

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

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April 18, 2016
Start: 11:20 a.m.
Recess: 12:50 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: BRAD S. LANDER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Daniel R. Garodnick
Steven Matteo
James Vacca
Allen Maisel
Deborah L. Rose
David Greenfield
Mark Treyger
Margaret S. Chin
Rosie Mendez
Inez E. Dickens
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Mark Levine
Ydanis A. Rodriguez

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

Joseph A. Puma
Candidate for NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board

Lauvienska Polanco
Candidate for NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission

Frank Carone
Candidate for NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission

Manuel Miranda
Candidate for NYC Public Design Commission

Jeanne Lutfy
Candidate for Landmarks Preservation Commission

Jeff Byles
Fine Arts Federation

Justin Garrett Moore
Executive Director of the Art Commission

2 [sound check, pause]

3 [background comments, pause]

4 [gavel]

5 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Good morning and
6 welcome to the New York City Council's Committee on
7 Rules, Privileges and Elections. I'm Brad Lander,
8 Chair of the Committee, pleased to be join this
9 morning by Committee members, uh, Council Member Dan
10 Garodnick from Manhattan, Minority Leader Steve
11 Matteo from Staten Island, and we're joined as a
12 guest in our committee this morning by Council
13 Members Jimmy Vacca and Allen Maisel and others who I
14 suspect will join us along the way. We'll welcome
15 them when they come. Thank you to our counsel Jason
16 Otaño and also to our great investigative staff,
17 Chuck Davis, Deandra Johnson (SP?), Alicia Vissel
18 (SP?). We have five nominees to consider today, one,
19 two, three, four, five, uh, for three different
20 agencies. Uhm, we're gonna first hear, uhm, consider
21 Joseph Puma's appointment to the Civilian Complaint
22 Review Board. That's a Councilappointment, and then
23 in addition we will consider the Council's advice and
24 consent for candidates for appointment Frank Carone
25 and Lauvienska Polanco to the New York City Taxi and

2 Limousine Commission, Manuel Miranda to the New York
3 City Art Commission a/k/a Public Design Commission,
4 and Jeanne Lutfy to the Landmarks and Preservation
5 Commission.

6 And we have one person, I guess, who
7 signed up to testify from the Fine Arts Federation
8 for the PDC. If there are others please go ahead and
9 fill out a form. Uhm, unless anyone has any
10 questions, we're joined as well by a member of the
11 Committee, Council Member Debbie Rose and also by
12 David Greenfield and Mark Treyger, guests at our
13 committee today.

14 Alright, Topic One, the candidate for New
15 York City Civilian Complaint Review Board, Mr. Joseph
16 Puma. Mr. Joseph Puma was recommended by the
17 Manhattan Delegation for reappointment. He is
18 already of the CCRV. If re-designated by the Council
19 and subsequently reappointed by the Mayor, Mr. Puma,
20 a resident of Manhattan, will serve for the remainder
21 of a three-year term that expires on July 4th, 2018.
22 As folks know, the Civilian Complaint Review Board is
23 an independent body charged with due to investigate
24 complaints of misconduct by police officers toward
25 the public. Board members are required to reflect

2 the city's diversity. There are 13 members, five
3 designated by the Council for appointment by the
4 Mayor, five by the Mayor directly and three
5 designated by the police commissioner. Those three
6 have law enforcement experience. There is a civilian
7 staff which conducts investigations and complaints
8 received by the board. All CCRB members are eligible
9 for compensation on a per diem basis. The per diem
10 rate is \$315 dollars a day. We, uh... uh, in this
11 committee heard and then the Council approved
12 appointments for both the Queens and Brooklyn spots
13 on the CCRB, the Council's Queens and Brooklyn spots,
14 on the CCRB just a couple of weeks ago, and we
15 appreciate having Mr. Puma back with us to talk about
16 his reappointment.

