and then unilaterally changed its course
12 of action?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No. DCAS had under the
14 serious consideration, entering into agreement with
15 250 Broadway. And that consideration was nonbinding,
16 and there was a back and forth negotiation... (CROSS-
17 TALK)

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, there was no selection
19 process of 250 Broadway where they were selected
20 based on their best and final offer? You're
21 testifying today... I just want to make sure that I
22 have this on the record very clearly. Because, we've
23 heard from many people, inside and outside the
24 Administration, who have told this explicitly
25 contrary to this.

1
2 So, I just wanna make sure I have it... (CROSS-
3 TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Sure...

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: clear from you on the record
6 that have this accurately.

7 A best and final offer was made to 250 Broadway.
8 It was selected by DCAS. The City walked away from it
9 and then unilaterally shifted course to 14 Wall
10 Street? You're saying that is not true.

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No. What I'm saying
12 is... (CROSS-TALK)

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, you're...

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: 250 Broadway... First of
15 all, we should take a step back.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. Let's try again...
17 (CROSS-TALK)

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The (INAUDIBLE) RFP was
19 nonbinding. And the nonbinding standards of that RFP
20 were made very clear in the language of the RFP for
21 all parties to understand. Right? And the goal of
22 that RFP was to do a couple of things. One, make sure
23 that we can move faster in selecting a site and
24 executing the lease on behalf of the City, a process
25 that normally takes sometimes over two years, we

1 wanted to go between seven and 14 months. That was
2 our goal.
3

4 We also wanted to open up the opportunity, as you
5 stated, minority and woman owned business, landlords
6 possibly that had never really done work with the
7 City, to be able to be given consideration of that.

8 And we advertised the pilot RFP on our website
9 and in Crain's Business Magazine, so that individuals
10 could know that it was being offered.

11 But, again, it was nonbinding. As we evaluated
12 originally what I would describe as the four optimal
13 locations that could possibly house Aging, Aging's
14 preference was always to be in 14 Wall Street.

15 As we were going through the scoring process, it
16 appeared at that moment that 250 Broadway might be
17 the better option. But, given that we were gonna
18 ultimately have a savings of over \$31 million, Aging
19 was adaptable, and the layout of 14 Wall Street,
20 there was capital improvements that did not have to
21 be done at 14 Wall Street, and that saved the
22 taxpayers of the City over \$31 million.

23 Nothing in the communications, though seriously
24 considered, option of going to 250 Broadway were
25 binding. No lease was executed.

1
2 What we're committed to is making sure that we're
3 bringing the best value to the City taxpayers of the
4 city, and that's what happened in this process.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I appreciate the context
6 that you're providing.

7 I just want to, again, get as clear as I can on
8 the record, a best and final offer was made to 250
9 Broadway and 14 Wall. DCAS selected 250 Broadway, and
10 then Deputy Commissioner Hamilton unilaterally
11 decided to move in a different direction.

12 You're saying that is not true?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm saying that 250 Broadway
14 was under serious consideration... (CROSS-TALK)

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Could I just get a yes or
16 no on that, because I just... (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: based... based... (CROSS-
18 TALK)

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: want to make sure I get it.

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: on what I know to date, 250
21 Broadway was under serious consideration. But, it was
22 not in a binding situation with 250 Broadway. And it
23 was our responsibility to evaluate every location to
24 bring the best deal forward for the City's
25 taxpayers... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Just... I just want to be
3 very clear on the record.. (CROSS-TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) on \$31
5 million... (CROSS-TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: to say to that, we have
7 gotten very clear information from people who are
8 involved in this process that 250 Broadway was
9 selected with the best and final offer. And there, as
10 was been reported in the press, emails from Deputy
11 Commissioner Hamilton that unilaterally decided to
12 move in a different direction. Understanding it had
13 been one of the sites that was considered, but after
14 a best and final offer was selected, for 250
15 Broadway, Deputy Commissioner Hamilton chose to go to
16 a different building. Uhm (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Deputy Commissioner Hamilton
18 made the decision that helped save the taxpayers of
19 this city over \$31 million.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, isn't it troubling that
21 the Deputy Commissioner could just unilaterally
22 choose which building to pick or not pick? Which...
23 (CROSS-TALK)

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: He didn't unilaterally do
25 that... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It sounds... certainly
3 sounds like it.

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-
5 TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You just said he made the
7 decision to say tax payor's money... He didn't
8 unilaterally make that decision? (CROSS-TALK)

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: He made decision in
10 consultation with the former general counsel, that
11 that... (CROSS-TALK)

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Didn't the... Oh... (CROSS-
13 TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: made it clear that that...
15 (CROSS-TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: let's get into that...

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: the decision was
18 nonbinding... (CROSS-TALK)

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So... (CROSS-TALK)

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: with 250 Broadway... (CROSS-
21 TALK)

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Commissioner Molina, you
23 said you reviewed this file, this case...

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Is it not true that... Or is
3 it true that the former general counsel deemed the
4 decision to move away from 250 Broadway as
5 unadvisable? Is that true?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, what the former general
7 Counsel, based on what I have seen acknowledged, that
8 the optics of changing the could be troubling to
9 people, but it was not a illegal decision to make.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Not illegal, but
11 unadvisable?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, we get advice from
13 counselors all the time.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: The general counsel advised
15 against making this decision. I think it's notable
16 that the general counsel advised against making this
17 decision. And while... and when did the general
18 counsel advise against making this decision?

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't know the exact date
20 of when he advised that the optics of making a
21 decision might be troubling.

22 But, it's important to note that we have to first
23 and foremost be concerned about city taxpayers
24 spending over \$31 million more on a location in which
25 the Department of Aging did not want to be in.

1 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

2 So, the general counsel and the former agency
3 leadership advised against this decision. You began
4 July 1, 2024.

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: When were you first briefed
7 on the 14 Wall Street lease?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can't recall at what stage
9 I was briefed exactly on the 14 Wall Street decision.
10 I... (CROSS-TALK)

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, you had made the
12 decision to move forward on the 14 Wall Street lease
13 after it had been previously halted, delayed?

14 When you did that, were you aware that the former
15 agency leadership and the former general counsel had
16 thought that it was unadvisable to move forward on 14
17 Wall Street?

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I didn't know about the
19 former general Counsel's position. What I was aware
20 of when the decision was made for us to move forward
21 with 14 Wall Street that we were gonna be saving the
22 city over \$31 million.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, you feel a 100%
24 confident that all protocols and regulations had been
25

1 followed, that there was no corruption involved in
2 steering this estimated \$4 million a year, \$20
3 million 20 year lease, to a massive mayoral donor?
4 You're 100% confident there is no corruption, every
5 protocol was followed appropriately, this is
6 absolutely on the up and up?
7

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Based on what I have seen to
9 date, the best decision and deal for City tax payers
10 was made.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And you're aware of the...
12 (CROSS-TALK)

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: and we saved 30... Over \$31
14 million.

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, you were... You
16 mentioned that you were not aware, earlier in the
17 testimony, of who owns 14 Wall Street when you
18 decided to move forward on this decision? Is that
19 right? That's what you had testified to at the
20 beginning of the hearing?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Aware of what?

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You were not aware of who
23 owned 14 Wall Street when you decided to move forward
24 on the deal?

25 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I was not.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Uhm, but the owner, as you
3 know now, is Alex Rovt, is that correct?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: That's what's been reported,
5 yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And you are aware that the
7 owner has donated \$15,000 to the Mayor's legal
8 defense fund 14 days after the RFP closed?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't know that with
10 certainty. I know that that's what has been reported.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

12 I would like to offer Council Member Marte, who
13 represents Lower Manhattan, the chance to ask
14 questions...

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Sure...

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And, then, we will follow
17 that up with maybe Council Member Schulman or Council
18 Member Powers, and then we will go to Brewer.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Thank you, Chair Restler,
20 for your questioning. Thank you, Commissioner, for
21 being hereabout

22 Uhm, you repeatedly mentioned that you were
23 looking for the best deal for New Yorkers to save \$31
24 million. However, wouldn't it be cheaper to renovate
25

1
2 the current 2 Lafayette location, where DFTA is at,
3 then actually move a whole agency to somewhere new?

4 Uhm, in 2021, in July 2021, there was an
5 appraisal of renovations costs for 2 Lafayette
6 Street. How much was that?

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I would have to get back
8 with you on the exact numbers of what the possible
9 cost of renovating 2 Lafayette was. I think it is
10 important... And I will get back to you with the
11 numbers, but I think it is important to understand
12 that if we... I believe it was more costly, but I
13 will confirm what that number is for you.

14 The other question is, if we were to pursue that,
15 we would have still had to find temporary space for
16 Department of Aging, and they would have had to go
17 somewhere to be able to continue their operations.

18 So, what this deal represents, with 14 Wall
19 Street, is an over \$31 million savings versus going
20 to 250 Broadway

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: But, from your experience
22 of managing massive real estate portfolios, in your
23 current position and your previous position at DOC,
24 wouldn't it be cheaper in the long run to relocate an
25 agency for a year or two, while renovations happen,

1
2 at a much cheaper space, uhm, and, then, bring them
3 back and pay lesser rent?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't know. I mean, each
5 scenario has to be evaluated on its own. So, as I sit
6 here today, I can't tell you if a complete gut rehab
7 and rebuilding of 2 Lafayette would have been cheaper
8 or not, because I don't have those numbers in front
9 of me. It may have been.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: And why was 2 Lafayette
11 inadequate for DFTA's headquarters?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Uh, 2 Lafayette, so I am
13 just being notified now, the 2 Lafayette renovation
14 cost would have been approximately \$80 million. And
15 that would not have counted any temporary relocation
16 lease that we would have had to pay for - or what the
17 impact of that operation to try to move Aging to a
18 temporary location would have had on, not only its
19 workforce, but also the clients that they serve.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Okay. Can you send us that
21 information (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Absolutely.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Thank you.
24
25

1
2 What is the current plan for 2 Lafayette now that
3 it is vacant? Has the City created a plan of how to
4 move forward with the space?

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, 2 Lafayette is not
6 vacant. It's still be occupied by DFTA. The lease for
7 14 Wall Street has yet to be executed.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Mm-hmm?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: That is still going through
10 its approval process. And what our plans may be for 2
11 Lafayette moving forward have yet to be determined.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: But, wouldn't, for it to be
13 used by a city agency, it would still have to be
14 renovated, potentially...

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Oh, absolutely.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: And, so, you're going to do
17 that cost anyway. You're going to do that
18 renovation...