17 Mr. Puma, if you will please raise your
18 right hand to be sworn in by our Council?

19 COUNSEL: Do you swear, affirm that the
20 statement you're about to make will be the truth, the
21 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

22 JOSEPH A. PUMA: I do.

23 COUNSEL: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: I will point out to
25 members that, as usual, his opening statement as well

2 as background information, uh, is in the red booklet
3 and, uhm, Mr. Puma, please, go ahead and, uh, begin
4 with your opening statement. Thank you.

5 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Good morning, Chair
6 Lander, members of the Committee on Rules, Privileges
7 and Elections, and guest Council Members this
8 morning.

9 My name is Joseph Puma, and since
10 December 2013 I have had the distinct privilege of
11 serving on the Civilian Complaint Review Board as a
12 City Council designee from Manhattan.

13 During the past two years or so of
14 service on the CCRB, I have had the unique
15 opportunity to exercise fair-minded, hands-on
16 principled and collaborative leadership during a time
17 when vast swabs of the public and numerous leaders in
18 government and law enforcement have looked to repair
19 and improve police community relations. Even when
20 these actors have disagreed they have made efforts to
21 view police-civilian encounters more holistically in
22 the social context, uh, in particular for their
23 impacts on diverse, more vulnerable and our
24 marginalized communities. Public discourse and
25 debate has focused on questions and collective values

2 such as how best to promote and maintain public
3 safety, impacts on the day-to-day practice of law
4 enforcement, creating better and more equitable
5 outcomes for individuals and groups, upholding
6 constitutional and civil rights, and understanding
7 and initiating positive reforms to law enforcement
8 and the criminal justice system as a whole.

9 In New York, the NYPD's widespread use of
10 stop, question and frisk was deemed unconstitutional,
11 and new city leadership and advocates sought to usher
12 in a remedial approach. Despite local reforms and
13 proposals, high profile, often tragic, incidents and
14 collective action by civilian groups and police
15 groups both locally and nationally further revealed
16 the ongoing necessary work. It is within this
17 context that I have viewed my service on the CCRB
18 during a historic and eventful time both locally and
19 nationally.

20 Since joining the board I have borne
21 witness to supported, led, and advised on many
22 sweeping reforms that not only resulted in historic
23 gains for the agency in terms of its efficiency and
24 effectiveness, but have also incrementally improved
25 the perception of an agency which for too much of its

2 existence has not lived up to its full potential as
3 an important and uniquely situated player in the
4 city's police oversight landscape with potential to
5 foster improve police community relations in New York
6 City. This unrealized potential has been
7 notwithstanding the various earnest efforts of scores
8 of the agency's forbearers, staff and board included,
9 and also exacerbated by real setbacks and challenges
10 over the years. There's still much work to be done.

11 Since I began serving on the board I
12 estimate I have reviewed over 1400 cases. I bring an
13 engaged fair-minded hands-on and collegial approach
14 to working with fellow board members and staff. I
15 bring an open mind, sensitivity, and compassion to my
16 review of cases which bear real world consequences
17 for police officers and civilians alike. At the CCRB
18 I have been an active member of the Outreach
19 Subcommittee and the Mediation Committee and served
20 as the co-chair of the Former Training Subcommittee.
21 My perspective and life experience as a community
22 advocate, lifelong public housing resident of
23 Manhattan, and is an openly gay bicultural Latino
24 identified cisgendered man has aided my, uh, the
25 agency in its outreach efforts. For example, tonight

2 (**INAUDIBLE**) communities, Manhattan communities, LGBT
3 serving... LGBTQ serving organizations and other
4 community based organizations.

5 My previous experience as a civil rights
6 paralegal, budget and policy analyst and
7 intergovernmental liaison has enriched internal
8 conversations about topics such as the budget and
9 legislative process and has helped the CCRB forge new
10 context with partners and government. I am in the
11 process of completing full time a Master of Arts
12 degree from Union Theological Seminary.