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: anyway probably for another
21 City tenant?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: It's possible, yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Okay. Are there... You
24 said, you mentioned, I want to be correct, there is
25 no capital improvements at 14 Wall Street?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: There is none. It is a
3 turnkey deal. So, they are moving in, uh, the
4 Department of Aging, and we will be using the
5 existing space as it is laid out to include the
6 furniture - there might be some minor, small touchups
7 that have to be done, but it is not at any capital
8 cost to the City taxpayers.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: And is 14 Wall Street a
10 larger office than 2 Lafayette?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't know the square
12 footage off the top of my head of 2 Lafayette. I just
13 know that the usable square footage that we will be
14 using at 14 Wall Street is just over 80,000 usable
15 square feet.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: I mention that because, as
17 we all know, a lot of office workers now work remote.
18 And many don't go to the office five days a week, uh,
19 especially when a lot of these estimates about who is
20 going to use the space and how long they are going to
21 be used.

22 So, hopefully, it's a smaller space, because then
23 there wouldn't really be any reason to make this
24 massive move by the agency.

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I wouldn't describe it
3 as a massive move. I think that ,you know, we
4 relocated agencies many times, uh, expanded agencies
5 if that was needed. And, of course, with our space
6 savings, uhm, initiative, we are taking into
7 consideration the fact that we have individuals that
8 work for the City, that are now working...
9 teleworking two days a week, and take that into
10 consideration to be able to downsize square footage
11 that is needed.

12 Chair Restler, I have two more questions.

13 Are there any other city agencies at 14 Wall
14 Street?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Not to my knowledge.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Has the City... (CROSS-
17 TALK)

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But, I can confirm that and
19 follow up.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Does the City have office
21 spaces within the portfolio of the property manager
22 at 14 Wall Street? (TIMER CHIMES)

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't know the answer to
24 that question now. But, I can see if we have any
25

1
2 lease space that we are leasing under the same
3 existing ownership and get back to you on that.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: And my final question, DCAS
5 has the power to withdraw this application, right?
6 And, so, wouldn't you think with all the
7 questionings, all the press that's been coming out
8 about this transaction, that you would withdraw it,
9 take a second look, make sure that all the t's are
10 crossed, and the i's are dotted, before trying to
11 move forward with this application?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: So, you're fully confident
14 on the process, fully confident on all of the numbers
15 that this was the best deal for New Yorkers?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: As I sit here today, this
17 was the best deal for New Yorkers that saved New York
18 taxpayers over \$31 million.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: I know you've been on the
20 job for just 90 days or so, but maybe when you were
21 Commissioner of DOC, have you ever gone through an
22 RFP process where the application was given to the
23 Council, and you reconsidered and withdrew the
24 application?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have been involved with a
3 number of RFPs across different jurisdictions in my
4 time leading or co-leading agencies. It is possible
5 that that may have happened, but in the moment, it
6 doesn't come to mind.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Okay, I just want to say
8 that it is unprecedented not to do that. You can
9 withdraw at any time. I have been involved with DCAS
10 site depositions where it was withdrawn at the last
11 moment when it was within the Council. So, I highly
12 suggest, probably for the best of all New Yorkers,
13 and probably for the best of the reputation and trust
14 at DCAS, that you withdraw this application, review
15 everything before resubmitting it to the City
16 Council.

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Thank you for your
18 suggestion.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I just want to thank Council
21 Member Marte for his sharp line of questioning, and
22 ,you know, note, you testified today, Commissioner,
23 that you were not aware of the donations that were
24 made, the \$15,000 made to legal defense fund to the
25 Mayor's legal defense fund. You were not aware of

1 that, and yet you are totally confident that this is
2 on the up and up, and that you are not even
3 considering withdrawing the application considering
4 all of the scrutiny and questions that have been
5 raised around the questionable decision making.
6

7 I just, for me, there is a serious disconnect
8 there that I struggling with.

9 We will now go to Council Member Schulman,
10 followed by Council Member Powers. I would also like
11 to acknowledge Council Member Gutiérrez, Council
12 Member Vernikov, and Council Member Paladino, thank
13 them all for joining us.

14 And, now, Council Member Schulman?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Good morning,
16 Commissioner, how are you? (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Good morning, ma'am.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, a question, who owns
19 14 Wall Street?

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: What's does it has a company
21 name? Alexander Rovt owns 14 Wall Street, but I just
22 want to be sure, there might not be a business or
23 company name that might be the ownership documents of
24 the location.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay, it's a very
3 popular subject today, so I would presume you can
4 find exactly who owns it, and especially if you are
5 doing business with them.

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, how does the
8 floorplate (sic) of 14 Wall Street compared to 2
9 Lafayette?

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The floorplan?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, it's two big
13 distinctions. One of the issues that made 250
14 Broadway so much more expensive for City taxpayers,
15 in addition to the per square footage rate being much
16 higher than 14 Wall Street, 250 Broadway, because it
17 was raw space, required the City to contribute over
18 \$10 million of capital improvements to that location.
19 And 14 Wall Street is turnkey location in which the
20 Department of Aging is willing to take the property
21 as is to include the furniture, so that there is no
22 capital improvement costs to going to 14 Wall Street
23 - which is Aging's preferred location, and has always
24 been cheaper per square footage than 250 Broadway.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: I know my colleague,
3 Council Member Mate, asked about other city agencies
4 there.

5 How many, just in terms of number, I know he
6 asked for specifics, how many other city agencies are
7 at 14 Wall Street right now?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can follow-up with you...
9 there are none - I've just been informed there are
10 none... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, if there are none,
12 but yet it's being made a priority over 250 Broadway,
13 which does have a number of city agencies, that's...
14 there's sort of a disconnect, for me, there's a
15 little bit of a disconnect. I understand you talking
16 about the money saved, but if we're already doing
17 business with a company that owns 250 Broadway, I'm
18 sure that that could have been negotiated, but I'm
19 just I'm just making a comment there.

20 So, what is the Citywide Space Saving Task Force?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The Citywide Space Saving
22 Task Force?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Mm-hmm

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Give me a second here.
25

1 The Citywide Space Saving Task Force, it was...
2
3 it's an initiative that was kicked off under the
4 First Deputy Mayor, Sheena Wright, in November of
5 2023, and we continue to report on our progress to
6 the office of the First Deputy Mayor, who is now FDM
7 Torres-Springer...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Mm-hmm

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: and is working closely in
10 partnership to ensure that we identify space that the
11 City is utilizing, both city owned space as well as
12 lease space, to make sure that any excess space,
13 under used space, that we are utilizing appropriately
14 or downsizing where downsizing is appropriate.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: No, it's a great idea.

16 Do you know the members, who's on who's on it,
17 who serves on it?

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I mean, the Office of
19 the First Deputy Mayor, members of OMB, members of
20 DCAS are part of that initiative.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: How often do they meet?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I could follow up with you
23 and how often they meet... (CROSS-TALK)

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: You can get us these
25 details?

1
2 And what's the scope of their duties?

3 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, there were different
4 stages regarding the initiative. So, in the first
5 stage of the initiative was really data collection,
6 and that took place between November of 2023 February
7 2024. Between February and May of 2024, DCAS did data
8 analysis on the information that was collected, and
9 we also utilized surveys and data from the City Owned
10 And Leased Portfolio Report to make an assessment so
11 that we can make some saving target recommendations
12 to the agencies. And, of course, the agencies who are
13 critical partners in this process, are thinking about
14 ways they may be able to consolidate space.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So they haven't come up
16 with any recommendations yet?

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Not as of yet. It's ongoing,
18 the work... (CROSS-TALK)

19 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Do you know when they're
20 expected to?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I hope - my goal is that I
22 hope that we get to sort of a plan way forward by the
23 end of the year.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, it's been reported
25 that the Citywide Space Savings Task Force has asked

1 the Law Department, Fire Department, and Social
2 Services to reduce their office footprint. Are these
3 the only agencies that you're asking to reduce space?
4

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I would not think that
6 they're the only agency that we're asking to reduce
7 space, you know, to give credit to Council Member
8 Marte's statement earlier, we are in a new world of
9 work today. So, we have a lot of members of our city
10 workforce that are working remote. We are helping our
11 workforce adapt to the culture where it's not one
12 desk, one person, and we have a lot of shared spaces.

13 So, it's an ongoing partnership that will involve
14 many of the city's agencies, not just the ones that
15 you've mentioned.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, the last question I
17 have, there are a number (TIMER CHIMES)... Chair, I
18 just want to finish my... thank you.

19 There are a number of vacancies, as we know,
20 mayoral agencies, and we're trying to... we're
21 working with the City to try and get people to join
22 the Administration and all of that.

23 So, if you're reducing space, how are you going
24 to have room if we really do start recruiting and
25 getting more workers?

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, it's a great question.

So, I think it depends on the work (INAUDIBLE)
you are describing...

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Mm-hmm

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: For those workers that are
working two days remotely and three days in the
office, there is what is normally called a hoteling
concept of shared spaces, that workers can share in
order to get their work done.

And that speaks to us moving away from a one
desk, one person concept, and just being more sound
with rightsizing our city spaces.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thanks so much.

We will now shift to Council... (CROSS-TALK)

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you, Council Member
Schulman.

We will now shift to Council Member Powers,
followed by Council Member Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you.

Hey, Commissioner. I wanted to go back to
something you said earlier.

When DCAS scored the RFP applications, was 250
Broadway scored higher than 14 Wall Street?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes, in one area of the
3 scoring of the four locations under consideration,
4 there was one area where 250 Broadway scored higher.

5 Now, it's important to understand that when we
6 did the pilot RFP, what we sent out was a lot of
7 information that normally would not be shared with
8 prospective landlords - and one of those were floor
9 plans, also known as test fits, to see if within the
10 existing footprint the agency's operations can be
11 placed.

12 And initially at the time, the test fit scored
13 higher at 250 Broadway, because it was completely raw
14 space, which will require an over \$10 million capital
15 improvement to meet the needs of Aging. In
16 conversation with Department of Aging and their
17 preferred desire to go to 14 Wall Street, they
18 communicated to DCAS that the test fit wasn't
19 absolute, and they thought that they can adapt to the
20 current layout of 14 Wall Street, which benefited
21 City taxpayers, because it saved us over \$31 million,
22 that Aging could do that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: So, there are areas where
24 250 Broadway scored higher, and, then you... there
25 was an evaluation also on cost and on, of course,

1 agency preference. I'm not sure agency preferences
2 goes into the scoring, does it?

3
4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I mean, it's something that
5 we take seriously into consideration, agency
6 preference. But, I think as far as the scoring of the
7 locations, I don't know that that gave it... gave
8 that weight in... (CROSS-TALK)

9 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, how many areas are
10 the four locations scored on? And how in many did 250
11 Broadway score highest... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: higher than 14 Wall Street
14 on?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: They are scored on test fit,
16 they are scored on a site visit score, and there is a
17 landlord interview score.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay. And those three
19 categories, what was 250 Broadway relative to 14 Wall
20 Street in terms of scoring?