13 As frontline public servants in their
14 communities Council members have been vital partners
15 in spreading the message of the CCRB inviting the
16 agency to events in their districts and distributing
17 our informational literature in multiple languages.
18 I am pleased that thanks to the leadership of Speaker
19 Mark-Viverito and several other Council Members, the
20 Council is helping the CCRB significantly scale up
21 the CCRB in the Communities Initiative. This
22 expanded initiative allows the CCRB to hold special
23 evening office hours in six participating Council
24 Members' districts... district offices throughout the
25 city allowing community members to file complaints,

2 give sworn statements and obtain information about
3 the CCRB without needing to travel to the CCRB's
4 lower Manhattan office during normal business hours.

5 I am grateful to the participating Council Members in
6 this expanded initiative, Speaker Mark-Viverito,
7 Council Members Gibson, Richards, Rose, Menchaca, and
8 Cornegy. My gratitude also goes out to several other
9 Council Members not listed here who participated in
10 earlier phases of this initiative and those who would
11 like to explore future participation.

12 I was deeply honored to receive news in
13 June 2015 of the Manhattan Delegation of the City
14 Council's wish to reappoint me as their designee on
15 the CCRB. My official appointment in December 2013
16 left me with approximately 1.5 years in my term which
17 expired on July 4th, 2015. Per the city charter,
18 CCRB members serve terms of three years. The timing
19 of my first appointment meant I joined the board with
20 about half a term remaining. Although the public
21 officers log permits certain appointed officials to
22 serve in their official roles beyond their stated
23 terms until a replacement is named, seeking
24 reappointment has afforded me the opportunity to
25 review and validate my unique contribution, uh, to

2 and commitment to serving the CCRB in fulfilling its
3 charter mandate. I was humbled to receive the
4 renewed support of the Manhattan delegation as their
5 potential designee and would be most grateful for the
6 support of this committee and the full Council in
7 recommending me to the Mayor for reappointment.

8 Thank you very much for the opportunity
9 to speak with you today. I look forward to answering
10 any questions you may have as well as to explore any
11 ideas about how I may be of further service to the
12 Council in this role. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Uh, thank you very
14 much, Mr.... Mr. Puma. That was a very strong opening
15 statement. Now we could spend a lot of time talking
16 with you about such... this Council critically values
17 the CCRB and the role of the members who serve on it,
18 and when we add the two new members we asked them a
19 lot of questions about their disposition and their
20 practice, uhm, but inasmuch as this is a
21 reappointment that as you say the Manhattan
22 delegation has reconfirmed after watching you serve
23 that they're supportive of your, uh, of your re-
24 nomination. To me at least this seems pretty
25 straightforward.

2 So I'll just, you know, ask a couple of
3 very quick questions and then, uhm, just so I have it
4 right. So you're a graduate of Yale, you studied at
5 Hunter, and now you're getting a Masters at Union
6 Theological Seminary?

7 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Correct.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And that Masters is
9 in Social Ethics, is that right?

10 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Correct.

11 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright. That seems
12 like a useful prospective on the Civilian Complaint
13 Review Board. You worked at the NAACP Legal Defense
14 and Education Fund.

15 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Yes. Uhm, I can
16 elaborate on that. I... well, I... I left, uhm, I joined
17 the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund after,
18 uhm, working for about seven years in city
19 government, uhm, as a... first as a... in the Council
20 and, uh, but most of that time was spent at OMB as an
21 intergovernmental liaison, uhm, but, uh, the
22 opportunity to join, uhm, LDF was, uh, was one that
23 I... I was very excited about. I was willing to even
24 take a little bit of a pay cut to do that, uhm, and I
25 got to work on some very exciting, uhm, cases, uh, in

2 LDF practice areas at the time which were criminal
3 justice, uh, voting, uh, political participation,
4 education and economic justice.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Great. And I took a
6 quick look at your attendance record. You have very
7 strong attendance at, uh, CCRB, and I know that
8 involves serving on a lot of panels as well. Thank
9 you for all of that work. And at least as I saw it
10 there's no... there's no guidance from COY (SIC)
11 because there's no conflicts, uh, structural
12 conflicts that you have that you needed to seek any
13 guidance for, correct?