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, 250 Broadway scored
22 higher, on the test fit at a 90 versus a 45. On the
23 on the site visit score, 14 Wall Street scored a 90,
24 and 250 Broadway scored in 85. And on the landlord

1 interview score, 14 Wall Street scored in 80, and 250
2 Broadway scored in 85.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay. So, 250 Broadway
5 scored higher in two of the three categories, and I
6 would say it's relatively close in the second
7 category.

8 And the 1st category doubled 14 Wall Street. So,
9 on the scoring, it strikes me that 250 Broadway was
10 scoring higher than 14 Wall Street.

11 I recognize and I understand the point about the
12 tax dollars, and I think that is important. But, how
13 often does DCAS taking the lower scoring application
14 when they score them out?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I think it's important
16 to point out that this process that we engage in was
17 a pilot process, and this RFP does not abide by the
18 PPB rules, and also was a nonbinding process.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I understand that. I guess
20 my question is in normal procedures, you take the
21 highest scoring application. Is that correct?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can't say that's in normal
23 procedures, because this was a pilot RFP.

24 What I can say is that in real estate, it is a
25 fluid situation where we're taking it under

1 consideration what might be the best for the city as
2 far as taxpayers and what might be (INAUDIBLE)...
3
4 (CROSS-TALK)

5 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Well, so, I guess my
6 question is, if you have a higher scoring
7 application, and then you have you have a highest
8 scoring application between two applications, and you
9 have a cost differential. What is the normal
10 procedure for them how to choose those locations?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: We enter into what will be a
12 negotiated process with the locations under
13 consideration. We work with our partner agencies, in
14 this case, the Department of Aging, to find out what
15 would be their preferred space, how their operations
16 work in either space, what their flexibility is, and
17 then cost is also a major factor. And here, we had a
18 \$31 million savings.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay. But, it sounds to
20 me, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but it
21 sounds to me, like, in the process, DCAS had scored
22 the RFP application higher for 250 Broadway. The
23 general counsel agreed with that assessment or
24 thought it was inadvisable to change that assessment,
25

1 and there was a decision to go to 14 Wall Street...

2 (CROSS-TALK)

3
4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: My understanding is that
5 general counsel felt that the optics of going to 14
6 Wall Street might look troubling, but was not
7 illegal. (TIMER CHIMES) And in my in my assessment,
8 it would have been more important to do two things,
9 get an agency in a location that they preferred and
10 not in my opinion, spend over \$31 million more to be
11 in 250 Broadway, because we were concerned that the
12 decision we were making might look a little troubling
13 to outside observers. We're here to explain that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Understood.

15 But, can you just explain to us why the general
16 counsel thought it was advisable even optically?
17 Like, what were the optics that they were that...
18 that the General... the former general counsel was
19 concerned about in terms of switching?

20 Because, I guess, what was the underlying... What
21 was the underlying criteria that they were using to
22 then say if you were switching, I would be concerned
23 about the optics of that?

24

25

1
2 I would have assumed it would be the score, that
3 they've scored higher in the assessment and then
4 there was a switch.

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah. Well, I mean, if you'd
6 like to call the former general counsel himself to
7 speak with him, he... (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

8 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Well, I assume you...
9 (CROSS-TALK)

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I assume that you had a
12 conversation with the general counsel? And they...
13 When they... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I didn't have a
15 conversation with the general Counsel, because he
16 retired. And at the time, these conversations
17 occurred as, I have been briefed to date, he was
18 having them with Deputy Commissioner Hamilton and the
19 former Commissioner Dawn Pinnock. His concern was
20 that we were in serious consideration for 250
21 Broadway, it appeared that we were leaning in that
22 direction to possibly execute at lease with 250
23 Broadway, but at the end of the day, the best fiscal
24 decision for the City, and the preferred location for
25

1 Aging, was 14 Wall Street, and it saved the City
2 taxpayers over \$31 million.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: So, I just want to finish
5 on this question.

6 In a normal, I know it's a pilot, but in a normal
7 I'm asking an honest question. This is not a gotcha
8 question.

9 In an on in a normal selection process for an
10 office space, if DCAS ranks one higher than another,
11 how often do they change the decision based on the
12 cost consideration?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I think the rankings
14 traditionally of locations are fluid, and at one
15 point, a location could be higher than another,
16 another location could be higher, it is a fluid
17 situation until we get what we think is the best deal
18 for City taxpayers.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, the Chair asked a
20 couple questions including whether there was a review
21 of other real estate transactions that this deputy
22 commissioner was involved in. And, I think the answer
23 was no. There was an answer... a question about
24 guardrails that were put in place. I believe the
25 answer was, no. There was a question about knowledge

1 of review by the Deputy Mayor's Office, I believe
2 the answer was, no. I believe there were questions
3 about knowledge about the vacation, and the answer
4 was, no.
5

6 Have there been any changes of modifications to
7 the role in responsibilities of the Deputy
8 Commissioner?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: There have been no changes or
10 modifications in the role of the Deputy Commissioner
11 of Real Estate. The one change that I made, which
12 predates these events, as I was coming in, I felt
13 that if the City was gonna be bound to lease deals,
14 that that decision laid with my office and the
15 Executive Deputy Commissioner of Asset and Property
16 Management. So, I changed the delegation of authority
17 to the Executive Deputy Commissioner of Property
18 Management, so that the office of the commissioner
19 can have greater insight into City real estate
20 operations.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, my piece of advice,
22 for what it's worth, is that there is a comprehensive
23 review done here, and that we do reevaluate a real
24 estate transactions. And, certainly, whether you
25 think something was illegal or not, it does raise

1 questions about how it was it was evaluated and it
2 was, ultimately the decision was made...

3
4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: and I recognize costs
6 considerations, I recognize agency preference as
7 things that are part of the evaluation process. There
8 is also a scoring process as part of our (INAUDIBLE)
9 that feels quite important. So, if this agency is not
10 taking it, and you're not aware of the Deputy Mayor
11 doing a review, which I became aware of in this
12 hearing as well, I do think it's worth looking at all
13 the transactions that the Deputy Commissioner has
14 been part of to better understand whether other
15 questions will be raised in other transactions as
16 well.

17 Do you agree with that?

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I thank you for your
19 suggestion.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, so I guess not.

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (LAUGHS)

22 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And finally, is the Deputy
23 Commissioner testifying today?

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: He is not.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: We did request that he
3 attend.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, okay... (CROSS-TALK)

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And he did say to the press
6 oddly yesterday that he was definitely coming, but we
7 have not yet seen him.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I just think, a couple
10 clarifying questions, based on Council Member Powers'
11 thoughtful line of questioning, and then we will
12 shift to Council Member Brewer.

13 Could you clarify the offer for 250 Broadway, you
14 said required extensive work at tax payer expense?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Could you break that down
17 for us? Was the landlord of 250 Broadway prepared to
18 cover the vast majority of the cost to renovate the
19 space to accommodate the City?

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Uhm, we were going to cover
21 just over \$10 million of it, and the landlord was
22 going to cover the balance of that.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Can you confirm that?

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm... (CROSS-TALK)

25 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: That that's... It...

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: What, you want me to confirm
3 the number?

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: No, I am asking if the
5 Executive Deputy Commissioner can just confirm that,
6 because I don't believe that's true. I just wanted to
7 give her the chance to correct that with you.

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Oh, so you don't believe
9 that I'm telling you the truth... (CROSS-TALK)

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I don't believe you have the
11 right numbers. I just want to just ask, so I am just
12 asking the question, is that accurate?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes, it's accurate.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, uhm, (INAUDIBLE)
15 inconsistent with our understanding.

16 And, then, could you... (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I... If you want, I
18 can share the exact number of the capital improvement
19 costs that the City tax payers would have had to have
20 to have paid, were approximately \$10,240,745.00.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: That is not the number that
22 the landlord committed to cover?

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, that is our portion that
24 we have to cover...

25 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay...

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The landlord would have
3 covered the difference... (CROSS-TALK)

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: We would love to review that
5 data... (CROSS-TALK)

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: We can follow up with you
7 and give the exact number (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Uhm, that would be great...
9 (CROSS-TALK)

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA and, then, we'll give...
11 (CROSS-TALK)

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And, then, could you confirm
13 the date, once again, that you delegated the
14 authority for license agreements to Executive Deputy
15 Commissioner Overton?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Uhm, I did that in
17 September... Well, we executed... Well, I was in... I
18 was in conversations regarding the delegation of
19 authority with my general Counsel. And we executed it
20 on December... on October 9th.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: October 9th? Okay, so that
22 did follow... (CROSS-TALK)

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But, we began talking about
24 it September... about it September 3rd... (CROSS-
25 TALK)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, so, following the
3 phone seizures of Jesse Hamilton, the delegation
4 authority was shifted to Executive Deputy
5 Commissioner Overton?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The discussions of shifting
7 delegation began on September 3rd, and we executed it
8 on October 9th, because they are complex legal
9 delegation documents.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, just wanted to make
11 sure we had that accurately for the... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Sure...

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: record.

14 Yes, Council Member Brewer, our former chair of
15 this fine committee?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Oh, gosh, that was a long
17 time ago. You thought Correction was difficult. Ha!

18 (LAUGHTER)

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I miss the Department of
20 Corrections, because as you know, Council Member,
21 that was very passionate work for me.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes, I know. This is more
23 challenging, however. Uhm...

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I think there are different
25 challenges, but... (CROSS-TALK)

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Oh, okay...

2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: nonetheless, I am happy to
3 be here with you today... (CROSS-TALK)

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, one of my questions,
5 before you were there, of course, these two real
6 estate companies were selected. Do you know how long
7 they are contract is? Or how is that contract
8 determined, et cetera, (INAUDIBLE) Cushman and
9 Wakefield and CBRE... (CROSS-TALK)

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Okay...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Because... And, also, how
12 do we know what their commission payments are? Just
13 in terms of those... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Got it...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: two companies?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Got it.

17 So, I can go back to 2017, is when CBRE Group and
18 Cushman and Wakefield were selected as the tenant
19 representatives for the City. They are also known as
20 brokers, those kind of are interchangeable in title.
21 Back in 2017, that contract was three years long,
22 with one two-year renewal. And there have been
23 negotiated acquisition extensions since then. We are
24 preparing to have an RFP, which is guided by
25

1
2 procurement rules, which is different than our real
3 estate transactions...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right.

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: that's going to be really
6 soon, so that we can expand the number of tenant
7 representatives who can represent the City on real
8 estate transactions.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, that's a good thing,
10 because that will go out soon to have perhaps the new
11 people representing the City in these tenant
12 discussions. Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, it's a competitive...

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right, we'll see.

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: PPB process...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Exactly...

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: We'll see.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And, then, their
19 commission and payments, are those hidden from the
20 public, or does one get to know what they make on
21 these deals?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, it's in the contract,
23 and what we have in the tenant rep contract is a cap.
24 So, these tenant representatives also represent some
25 of the locations being proposed. And the commissions

1
2 that tenant representatives get are paid by the
3 landlords. They're not paid by the City.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. So, they're all paid
5 by the owner? Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The other question I have
8 is, now maybe discuss this earlier, but the amount of
9 space at 2 Lafayette is more than what would be at 14
10 Wall Street, right? More space? Is it just...

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I can... I can follow
12 up with you as far as the size of 2 Lafayette versus
13 14 Wall Street.

14 I can tell you that at 14 Wall Street, we will be
15 charged the usable square footage of just over 80,000
16 square feet.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, because I think it's
18 hundred-something, not to say maybe it's not as
19 conducive, I don't know, at 2 Lafayette.

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, the Department of
21 Aging deemed it conducive to their operations.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, now, the other issue
23 I have is having worked with the City for a 100
24 years, it seems to me that there is... there are

1 fewer, as you suggested, people working for the City
2 and less time in City space...

3
4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, why in the world do we
6 need more space now? Because, it would seem to me if
7 we have fewer employees...

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And we are not working
10 necessarily five days a week, yet it seems, according
11 to the press, that we have doubled the amount of
12 space that we are either leasing or on.

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I don't understand how
15 that works.

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I think it is important
17 that traditionally, many of these real estate
18 transactions take two to three years to realize. So,
19 what's being reported from our MMR...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: right...

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Are lease transactions that
22 were already in the pipeline of being done, that in
23 many cases predate the Administration, and also
24 include the square footage that was needed to deal
25 with the migrant asylum crisis.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. But ,you know, it's
3 very nontransparent. For example, I don't know what's
4 available at One Center Street, having worked there
5 for many, many years, I understand that there is some
6 space that needs to be fixed up...

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I have been in every
9 single floor myself.

10 Also, at ,you know, what are the other City-owned
11 buildings? Two Lafayette is going to be vacant
12 essentially.

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, why are we... And,
15 also, what's with, uh, I call it, 22 Reade Street,
16 even thought that building is in bad shape, is there
17 more space there? What I am saying is, we all want to
18 save the tax payer money. Are there not City-owned
19 buildings that Department for the Aging could go
20 into? I... I have to say, from... it doesn't seem to
21 ring true that we absolutely have to rent more space
22 - at vast cost.

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Okay, so, let me just... I
24 will answer this way, we do not make the decision,

1 right, for an agency to go into a lease space.

2 What... (CROSS-TALK)

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You do not make the
4 decision?

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: What happens is, a decision
6 is... is made where an agency may need to relocate,
7 the current space that they're in is not optimal
8 moving forward. Uh, and OMB is involved with
9 determining, after they request for a space, to
10 determine where can that space go if it's determined
11 that they should (TIMER CHIMES) be considered for
12 additional space? We then do an inventory of our
13 space that is available within City buildings, and we
14 have like, I think it's like less than, or just about
15 1%, space that is vacant that can be utilized. And,
16 as you know, our buildings are very, very old.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know.

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Once we determine that there
19 is not a suitable City building that an agency can
20 use, that is when we begin a process working with the
21 tenant representatives to identify site locations
22 that could be used. And we begin this process of
23 trying to figure out what the best location is. We
24 give a lot of deference to the agency on location,
25

1 because they know their workforce better, they know
2 the clients that they serve better. And, then, we
3 work with our tenant representatives on trying to
4 figure out what location best can suit the operations
5 of that given agency.

6
7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I hear you.

8 The issue is that the public, with all due
9 respect, has no idea that all of the City space is
10 taken or not up to par. We don't have any
11 information. So the public thinks, "I'd love to go to
12 14 Wall Street. I'm sure it's a nice space." But, you
13 know, is it the most... Is it the best for the
14 taxpayer? That's also... you're asking the same
15 question between 250 and 14 Wall Street.

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm asking another
18 question, which is, isn't there any City-owned space?
19 Even though they may not wanna go there, I understand
20 that. But, it seems to me that we're not giving the
21 public the full status.

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, let me be clear. It is
23 not up to the agency to determine if they do not
24 wanna be in a City-owned space.

1
2 DCAS makes the determination if a City-owned
3 space is available for the agency's needs. And in the
4 case of Aging, there was none. Their preferred
5 location was 14 Wall Street, and we got the best
6 financial deal for city taxpayers, which saved the
7 city taxpayers over \$31 million versus going to 250
8 Broadway.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, so, is true, though,
10 that there were... It ended up being just between 250
11 Broadway and 14 Wall Street? There were no other
12 buildings that came into that scenario?

13 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: There were. There were two
14 other locations that were in Brooklyn. And... (CROSS-
15 TALK)

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I don't wanna go to
17 Brooklyn either.

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I...

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Gale...

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The agency didn't feel that
21 those locations were optimal.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay...

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: for their vulnerable
24 clientele.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright. So it's... the
2 whole thing, the trouble with this process, as you
3 know, it's almost like you want to have a building
4 that has not donated to anybody. You want an owner
5 that has not donated to anybody.
6

7 You almost should put that on your list of things
8 to be reevaluated. I'm not kidding. Because, in this
9 world today, it has dramatic, just feelings to the
10 public that there's something fishy.

11 I don't think that sounds strange, but that would
12 be with something that I would add to your DCAS list
13 of evaluation.

14 What do you think about that idea?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'll take your
16 consideration... I'll take your suggestions on the
17 consideration.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright, like everything
19 else.

20 But I do think that also, I would prefer 250
21 Broadway, even though it costs more money, because
22 you can walk to City Hall, it's closer to other
23 agencies, and maybe you save time and money just by
24 having... being closer to the City Hall. That
25 doesn't come under consideration?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I mean, that might be
3 optimal for you, because you go from 250 Broadway to
4 City Hall. I don't know if that was optimal for the
5 vulnerable clients that are being served by the
6 Department of the Aging. So to spend an extra \$31
7 million just so one could walk across the street, I
8 don't know if that's really worth it to the tax
9 payer... (CROSS-TALK)

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But, it's also, back to
11 this issue of transparency. Like, I know you're
12 saying it's gonna cost more, but we don't know that
13 it's costing more. We just hear from you. We're not
14 knowing all of the details. Everything is not
15 transparent. I think that's what people are concerned
16 about.. (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But the... Ma'am, there's a
18 process which includes the Office of Management and
19 Budget, uhm, and... (CROSS-TALK)

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You know how we feel about
21 OMB... (CROSS-TALK)

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: And everybody knows that
23 Director Jiha is very conservative and conscious and
24 is penny pinching on City taxpayer money. And, I
25 can't see a scenario in where we would propose

1
2 spending \$31 more more at a location where we could
3 be spending over \$31 million less...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: that OMB would approve.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright.

7 I mean, it's... it... we just don't know the
8 facts.

9 Now, Finally, I'll let (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-
10 TALK)

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Ma'am, I'm giving you the
12 facts...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: 14 Wall Street is \$31
15 million more cheaper.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. It's a buildout
17 space, I understand that. Maybe we would have less
18 space at 250, that would still accommodate them, and
19 still have... There's a big sign at 250 Broadway
20 "Space Available", big sign, every single day.

21 So, I am concerned that... It's hard to know
22 what's factual, I will put it that way.

23 I am concerned, just generally, 2 Lafayette is
24 going to stay empty for how long?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, 2 Lafayette, at some
3 point, when Department of Aging moves out, is going
4 to have to undergo significant renovations.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Mm-hmm

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: And, at that time, we have
7 some ideas of what city agencies may be able to move
8 there and take over that city space. Because, after
9 it has been improved, we would look to locate a city
10 agency there. And one of the agencies under
11 consideration, I was reminded by my colleague, is
12 Consumer and Worker Protection.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, alright, thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: You're welcome.

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: (NO MIC) Thank you... Oh,
16 sorry, thank you very much, Council Member Brewer.

17 Before I shift gears to ask some questions about
18 Diana Boutross, I just wanted to ask, in all of this
19 back and forth of the best and final offer being
20 selected, and then Deputy Commissioner Hamilton
21 shifting gears and choosing a different site, did
22 DCAS return to 250 Broadway to see if they could
23 match the offer - the savings that you're alleging
24 were available on the 14 Wall Street deal?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: To my knowledge, to date,
3 DCAS did not direct the tenant rep, I believe, to go
4 back to 250 Broadway. But it's important to be
5 reminded that 250 Broadway was also represented by
6 CBRE. They were their shared client, so I'm not sure
7 if CBRE went back to 250 Broadway and asked them if
8 they would revise the deal. I don't know the answer
9 to that.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And in your review of this
11 case that you say you've gone back on... Let me just,
12 why isn't Jesse here to answer these questions?
13 Right? You're saying you weren't involved pre-day
14 two.

15 Why is the deputy commissioner not here to
16 directly respond?

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Sure. So, I mean, as a
18 commissioner, I believe that this is an opportunity
19 for me to share my vision with all of you and answer
20 your questions about our leasing practices.

21 As commissioner, I decide who represents us in
22 hearings... (CROSS-TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Totally, and I appreciate
24 that... (CROSS-TALK)

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: And I thought that...

(CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: But, you've only been here
90 days... (CROSS-TALK)

COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The best course of dialogue,
it was best from myself and Executive Deputy
Commissioner Overton to be here to answer these
questions.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. Alright, I'll keep
moving.

I think that we'll shift gears to Diana Boutross.
I think there remain a lot of open questions. I hope
you'll seriously consider the recommendations from my
colleagues to pull back and reconsider this lease
agreement.

Now, I'd like to shift to questions about Diana
Boutross.

In 2017, DCAS executed a three-year year
contract with an optional two year extension with
Cushman and Wakefield to provide tenant
representative services.

In its proposal, Cushman specified that Robert
Giglio would be serving as the account manager. Mr.
Giglio had decades of experience in commercial real

1 estate, working with city agencies and other large
2 public and private clients such as AECOM, Aetna,
3 UNICEF, JPMorgan, and others in leasing office space.

4
5 Toward the end of 2022, Mr. Giglio announced he
6 would be retiring. To the best of your knowledge, did
7 DCAS have conversations with Cushman and Wakefield
8 about who the new account manager would be?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: To the best of my knowledge
10 to date, I'm not aware of any conversations that DCAS
11 had on selecting who the account managers of the team
12 should be.

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I imagine that neither you
14 nor Executive Deputy Commissioner Overton can respond
15 to many of these questions, since you've only been in
16 these roles respectively for a matter of days.

17 But did anyone in the Mayor's Office weigh in, to
18 the best of your knowledge, about who the new account
19 rep would be at Cushman and Wakefield?

20 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: To the best in my knowledge?
21 No.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

23 I just want to underscore again why it's so
24 frustrating that we don't have Deputy Commissioner
25 Hamilton here or somebody who's been in these jobs

1
2 for more than two months - three months to testify to
3 answer questions about what's transpired that's so
4 concerning.