14 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Correct.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright. Just seems
16 pretty open to me. So we will, uh, open it up to
17 other members. Council Members Garodnick and Rose
18 for questions.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you.
20 Just... hello, and nice to have you back. Uhm, I just
21 had one question for you and it, uh, it doesn't
22 really relate specifically to your background, uh,
23 here, but it relates to operations of the CCRB. Uhm,
24 you know we have had some conversations over time
25 about how best to enhance the independence of the

2 CCRB, the ability to not just review and substantiate
3 but also to, uh, bring the cases themselves on the
4 part of the CCRB. A lot of the authority here is
5 vested in the police commissioner as you noted in
6 your... your statement and in the answers to the
7 questions, but to have the ability for the CCRB to
8 decide and actually pursue the cases as an
9 independent agency is something that is being tried
10 and is being, you know, pursued at this point. I
11 want to see if you could tell us a little bit about
12 how you believe that's working, uh, if it is resulted
13 in any change in, uh, approach or attitude by members
14 of the CCRB in terms of whether there's more
15 restraint or more, uhm, detail put into the
16 investigations. Give us a sense as to how that's
17 working if you don't mind?

18 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Sure. Uhm, my
19 understanding of the way... I think you're... you're
20 referring mostly to the Administrative Prosecution
21 Unit?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Yes.

23 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Uhm, in which, uh,
24 prosecutors employed by the CCRB, uh, on cases in
25 which the board has recommended charges and

2 specifications, uh, actually participate in the
3 administrative trial as prosecutors, uh, and that
4 those trials happen at One Police Plaza generally.
5 And, uhm, my understanding is that we actually had a...
6 those... those, uhm, those prosecutions have... have...
7 have been quite, uhm, active and busy and, in fact,
8 we actually had a staffing need for eight new
9 attorneys which was, uh, fulfilled in the preliminary
10 budget. As far as the actual performance, uhm, I
11 mean I... there was, uhm, I did write in the... in the
12 prehearing questions about, uh, how there's been a
13 greater concordance in, uhm, the actual, uh,
14 discipline rate that has happened... that has... that
15 comes from the police commissioner, uh, especially
16 thanks to a new plea process that was introduced.
17 Uhm, I would definitely like to, you know, give you
18 more information, uhm, after the hearing since I... I'm
19 not sure if I'm really getting at what you... what you...
20 what you... what you're looking for.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay. I... I
22 think my question really was just to get your sense
23 as to whether it's working, how, uh, members of the,
24 uh, the board are relating to this, uh,
25 administrative prosecution unit, whether it is

2 something which is being embraced by the leadership
3 of CCRB, whether it's something that's being embraced
4 by the police department or whether there's anything
5 particular issues that you have seen, uh, that create
6 any impediments to its success.

7 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Right. Uhm, to elaborate
8 further, I think it is... it is, uh, working. I think
9 the leadership does... does embrace it at the CCRB, and
10 there is... there is that memorandum of understanding
11 between the department and, uhm, the CCRB which
12 basically gives a lot of, uh, a lot of... basically the
13 existence of the APU, uhm, is at the pleasure of the
14 police department. That's the way that agreement is
15 structured as far as I understand it. So it wouldn't
16 exist if... if the police department didn't believe in
17 it in, uh, to some extent. Uhm, there are certain
18 aspects that I think board members could sort of
19 link... tap into more. Uhm, there was formerly an APU
20 committee that was, uh, very much accompanying the
21 work of the APU, and that fell dormant, uhm, once
22 there was new leadership, and I... and so... but seeing
23 that question in the... in the prehearing, uhm,
24 questions basically reminds me of a new commitment of
25 mind to get more involved with the APU work.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Good. Well,
3 thank you, Mr. Chairman. I happen to think that you
4 make a very, uh, apt observation which is that it is
5 only being governed by a memorandum of understanding
6 at this point, probably should be, uh, formalized
7 through local law that the CCRB should have powers to
8 bring these cases independently recognizing of course
9 that the ultimate, uh, decision will always rest in
10 the discretion of the police commissioner, but we
11 should probably do that so I... I agree with that
12 observation and I thank you for your time and your
13 service.