5 Could you explain the difference for me between
6 office leasing and retail leasing?

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: As in retail and like a
8 commercial store? Or...

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It's a common phrase in
10 commercial, real estate retail leasing versus office
11 leasing. These are...

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I mean ,you know, we rent
13 office space and we lease office space as a customer
14 to some private landlords where we're the tenant.

15 And, then, there are retail spaces, I would
16 imagine in things like maybe a mall or something like
17 that that could be considered retail spaces.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, as the New York Times
19 has noted, retail leasing and office leasing are two
20 distinct... I'll quote, them.

21 "Retail leasing and office leasing are two
22 distinct areas of expertise, and it is unusual for a
23 broker who has spent decades working in one to move
24 over to manage a large account in the other."
25

1
2 Disparate areas within commercial leasing, retail
3 leasing, office leasing, totally different areas of
4 expertise.

5 Diana Boutross has spent her career in retail
6 leasing, the Starbucks and Chipotle's of the world.
7 She has zero experience with office leasing.

8 Could you explain to me why Diana Boutross is
9 qualified to be the account manager for this
10 multimillion dollar account with Cushman and
11 Wakefield?

12 Did Cushman and Wakefield submit information to
13 DCAS on her qualifications? And if so, could you
14 provide them to us?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: If Cushman and Wakefield
16 submitted any such documentation regarding Miss
17 Boutross, I have no objection of sharing that with
18 you. I do not think, in my opinion, that it's not a
19 big leap. But again, it is Cushman and Wakefield's
20 decision as to what staff members are going to be
21 working on the City's account.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: We've received information
23 from multiple people within DCAS, the DCAS
24 officials, including Deputy Commissioner Hamilton,
25 requested Miss Boutross be the account manager on the

1
2 Cushman and Wakefield account. Can you confirm or
3 deny?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: To date, I have not seen any
5 of that... (CROSS-TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Have you had that
7 conversation with Mr. Hamilton? (CROSS-TALK)

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have not seen any such
9 communication... (CROSS-TALK)

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Have you ever discussed it
11 with Mr. Hamilton?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have not.

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, so you don't know?
14 Okay. Uhm...

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I know that I've not seen
16 any documentation that indicates that DCAS staff
17 asked for any particular person to be selected to
18 lead the account.

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It's unusual for someone
20 with zero relevant experience to be selected by
21 Cushman and Wakefield to run such a significant
22 account if DCAS didn't request it. So... which is
23 what we've been advised.

24 Do you know, did DCAS... did the conflicts of...
25 the DCAS Conflicts of Interest Officer or general

1
2 counsel weigh in on any conflicts given Miss
3 Boutross's preexisting relationship with Mr. Hamilton
4 and Ingrid Lewis-Martin prior to her appointment to
5 this role?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Not that I've been made
7 aware of to date.

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You are aware of the
9 significant donations that she's made to the Mayor's
10 campaigns over the years?

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm not.

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You haven't read that in the
13 reporting?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't recall reading that
15 in reporting, and I didn't look it up.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I am sorry to... Okay, uhm,
17 I can send you the articles.

18 But, I will remind you. Uhm, the Adams' donations
19 that she has made, she hosted a fundraiser in 2019;
20 she's given many thousands of dollars. It was
21 reported in Politico that she has gone out... that
22 Ingrid Lewis-Martin's public schedule for multiple
23 dates in 2022 and 2023 had full evenings and full
24 weekend days spent with Diana Boutross prior to her
25 selection for this role as account manager.

1
2 I would to just shift to the Cushman portfolio
3 and how things have changed since Diana Boutross has
4 been appointed as the account manager.

5 So, as we have discussed, this is an extremely
6 like, wildly lucrative contract. Could you go through
7 with me again, how much does the tenant rep receive
8 on a lease agreement that they sign?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, within our tenant...
10 first of all, the commissions are paid by the
11 landlords, they're not paid by the City. And what we
12 indicate in our contract with our tenant
13 representatives is we cap what those commission rates
14 can be, and it's 5%. And that percentage may change
15 over the term of the lease, because it's determined
16 by the term of the lease, obviously, the dollar value
17 of the lease. So, every year might be a little bit
18 different.

19 And on an acquisition, I believe the cap is
20 anywhere of a range between 4% and 6%.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. So, just to give
22 examples, ACS recently signed a lease for 110,
23 William, 630,000 square feet, costing \$28.8 million
24 in year one, \$30.7 million in subsequent years.

1
2 So, that works out to \$1.4 million for the tenant
3 rep in year one, and over \$6 million in the first
4 five years of the deal.

5 Is that consistent with your understanding?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can get back to you to
7 give you a more substantive answer on exactly what
8 the commission would be for that particular location.

9 But, that that deal was negotiated by Mr. Giglio.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Understood.

11 I thought it was a CPRE deal, but either way,
12 the... oh, you're right, Mr. Giglio, excuse me.

13 Just trying to get a sense of the scale of the
14 amount of money that goes to these tenant reps on
15 these contracts...

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

17 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: \$6 million dollars over five
18 years is a lot of money for one license agreement.

19 And you mentioned on a purchase of a City
20 building - we're gonna talk a little bit more in a
21 couple minutes about the Bronx Logistics Center -
22 Deputy Commissioner Hamilton has been trying to get
23 the City to purchase this building for some time now
24 at a cost of \$670 million.

1 If that deal were executed, that would be \$13.4
2 million for Miss Boutross. Is that right?
3

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Depending on what agreement
5 Cushman and Wakefield might have with the ownership
6 group of the Bronx Logistics Center, we, like I said,
7 we cap the amounts (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And it's capped at \$13.4
9 million is the maximum amount that Miss Boutross
10 could make on that purchase. We're talking about very
11 significant money... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I think it's clear
13 that... (CROSS-TALK)

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And while you're saying that
15 the... (CROSS-TALK)

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Our... Our... Our contract
17 is not with Miss Boutross. Our contract on
18 (INAUDIBLE) represented... (CROSS-TALK)

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It's with... with Cushman
20 and Wakefield, and she's... (CROSS-TALK)

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Cushman and Wakefield...
22 (CROSS-TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: and she's the account
24 manager for that contract. She's the lead
25 representative. She gets the fee.

1 Okay, so, the tenant representation services
2 contract with Cushman expired in November of 2023.

3 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

4 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: In January of 2024, a
5 negotiated acquisition extension was issued extending
6 until November of this year.

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Why hasn't the new RFP been
9 issued?

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, the new RFP represents
11 something, I think, new in that we want to make sure
12 that the City is represented by more than just two
13 organizations on its real estate transactions.

14 And we want to increase the tenant representation
15 from the current two number, and our goal is to have
16 five.

17 And in addition to that, we were working with the
18 Chief Diversity Officer of the City in order to make
19 sure that we give minority in women business
20 enterprises that work in the real estate sector the
21 opportunity to compete for that deal. So, we have to
22 work with him, the Law Department, and others to make
23 sure that the language of that RFP allows for that
24 level of competition and opportunity to take place.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I do want to come back on
3 the MWBEs.

4 But, could you just give us a timeline? When do
5 you expect the RFP to come out?

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: By the end of the year is
7 what I've been told... (CROSS-TALK)

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: By the end of the year? Oh,
9 great.

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, it's coming quickly.

12 So, let's shift to the MWBEs. So, in 2017 when
13 CBRE and Cushman and Wakefield were selected for this
14 contract, there was, I believe, a 31% goal for MWBEs
15 on that contract, is that right?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'd have to confirm that, I
17 don't know that off the top of my head... (CROSS-
18 TALK)

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I have it here, we reviewed
20 the contracts. So, had a 31%, I think it even
21 extended to over 33% of a certain period of time on
22 the deal...

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

24 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Since Miss Boutross was
25 assigned as the account lead... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm

3 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: For Cushman and Wakefield,
4 that has slashed down to 10%. Can you explain why the
5 current MWBE participation on the contract has been
6 slashed by over two-thirds since Miss Boutross came
7 in, when you're stating that the reason for the delay
8 on this contract is to expand the MWBEs?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I'd have to I'd have
10 to follow up with you on that.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

12 There was this a contractor, JRT Realty, who has
13 been working with Cushman and Wakefield for years,
14 providing excellent services with Cushman, while Bob
15 Giglio was the account holder... was ws the account
16 lead, and since Diana Boutross came in, the
17 subcontractors were slashed, The MWBE subcontractor
18 was slashed... (CROSS-TALK)

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I'm being informed by my
20 team that that was not the case, and that the MWBE
21 percentages are 10% for persons of color, Black owned
22 businesses, 10% for Hispanic, and 10% for women for a
23 collective 30%.

24 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: For the new contract that
25 you're hoping to release...

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE)...

3 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Because, for the current
4 contract, there's no other subcontractors in place.
5 So I'm confused.

6 For the negotiated acquisition that we currently
7 have, the only MWBE sub involved is JRT Realty. They
8 were slashed from over 30% to 10%. So we slashed
9 MWBEs to give Dianna Boutross more money, and have
10 done... and we're supposedly delaying the RFP process
11 to increase MWBE participation... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I'm... I'm happy to
13 look into that for you and provide you more clarity
14 on that...

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay...

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't believe that the way
17 it's being framed at the moment is accurate.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Oh, I think it is.

19 Are you aware that Michael Garner, the Chief
20 Diversity Officer for the City, has met with JRT
21 Realty and Deputy Commissioner Hamilton multiple
22 times to question why the MWBE participation on this
23 contract has been slashed?

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm not aware of those
25 meetings.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Yeah. And, again, we were
3 under... we ask where Deputy Commissioner Hamilton is
4 today.

5 Okay. I think we... the question of why Diana
6 Boutross and Cushman and Wakefield are getting so
7 much more money at the expense of MWBEs, despite her
8 total lack of experience in office leasing, is an
9 open question that all New Yorkers should be asking
10 right now.

11 So, I'd like... before... in 2017, when the
12 contract was assigned, the following agencies were
13 given to Cushman and Wakefield, ACS, Department of
14 Finance, Department of Health, HRA, Department of
15 Sanitation.

16 Have there been any changes in the portfolio
17 since Miss Boutross has been assigned the account
18 holder between CBRE and Cushman Wakefield?

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm not aware of any changes
20 as I sit here right now. I can tell you that Cushman
21 and Wakefield represent about one-third of the
22 agencies and CBRE agencies, their work portfolio
23 represents about two-thirds. So, CBRE has much
24 more... many more agencies that they represent than
25 Cushman and Wakefield. And they also out pace Cushman

1 and Wakefield significantly over the course of this
2 administration. When it comes to real estate deals,
3 Cushman and Wakefield has presented and worked in
4 with three, and CBRE, in our time in the
5 Administration, has had 21.

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

8 Executive Deputy Commissioner Overton, are you
9 aware of shifts and responsibilities between the
10 agencies Cushman and Wakefield was responsible for
11 versus CBRE?

12 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: No, I'm
13 not aware of anything that... (CROSS-TALK)

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And when did you start in
15 this job?

16 EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OVERTON: I believe
17 in September, September 3rd.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, so about a month and
19 change. Alright, six weeks - eight weeks. Okay.

20 It's a little, again, frustrating to have folks
21 up here who can't answer the questions. We appreciate
22 your best efforts.

23 But, my understanding is there have been
24 significant new agencies assigned to Cushman and
25 Wakefield and Miss Boutross since she has taken over

1 this account, despite over many years, there being a
2 consistent breakdown between what agencies CBRE held
3 and what agencies Cushman held. And that's because
4 some of the inhouse expertise that CBRE brings to the
5 table, that Cushman doesn't.

6
7 So, I'm troubled by that shift in responsibility
8 that has been increased to Cushman and Wakefield and
9 Diana Boutross since she's come into this role.

10 I'd like to ask about the pending RFP.

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm?

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, you said by the end of
13 the year, an RFP's coming out, Cushman and
14 Wakefield's the current account holder; Diana
15 Boutross just went on a vacation with Jesse, Deputy
16 Commissioner Hamilton, and Ingrid Lewis-Martin.

17 Do you think it's inappropriate that they're
18 going on vacations together prior to this account
19 that's worth many tens of millions of dollars being
20 released for an RFP weeks after the vacation
21 concluded?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I'm not here to
23 comment on the personal vacations and personal
24 relations that people have outside of work.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I'm not asking you to, I am
3 asking you to comment on the ethics of your agency
4 and making sure that our taxpayer dollars are being
5 properly spent.

6 Are you concerned? Do you think it's appropriate
7 for Deputy Commissioner Hamilton to be going on a
8 vacation to Japan with the lead representative on a
9 multi... a contract that's worth tens of millions of
10 dollars, and the RFP is being released weeks after
11 their return?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Will I expect that any staff
13 member DCAS comport themselves within a legal way.
14 And from what I know today, Deputy Commissioner
15 Hamilton has not violated any DCAS policy, or COIB
16 policy. that I'm aware of to date, by his personal
17 activities that are done in his own time. This was
18 not a City business trip.

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: For me, it's highly
20 unseemly. It's unethical. It's really concerning.

21 And I'm disappointed we don't have the
22 opportunity to ask these questions of Deputy
23 Commissioner Hamilton today. And I really think it
24 underscores what Council Member Powers and others
25 have requested from you, that you and Deputy Mayor

1
2 Torres-Springer conduct an immediate review of every
3 single transaction that he's been responsible for
4 during his time as Deputy Commissioner For Real
5 Estate. I am very in troubled...

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I am conducting a
7 review of all of the divisions within DCAS to find
8 opportunities where we can improve transparency and
9 enhance efficiency.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I appreciate that
11 Commissioner Molina, but you said very clearly you
12 reviewed the 14 Wall Street, and that was... deal,
13 and that was it.

14 You said you were... done a comprehensive review
15 of the agency. I appreciate that. You've got a big
16 job. DCAS is a hard agency to run, wildly disparate
17 functions, important responsibilities. But we're
18 concerned specifically today about the alleged
19 corruption by Deputy Commissioner Hamilton and in his
20 division, and we'd like to see a comprehensive review
21 take place of every real estate transaction that he's
22 been responsible for. Because, the things that we're
23 asking about today leave more questions than answers,
24 and that's my concern.

1
2 Okay. I'd like to shift gears to the Bronx
3 Logistics Center, one of Mr. Hamilton's top
4 priorities.

5 Erica, do we have the video? Are we able show...
6 I don't know where she is. Is she here? Okay, it's
7 coming up now.

8 We're going just show a quick video for you that
9 that I found confusing. This is Erica's Screen, and
10 here's the video, I apologize for the quality. We got
11 volume?

12 UNKNOWN: (INAUDIBLE)

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: No volume.

14 (INAUDIBLE) I don't know how to get the
15 (INAUDIBLE).

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, we'll just go ahead,
17 we'll just go ahead. If we have an opportunity, we'll
18 ask about it later.

19 So, this is a video that Deputy Commissioner
20 Hamilton had created to promote the Bronx Logistics
21 Center, a privately owned site.

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm?

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Are you... have you seen
24 this video before?

25 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have not.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You've never seen this
3 video?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I've never seen that video.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Oh...

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I mean, I have not seen
7 the... the few clips that were presented on the
8 screen, and I'm not aware of any video that DC
9 Hamilton created.

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: You're not aware of this...
11 the existence of this video?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I'm not aware of it. I've
13 never seen it until it was just...

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, we were... we were
15 told (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: slightly posted...

17 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Can you explain to me why
18 would the Deputy Commissioner for Real Estate and his
19 team create a promotional video of a privately owned
20 site to encourage city agencies to be enticed to
21 lease space there?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, being that I have not
23 seen the video, it's hard for me to comment on the
24 context of why the video was made.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. Don't you think, just
3 help me here...

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm?

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: we'll do this
6 hypothetically. For a video that is being created by
7 DCAS, of a privately owned site, for a building that
8 we'd either be purchasing or leasing, wouldn't
9 promoting it, putting it out on YouTube, trying to
10 encourage, wouldn't that inflate the price?

11 Like, I don't really understand the negotiating
12 strategy. If the building owner knows that Jesse...
13 that Deputy Commissioner Hamilton is promoting a site
14 for purchase and encouraging city agencies to
15 consider it, wouldn't that make... wouldn't that
16 increase the sale price from the owners or the lease
17 price?

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Having not seen the video, I
19 will reserve my comments until after I've had time to
20 review the video.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Alright, we'll try to get it
22 on for you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Has DCAS ever made a
24 promotional video to your knowledge, to promote the
25 purchase or renting of leasing of a space?

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: To my knowledge to date, I
3 have not, in my 90 days there, thought about creating
4 a video to share with perspective agencies that may
5 be able to utilize the space.

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

7 And do you think it's appropriate for DCAS to
8 create a promotional video for a privately owned
9 space?

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I'm not against the
11 use of videos, I think that if we had a space, then
12 one option to provide agency workers that may be
13 teleworking to kind of view the space, it's possible
14 that one can consider sending a video. But, I have
15 not seen the video that you ... (CROSS-TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I mean, I... (CROSS-TALK)

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: tried to show, so I don't
18 have a comment on that specific video...

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I don't have as much
20 experience don't have as much experience as Council
21 Member Brewer, but I've worked in city government for
22 a while, I can never remember anything like this at
23 all. I think it's bizarre, and frankly, smells funny.

24 To your knowledge, when did DCAS begin
25 considering purchasing or a lease agreement for the

1
2 Bronx Logistics Center? And how did DCAS become aware
3 of this site?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, in most sites, in
5 general, are brought to us by tenant representatives
6 for consideration to the City to address a number of
7 space needs that the City may have.

8 So, I don't know how Bronx Logistics Center came
9 to us, but I believe, because I was presented at the
10 meeting that you referenced earlier...

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right.

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: the entire team of Cushman
13 and Wakefield to walk me through their thinking of
14 why they thought the Bronx Logistics Center could
15 serve a good purpose for the City.

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. I would have thought
17 we were meeting the needs of city agencies rather
18 than meeting the needs of Cushman and Wakefield.

19 The thing that's unusual about that... (CROSS-
20 TALK)

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, we the... So... (CROSS-
22 TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: about these contracts...
24 (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: The City agencies have a
3 number of needs, and when those needs are outside of
4 the available square footage that's under the City's
5 control...

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right.

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: And we get authorization to
8 look for leased space, we're thinking about
9 opportunities where the City can possibly make a
10 strategic acquisition, those opportunities are
11 presented to us by tenant representatives. We're not
12 bound to do them...

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Right? But, the thing that's
14 unusual... (CROSS-TALK)

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: about these tenant
17 representative contracts, is that... and I'm sure
18 there's some... lots of people who operate with
19 integrity, and I don't I'm not trying to paint too
20 broad a brush. But, the thing that's unusual about
21 these contracts is, the higher the lease agreement,
22 the higher the license agreement, the higher the
23 purchase price, the more money they make. Right?

24 And so, you know, they have every incentive to
25 make more deals at higher prices.

1 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm.

2
3 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: For the city of New York,
4 because that is what that's good for them.

5 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yes, but, Council Member, we
6 have a process that involves us, City Hall, the
7 Office Of Management and Budget, City Planning, this
8 body to make sure that the deals we are not
9 negotiating on behalf of the City... (CROSS-TALK)

10 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Was there authorization from
11 OMB to pursue the Bronx Logistics Center?

12 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No. It's not... It's...
13 (CROSS-TALK)

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: No? Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: It's not (INAUDIBLE)...

16 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: No, we just have a
17 promotional video from the Deputy Commissioner from
18 the DCAS... (CROSS-TALK)

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) presenting it.
20 Right? So, I haven't seen the video, so I can't speak
21 directly to the video.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Alright, why don't we try
23 again...

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can speak to the
25 process... (CROSS-TALK)

1 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: on the video, let's see.

2 Because, I find this whole thing just confounding.

3 Can we try again on this video? We'll see how
4 competent we are technology today.

5 Okay, no? Alright. I'll keep going. Oh... This
6 doesn't work. We'll send...

7
8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I can tell you that I have a
9 lot of confidence in our Marketing and Communications
10 team. So, we did not produce this video, according to
11 my colleagues.

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: This video was produced by
13 DCAS.

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I was told it was not.

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, we've re... I don't
16 know who is giving you this information. But, this
17 was a DCAS video, created by DCAS for DCAS to promote
18 this site.

19 Do you want to clarify? Do you want to say who
20 was...

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, I'm... I'm... I'm being
22 informed that DCAS did not produce this video.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, DCAS starred in it, but
24 didn't produce it? We were told explicitly this was
25 created by Mr. Charles Gross, who works for Jesse

1 Hamilton, to promote the Bronx Logistics Center. And
2 you're... (CROSS-TALK)

3
4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: No, my understanding is that
5 the DCAS communications team did not produce this
6 video... (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: No, the DCAS Real Estate
8 Division did, which is even stranger. Right? So, it's
9 not... That's... We're fighting over semantics. DCAS
10 created the video, that's clear. I'm sorry that you
11 don't have a chance to watch it today. We'll send it
12 to you later.

13 So, you recently had a meeting about this site.
14 Which agencies would be utilizing the Bronx Logistics
15 Center?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, agencies under
17 consideration when we were reviewing the site, would
18 be to station agency vehicles, as well as possibly
19 vehicles that may be towed.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Could you specify which
21 agencies?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, we were considering the
23 Department of Sanitation, the NYPD, and those are the
24 two, sort of what I would call large agencies that
25 would possibly use the site.