14 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you, Council
15 Member Garodnick. Council Member Rose?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. Uhm, I,
17 uh, I'm sure you're aware of the program, uhm, the
18 initiative that, uh, the CCRB actually comes to
19 Council Members' offices and, uhm, and works with,
20 you know, local, uhm, constituents. Uhm, so, uhm,
21 could you tell me what you think of that, you know,
22 that particular part of the, uhm, program? Uhm, do
23 you think it has value, has it been... has it been
24 valuable to the CCRB and, uhm, if there are any plans

2 to try to encourage other Council Members to, you
3 know, to utilize that particular program?

4 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Certainly. Uhm, we just
5 got a new member... a new director of outreach whom I'm
6 yet to... to meet and actually talk about, uh, some of
7 these... these, uhm, initiatives with and... and what her
8 vision is, but I... this... the... the initiative that
9 you're describing has certainly been, uh, a priority
10 for the CCRB for several years and we were very
11 pleased to see it move forward with the partnership,
12 uhm, that we... that we... that we made with the
13 Speaker's office to scale up the program. Uh, I wish
14 I could... I wish I had more specifics in terms of how
15 many people have taken advantage of that but I know
16 that the agency has that and I can certainly give you
17 any other, uhm, data on that after the hearing if you
18 would like, uh, but I think it's an extremely
19 valuable, uhm, program because it does take a lot to
20 participate in the civilian complaint process. Uhm,
21 there's an initial complaint made usually by the
22 phone or... or internet or we actually still get... still
23 get mail, and then there are these follow up, uh,
24 contacts that have to happen with... with the
25 complainant themselves or witnesses, and... and a need

2 for verified statements. So that's easiest to obtain
3 in person and coming to the CCRB's Manhattan office
4 during normal business hours, uh, can be a burden,
5 uh, for many people in... in communities. So I think
6 as... as I said in the opening statement, the Council
7 Members are frontline, uh, public servants in their
8 communities with offices in... in these communities so
9 it's a... it's a valuable resource for the CCRB to be
10 able to partner in that way.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So it is a City
12 Council initiative. Uhm, is there any talk of, uh,
13 within the CCRB of just establishing offices in the
14 outer boroughs, you know, outside of the City Council
15 initiative?

16 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Right. Now I... I don't
17 know what the status is on any recent discussions on
18 that, but that my understanding of this initiative
19 is... is that it... I think the agency would love to have
20 satellite offices in the boroughs. Uhm, I don't
21 really understand... so some of this... some of this
22 predates me as to whether, uhm, that has... that was
23 something that was ever formally requested, uh, but,
24 yes, certainly that would, uhm, that would be ideal,
25 but I think for now working with the Council in this

2 way, in the more formalized way, has been an
3 excellent, uh, step forward.

4 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright. We've also
5 been joined by Council Member Margaret Chin who is a
6 member of this committee and by Council Member Rosie
7 Mendez, who I believe represents, uh, Mr. Puma. Uhm,
8 let's see, we don't have anyone else signed up to
9 testify, and I'll just say it, you know, it seems to
10 me that the question which we're considering today
11 which is your fitness for reappointment is very
12 straightforward. Obviously, the broader question of
13 issues at the CCRB, uhm, there's a lot of continued
14 work to do. The issues Council Member Garodnick, the
15 issues Council Member Rose raised. Obviously
16 unfortunately at the moment is a time of some turmoil
17 at the CCRB, and we want to help make sure that that
18 gets along... moves along smoothly and also we've
19 raised in... in the Council before this issue of
20 disclosure, uhm, when... especially when the police
21 commissioner disagrees with your recommendations on a
22 substantiated charge making sure that available...
23 information is available to the public and in general
24 that I guess I'll add is one other issue, the, uhm,
25 the situation of making sure we're using the

2 information about where there are substantiated
3 charges in a proactive way, uhm, to help make sure we
4 get the best possible policing and community police
5 relations. So we look forward to continuing to have
6 that dialogue with CCRB, uhm, and I want to thank you
7 for your time with us here today. Thank you.