1 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. And...

2
3 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: And these are very, very
4 preliminary conversations.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. Do you know if... So,
6 OMB is not provided authorization for this, do you
7 know if they support the purchase or leasing of the
8 site?

9 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I have been aware that OMB
10 is not funding or entertaining this as an option.

11 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, well, that's good to
12 hear.

13 Could you clarify how much the owners of the
14 Bronx Logistics Center have spent lobbying the City,
15 including Deputy Commissioner Hamilton, to advance
16 this?

17 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I do not have information
18 regarding what expenses were borne by the ownership
19 group of Bronx Logistics Center. I don't have that
20 information.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: My understanding is
22 approximately \$100,000.00

23 I'd like to just shift gears away from this to
24 some of the broader questions that Council Member
25

1 Brewer was asking about regarding headcount and
2 space.
3

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mm-hmm?

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Firstly, I just want to ask
6 about that within Deputy Commissioner Hamilton's
7 division.

8 So, as you know well from your time as DOC
9 Commissioner and your tenure in in this
10 administration, we've experienced multiple hiring
11 freezes, and we've seen a significant shrinkage in
12 the headcount in city government over the course of
13 these three years.

14 Is that right?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: There's been a significant
16 shrinkage in employment headcount overall.

17 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Yes. However, the Real
18 Estate Services Division has grown in the past two
19 years since Deputy Commissioner Hamilton took it over
20 by approximately 33% from 90 active employees in FY22
21 to a 119 active employees in FY24.

22 During this time... so DCAS' overall budget and
23 headcount has been reduced by 75 positions during
24 this time. There are 300 vacancies over the past two
25 years.

1
2 Could you help explain to us, as Council Member
3 Brewer pointed out, at a time when the total
4 workforce of the City is shrinking, more people are
5 doing remote work, we have a less of a need for
6 space, why we would see such a dramatic increase in
7 Deputy Commissioner Hamilton's headcount?

8 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I mean, workforce
9 leaves, workforce retire.

10 I think it's important that DCAS have a level of
11 expertise within real estate, within the Real Estate
12 Services Division. So, we employ transaction
13 managers, attorneys in that space. It's very complex
14 work that they oversee with the tenant
15 representatives.

16 It's also important to point out that when we
17 look at our asset and property management portfolio
18 as a whole, they have the largest number of
19 vacancies. We are working to shore up those
20 vacancies, so in addition to Real Estate Services,
21 our other responsibilities in facilities management
22 can also be addressed with our aging property
23 portfolio of the approximate 55 buildings that we
24 oversee.

1 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I appreciate that. It's just
2 unusual that we have seen so many parts of DCAS
3 shrinks significantly during these three years, and
4 yet Deputy Commissioner Hamilton has had the approval
5 to dramatically increase both the active and budgeted
6 head count of his unit by 33%.
7

8 I don't think there is a... I'm not sure there
9 is another... I think any other deputy commissioner
10 in the city of New York would love to have
11 experienced a headcount increase during this
12 administration when the city has shrunk so
13 significantly. To see such a massive increase under
14 Deputy Commissioner Hamilton speaks to support from
15 City Hall, support from OMB, that he and his team are
16 receiving, that others across the breadth and
17 entirety of the Administration quite simply are not.

18 I'm just going ask one more question, and then
19 we're gonna try again on the.. we'll see how we do
20 on this video.

21 Since FY 2020, sort of the last five years, we've
22 seen city lease payments grow by about 20% - from
23 \$1.2 billion in FY 2020 to about \$1.5 in FY 2024.
24 And, as I mentioned, and as Council Member Brewer
25 has mentioned and others, the City workforce shrunk

1
2 dramatically during that time period. Remote work
3 policies are being implemented further reducing our
4 need and demand for space.

5 I know you're working on some initiatives to
6 advance those goals and make things work better and
7 more cost effectively. But, in addition to those
8 changes, asking rents for office spaces are down
9 about 10% over these five years.

10 So shrinking workforce, increased use reliance on
11 remote work, office space rents are down citywide.
12 Why has our lease portfolio continued to expand so
13 much during this time, especially under Deputy
14 Commissioner Hamilton's leadership?

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: So, I think it's important
16 to point out that a lot of the majority of these real
17 estate deals are two to three years in a process. And
18 what you're seeing now is not only the effects of
19 those two or three years of lease deals that were in
20 a pipeline that crossed over two administrations, a
21 migrant crisis that that required the City to find
22 space to house over 200,000 individuals that have
23 come through our city and manage that issue.

24 And in one hand, you're casting as negative
25 aspersions on the situation regarding leasing, but

1 when we found an over \$31 million savings in the 14
2 Wall Street versus 250 Broadway, you're upset that we
3 got a lower price offer that saved the City tax is
4 over \$31 million. Like, I don't understand that.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Well, I'm always happy when
7 we save taxpayer dollars. I'm confused about the
8 process that unfolded in this case. I'm happy to go
9 back through this with you one more time. It sounds
10 like you'd like to.

11 So, best and final offer was selected for a
12 different building. Deputy Commissioner Hamilton
13 unilaterally chose to go in a different direction to
14 support a building, the owner of whom... the owner of
15 which has given generously to the Mayor. No return in
16 the negotiations was made back to 250 Broadway to see
17 if they could compete with the new price.

18 My understanding is the numbers that you've
19 shared are not accurate in terms of the cost that 250
20 Broadway was prepared to take on to renovate the
21 space, to make it inhabitable, for DFTA.

22 I'm not convinced that the cost savings are as
23 significant as you're laying out.

24 I'm even more concerned about that process and
25 the fact that Deputy Commissioner Hamilton had such

1 wide latitude and discretion to be able to send these
2 lease agreements and license agreements wherever he
3 thought made the most sense - and clearly, where City
4 Hall thinks makes the most sense.
5

6 And despite all of these open questions, all of
7 these concerns, your lack of awareness about the very
8 generous donations that the building owner at 14 Wall
9 Street has made to this Administration, you're
10 unwilling to pull the application back, to revisit
11 it, to research it, you're unwilling to, frankly, do
12 a comprehensive review of all of Deputy Commissioner
13 Hamilton's real estate transactions that raise very
14 significant ethical concerns. So that's my concern.
15 That is what I am... That is why we are having this
16 hearing today.

17 We are going try to show this to you one more
18 time. I'm not banking on it, but we'll try.

19 Let's do one more, and we'll see because you
20 haven't seen this video, so you'll enjoy it.

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE) going back and
22 forth with this video...

23 **(*VIDEO DIALOGUE):**

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: *We're here at the*
25 *Bronx Logistics Center. It's a phenomenal place, 1.3*

1 million square feet, which can accommodate a lot of
2 the city agencies. It's a state of the art industrial
3 space, warehouse, which has a platinum lead
4 certification.

5
6 We have a great team here that that was assembled
7 today. We have Erik Abad from OMB, George Donahue
8 from the leasing unit, (INAUDIBLE) at DCAS, and we
9 just want to thank Erik Abad for having the foresight
10 to be here and coming with short notice, uh, George
11 Donahue for looking for the location and Charles,
12 Charles Gross is... he's phenomenal guy, he said,
13 Jess, we need to see this place. I said, I know I
14 have a great team. Let's go see the place, and now I
15 think we're on the cutting edge. And I just wanna
16 say, you know, let Erik say something real quick and
17 then let George.

18 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ABAD: Thank you. This place is
19 amazing. I think this is huge potential would be a
20 great possible benefit for the city. like Jesse
21 mentioned with the lead platinum, it's exactly the
22 future of the city and where we need to be.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: I am... I am Jesse
24 Hamilton, Deputy Commissioner, I'm sorry, I didn't
25 to mention that.

1
2 GEORGE DONOHUE: *Yes. This is an excellent*
3 *building for the city of New York. Plus, the*
4 *community is gonna love this. We're gonna create new*
5 *jobs, be very energy efficient, and very*
6 *operationally perfect.*

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: *And this is a great*
8 *economic development, thousands of jobs we created*
9 *here. We have a mayor, a visionary to make sure we*
10 *have economic development, and I'm sure this is a win*
11 *for all... everybody involved. So...*

12 **(*END OF VIDEO CLIP)**

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Great. That's a snippet. My
14 understanding is this is a 12 or 13 minute long video
15 as a whole.

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Well, I thank you, Chairman,
17 for bringing the video to my attention.

18 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Great.

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: If you want to send me a
20 link so I could see the full version of the video,
21 and I will look into it further.

22 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

23 Now that you've had a chance to see what I was
24 referencing, any further feedback on the

1
2 appropriateness of a video like this of DCAS
3 promoting a privately owned space for utilization?

4 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Not at this time.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay...

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: But I will follow up with
7 you.

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Alright, I can just... I
9 just want to say one more time, in my years in
10 government experience, I can never recall DCAS
11 promoting a private site for utilization.

12 It's the role of DCAS to execute the best deals
13 for the City workers, for the City tax payers. It is
14 not DCAS' role to be promoting the best interests of
15 private property owners - which is what I think we
16 see here on this video.

17 Council Member Brewer would like to ask a couple
18 of questions.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That's a lousy video, so
20 I'm sure that your Communication staff did not make
21 it?

22 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah, they did not.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Lousy...

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Thank you for recognizing
25 the poor quality...

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: It just...

2 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: of the video.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: It just... Mr. Hamilton
4 did all that by himself? That is not appropriate, and
5 he should be taken to task just for the video.

6 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: (INAUDIBLE)

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I have a question about
8 just generally City-owned space. I do know that it's
9 in poor shape in some cases. But, do we have, as the
10 public, the listing of the 55 buildings, some of
11 which are garages, but I am talking mostly about
12 where we have offices, and what space is available,
13 even if it has to be renovated?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah, I...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Is that something that is
16 available to the public? Because, I think what you're
17 sort of hearing is even though it's bad space, in
18 terms of needing renovations, the public, certainly
19 me in particular, still feels like there might be
20 space available that's available... that is less
21 expensive, in City-owned buildings, given the fact
22 that we have few workforce.

23 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah. So, we actually do,
24 every other year, publish what is called The City
25

1 Owned and Leased Portfolio Report. It is being done
2 in conjunction with another agency that publicizes
3 that report. And, often, individuals peruse that
4 report to see what space is available or time...
5 there are times where individuals might have interest
6 in renting City-owned space, and they contact Real
7 Estate Services. And we do often lease out a lot of
8 City-owned space for retail, and between short term
9 leases and long term leases, we generate nearly \$40
10 million in revenue a year.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, that's in terms of
13 the commercial. I would assume that would be first
14 floor that you're talking about, or are you talking
15 about office space also?

16 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Mostly commercial floor...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right...

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I would describe it as
19 storefront space...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: uhm, is what I would best
22 describe it... (CROSS-TALK)

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, no, I...

24 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: We can give you a more
25 detailed list...

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I mean, I would love to at
3 some point be able to get more information, because
4 there's a lots of commercial space - 253, 280
5 Broadway, I walk by them every day, they're all
6 vacant.

7 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Always happy to meet with
8 you and any other member... (CROSS-TALK)

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I would like to get
10 those rented... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: council member...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, I'm talking more
13 about, what's available at One Center; what's
14 available, we know 2 Lafayette...

15 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Sure...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: What's available at two...
17 at 22 Reade, et cetera?

18 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Yeah...

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Because, when you say we
20 have to rent at a private location, okay, but, then,
21 I'd like to see the data that we haven't fixed up the
22 space or that we are in the midst of fixing up the
23 space - even if it is older space - I know the whole
24 issue with 22 Reade and the burial center. I know the
25 whole story.

1 But, what is... You know, is it really true that
2 we... I remember Mayor Bloomberg said, or, no,
3 somebody said, yeah, Mayor Bloomberg said, after he
4 has sold some of the City-owned buildings, that maybe
5 we shouldn't have done that. We did. So, then, the
6 question is what's left, and what's available? Is
7 that something that you publish, or that we could get
8 our hands on?
9

10 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Happy to work with you and
11 your team to get you that information.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Oh, so, it's not public
13 now?

14 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: I don't... I believe
15 through the citywide owned and leased portfolio, it
16 may be public, what your specifically asking for, but
17 I will follow up and confirm.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: You're welcome.

20 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I will leave it there for
21 today for questions, Commissioner. I really do want
22 to thank you for coming, doing your best to answer
23 questions.

24 And, Executive Deputy Commissioner Overton,
25 congratulations on your recent promotion.

1 I just have to say in conclusion, I think there
2 are a lot of very serious open questions about
3 decisions that have been made at DCAS in recent
4 years. And I realize you're coming in new. You're
5 trying to bring your fresh perspective and provide an
6 overview of... provide a review of what's
7 transpired. But, the fact that we have seen no
8 comprehensive review of Deputy Commissioner
9 Hamilton's decisions, no guardrails imposed, no
10 modified duty, uh, is concerning.

12 And, I hope that, in good faith, you'll take back
13 the concerns that have been raised by my colleagues
14 and I today and choose a different course, because I
15 think it's urgently needed.

16 So, thank you both for coming today.

17 We have some members of the public that will be
18 testifying shortly.

19 COMMISSIONER MOLINA: Thank you for your time.

20 (PAUSE)

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you again to the DCAS
22 team for making themselves available. For that it's
23 worth, apparently Mayor Adams noted in his press
24 conference at 11:30, uh, his weekly, off topic, that
25 Deputy Commissioner Torres-Springer is conducting a

1 review of DCAS leases. So, we are glad to know that
2 that is happening. Hopefully, they will tell DCAS
3 some time soon.
4

5 I would now like to open the hearing for public
6 testimony. And I would like to remind members of the
7 public that this is a formal government proceeding
8 and that decorum shall be observed at all times. As
9 such, members of the public shall remain silent at
10 all times.

11 The witness table... Except when you are
12 testifying of course... The witness table is reserved
13 for people who wish to testify. No video recording or
14 photography is permitted from the witness table.

15 Further, members of the public may not present
16 audio or video recordings as testimony, but may
17 submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant
18 at Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

19 If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please
20 fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms
21 and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will
22 have two minutes to speak on today's hearing topic.

23 If you have a written statement or additional
24 testimony you wish to submit for the record, please
25

1 provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant at
2 Arms.
3

4 You may also email written testimony to
5 Testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours after the
6 close of this hearing. Audio and video recordings
7 will not be accepted.

8 I would now like to call up our first and only
9 panel, as far as I know, Sharon Brown Jeter,
10 Christopher Leon Johnson, and Barbara Manu... Wang?
11 I'm sorry, sorry if I got that really wrong. I think,
12 I'm not sure, we're going to see.

13 Okay, why don't we start with Ms. Brown Jeter.
14 You have two minutes, and we will go from there.

15 (PAUSE)

16 SHARON BROWN JETER: Hello, my name is Sharon
17 Brown Jeter. Can you give me an overview of what
18 with the specific topic?

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: It's always good to have you
20 here with us, Miss Brown Jeter, the topic we're
21 focusing on today relates to leases and real estate
22 practices by the Department of Citywide
23 Administrative Services.

24 SHARON BROWN JETER: Okay, thank you.
25

1
2 First of all, I would like to say we are keeping
3 Israel in our prayers, defend Israel. We need to have
4 their hostages release and let Yahweh's people go.

5 Okay, for the leases of the things that they
6 said, uhm, Mayor Bloomberg said we sold it to some
7 people, some of the properties that we had, uh, we do
8 have eminent domain, but we don't have to go that
9 far. If those properties are something that we want
10 back, we can go back to the people that we sold it
11 to, and we can offer them some compensation in order
12 to get those building back if it's even feasible. If
13 there's any property that the City lost, and it is
14 incumbent... it would be incumbent upon us to use
15 the laws that we have at our disposal. If there's any
16 dire need for us to have those buildings back, we
17 could always use eminent domain, and we also would
18 compensate people for that, or we could just do some
19 kind of deal to get it back.

20 We need to make sure we get people into housing
21 immediately. We need to make sure that the City is
22 renting out properties, so that when we have people
23 who become homeless, military, and whoever they are,
24 that we have properties, that we already lease in the
25 name of the government, whether it be complete

1 houses, whether it be apartments, or whatever kind of
2 living situation that is not (TIMER CHIMES) uhm,
3 congregate living, and we need to be able to offer it
4 to people without strings attached.
5

6 And that's how we can eliminate homelessness by
7 getting the key, giving it to them, and getting out
8 of their business.

9 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Well, said, thank you very
10 much.

11 SHARON BROWN JETER: You're welcome.

12 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Mr. Christopher Leon
13 Johnson?

14 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Hey, what's up, Chair
15 Restler?

16 My name is Christopher Leon Johnson. I agree with
17 everything that you said to Mr. Molina, but where was
18 Jesse Hamilton? Where was the corrupt former state
19 senator that got voted out by Zellnor Myrie and his
20 wife, Donna Richardson Myrie?

21 We all know what's going on here. This is... and
22 I can say that we just found out through this
23 lobbyist named Maria Torres-Springer that she's gonna
24 look into the deal. That shouldn't be happening.
25

1
2 That's like a bank robber looking into a fraud
3 scheme.

4 Maria Torres-Springer is captive to all these,
5 uhm, A Better New York and all these real estate
6 organizations like REBME that are hell bent on
7 selling out the City to the people.

8 Maria Torres-Springer should not be looking to
9 this.

10 I don't know what's your power as in the city
11 council, but she should not be... you should bar her
12 from looking into this. She should be investigated by
13 an independent investigator, like independent

14 (INAUDIBLE)

15 Let's make this clear, uhm, Maria Torres-Springer
16 is a lobbyist. Meera Joshi is a lobbyist. None of
17 these members of the Mayor's Office should be looking
18 into anything that DCAS is doing.

19 This is, like I said, anytime a member in the
20 Mayor's Office, is looking into anything that any
21 city agency is doing, especially this administration
22 under this indicted Mayor, Eric Adams, it's like bank
23 robbers look into a fraud scheme. It's like a
24 domestic violence suspect looking into a stalking
25 scheme. That's what's going on here.

1
2 So, this this is nothing but a... everybody knows
3 what's happening here. This is mayor Eric Adams in
4 nutshell, with the help of the Brooklyn democratic
5 machine, the Brooklyn Democratic Party working,
6 installing Jesse Hamilton, to do all these schemes
7 for Eric Adams righthand chick, Ingrid Lewis-Martin.

8 So this is what's going on here. This it's all
9 about. This is nothing about dirty deals, done by the
10 Mayor's office, and the party. This is what is about.

11 And people got to look into everything. So, the
12 City Council should be... have to introduced the
13 bill in the City Council to have an (TIMER CHIMES)
14 independent board, independent agency, to oversee
15 this schematic of a DCAS real estate land grab. What
16 everybody knows with the developers, selling land,
17 selling property to developers, and for, like I said,
18 the democratic machine, and they're gonna make a
19 million... they're gonna make millions out of this.

20 People got to start looking to the law firm or
21 PETA (phonetic) like, PETA law firm, uhm, Grant...
22 not Grant... Mr. Corona... Ben Corona (phonetic), and
23 all these other characters. Okay, this is what's
24 happening here. So...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you very much for your
3 testimony.

4 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Mm-hmm, yeah.

5 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Today's is Frank (INAUDIBLE)
6 birthday, so we can all wish him a happy birthday.

7 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And... And I hope that, uh,
9 it was noted on the record that you started your
10 testimony by saying you agree with me. So, I think
11 that was the first time I've heard that in a while...

12 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah...

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: And I appreciate it.

14 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: So, thank you, Mr. Leon
16 Johnson, it's good to see you...

17 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, I'm going to go
18 over to the... the thing downstairs...

19 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: (INAUDIBLE) Isreal.

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Have a good day.

22 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you for being with us.
24
25

1 We have one final person on this panel, and I
2 don't... I think I am mispronouncing your last name.
3 Ms. Barbara, would tell us your name for the record?
4

5 BARBARA MANU: Barbera Manu.

6 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Barbara Manu (phonetic). Oh,
7 I was right, Jayasri was wrong. (LAUGHTER) I just
8 wanted to get that on the record, too.

9 Ms. Manu, please.

10 BARBARA MANU: I wanted to address the problem I
11 had with... my children have with the city of New
12 York, but I wanted to address it to Ms. Brewer.

13 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I can follow up with her,
14 please...

15 BARBARA MANU: Well, I went to her office three
16 months ago regarding the way the City have treated my
17 children and myself, dehumanizing us by city
18 agencies. Currently, we've been homeless... we are
19 homeless since June 2018. This is my fifth time
20 coming to a hearing here. But it's always turned to
21 deaf ears

22 My children was receiving SSI, and was sent to
23 Direct Express which is a federal contractors
24 contractor by with Social Security. They have not
25 received any payments. Our section 8 was taken away

1
2 from us, just to create homelessness for us. That's
3 what I want to say.

4 I left messages on an answering machine also
5 Miss, uh, other city council members. But I haven't
6 gotten a reply.

7 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay. Well, Ms. Manu, we
8 really appreciate you joining us today and sharing
9 your experience. Happy to gather some more
10 information and figure out how we can be of
11 assistance.

12 At this point, I am going to close out...

13 BARBARA MANU: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you. Thank you very
15 much. I want to thank this panel for joining us.

16 I will now adjourn the hearing. Thank you so
17 much. And thank you to the Sergeant at Arms for your
18 assistance.

19 (GAVEL SOUND) (GAVELING OUT)
20
21
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date November 14, 2024