8 Oh, alright, Council Member Mendez?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Hello? Okay.

10 Apparently I don't need this. Uhm, mine is more of a
11 statement than a question and, uhm, I have known
12 Joseph Puma, Jesus, I don't know, close to 20 years,
13 uh, when he was in college and interned at, uh, my
14 predecessor's office, uhm, Margarita Lopez, and then
15 came back at some point to work there. He, uh,
16 resides in public housing. He sits on the board of
17 several community groups, uh, long term CBO's in our
18 neighborhood and, uh, years ago when an opportunity
19 opened up he is one of the names that I put forward.
20 He's a model... and a role model for so many of our
21 young people in our community, and as a... an out gay
22 man, a Latino who lives in the projects, I think he
23 is an inspiration to many of our young people. Uhm,
24 so Mr. Chair, I take a little... a little offense when
25 you say this is very straight up, uh, process but,

2 uhm... uh, moving along from there I also want to talk
3 about some of the work that Joseph has done with my
4 office and with this Council since he has been
5 sitting on the CCRB, and so I don't know if this has
6 come up. So when the city Council has tried to bring
7 CCRB into our communities he was very helpful in
8 working with us and the CCRB to have them hold a
9 hearing on Avenue D across the street from all the
10 public housing. We held it at the Lower East Side
11 Girls Club, and many of, uh, the people in the
12 community including young people came and saw their
13 first CCRB hearing and saw the work that was being
14 done. Uhm, he has also worked with, uh, the LGBT
15 caucus on the Hetrick-Martin Institute on LGBT Youth
16 Summit Initiative. We've been going to every borough
17 and, uh, he was very helpful with the first summit,
18 uh, with having, uhm, the role of CCRB and having our
19 LGBTQ youth know how to interact, how to make
20 complaints of maybe one day interact with police. We
21 just had our Manhattan summit this weekend, and we're
22 coming to Staten Island, Debbie Rose, so we're gonna
23 be there.

24 So I just wanted to, uhm, talk about how
25 this collaboration really is empowering individuals

2 and young people and also letting them know what the
3 different roles of all the government or quasi-
4 government institutions are, and I'm just very proud
5 that he lives in my district and proud that he has
6 served on the board and more proud just to call him
7 my friend. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you Council
9 Member. I'll accept your, uh, correction of my
10 hetero-normative, uh, language and acknowledge
11 actually that, uh, anyway let me stop there. Uh,
12 alright. Uh, we have no one else signed up to
13 testify, uh, so Mr. Puma thank you very much for your
14 time with us today. We... we don't vote, uh, at the
15 hearings in this... in this committee so we'll do all
16 five of these hearings and we will likely vote, uh,
17 on Wednesday morning before the stated so thank you
18 very much. This concludes...

19 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Thank you everyone.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: ...the (**INAUDIBLE**) with
21 Mr. Puma. Thank you.

22 We will move next to the, two, Taxi and
23 Limousine Commission nominees. Uhm... uh, we have two
24 of them today, Frank Carone and Lauvienska Polanca...
25 Polanco, excuse me. Uhm, Mr. Carone, uh, was

2 recommended by the Brooklyn delegation for
3 reappointment to the TLC, and I'm pleased to both be
4 a member of that delegation and have be joined by
5 several other members, uh, here today. Uh, Mr.
6 Carone, a Brooklyn resident, receives the advice and
7 consent of the Council and is subsequently
8 reappointed to the TLC will be eligible to serve the
9 remainder of a seven-year term expiring on January
10 31st, 2022. Uhm, and, uh, Ms. Polanco was first
11 appointed to the TLC upon the recommendation of the
12 Manhattan delegation to serve as the Council's
13 Manhattan representative. Now the Mayor is seeking
14 the Council's advice and consent to have Ms. Polanco
15 serve as his direct representative on the TLC. Uh,
16 if Ms. Polanco, a Manhattan resident, receives the
17 advice and consent of the Council is subsequently
18 appointed to the TLC, she will become eligible to
19 complete the remainder of a seven-year term expiring
20 January 31st, 2017. Uhm, as folks know, the Taxi and
21 Limousine Commission was created pursuant to Local
22 Law 12 in 1971, uh, and oversees, uh, the, uh, taxi,
23 coach, limousine, wheelchair accessible van and other
24 related services for New York City, establishing
25 rates, standards, criteria, licensing, etc. TLC

2 consists of nine members appointed by the Mayor, all
3 with the advice and consent of the Council. Five,
4 uh, of these members must be a resident from one each
5 of the five boroughs and are recommended for
6 appointment by a majority vote of the Council Members
7 of those boroughs. TLC members are appointed for
8 terms of seven years and can serve until the
9 appointment and qualification of a successor. The
10 Mayor designates one member of the TLC to act as
11 chairperson and chief executive officer, and while
12 the chair receives compensation other members of the
13 TLC are not compensated. All proceedings of the TLC
14 and documents and records are public and they also
15 make an annual report, uh, in January which I
16 recommend to members, and I'll just flag that for
17 members I have been joined by some additional members
18 of the committee, Council Member Dickens, Council
19 Member Espinal. Uhm, and I would just flag again
20 that obviously as with CCRB there are many issues
21 about the Taxi and Limousine Commission and its
22 policy, uh, which are fair to talk about but the
23 question this morning is are these two individuals
24 who are already serving on the TLC worthy of the
25 Council's support for reappointment, uh, and to give

2 our advice and consent to the Mayor about their
3 continued service. Uh, with that, let me ask each
4 you of you to raise your right hand and be, uh, sworn
5 in by counsel.

6 COUNSEL: Do you swear, affirm that the
7 statement that you're about to make is the truth, the
8 whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Uh, all the
10 materials, uh, for each of the two of these
11 candidates is in your binder and let me ask you each
12 to go ahead and begin with your opening statement in
13 whichever order you choose and, uh, and we'll go with
14 questions from there.

15 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: Uh, good morning.
16 Uhm, my name is Lauvienska Polanco. I've been a New
17 York City Taxi and Limousine Commissioner
18 representing the city Council seat of New York County
19 for the last, uh, eight years. I would like to thank
20 first of all the Manhattan delegation, uh, for
21 allowing me the privilege to serve on their behalf,
22 and I'm now honored to accept a nomination for Mayor
23 de Blasio to continue my service on the TLC, uh, in
24 one of the Mayoral seats.

2 As a Latino woman attorney living in
3 Northern Manhattan and working... and working in the
4 Bronx, both areas with a history of being underserved
5 by some sectors of the TLC industry, I know full well
6 of the transportation difficulties affecting not only
7 Manhattan but the other boroughs. As a result I've
8 been very vocal in seeking regulations that will
9 enhance services for all riders. Over the past eight
10 years I've been instrumental to bring other sectors
11 of the taxi industry who in the past were not
12 involved in the decision making process to the TLC
13 table. I'm deeply connected with my community, and
14 my strong ties to the livery industry made up of many
15 small business owners have been crucial in developing
16 establishing dialogues, most importantly access and
17 regulation to meet the needs of the public at large,
18 the stakeholders and drivers. For example, it's
19 very involved in the implementation of the green Boro
20 Taxi.

21 TLC is an agency where people can have a
22 direct impact in the proposed regulation by simply
23 participating at the hearings. As a result in order
24 to increase participation I propose and was able to
25 successfully bring TLC hearings to the Bronx and

2 Brooklyn. This was the first time hearings were held
3 outside of Manhattan, and we're now working to have
4 hearings in Queens and Staten Island. I strongly
5 support this kind of participatory governments and
6 hope to continue to engage more individuals, uhm,
7 with TLC. Overall my experience at TLC has been very
8 rewarding but also challenging. I've gotten to see
9 the direct impact that a proposed regulation will
10 have, not only in the industry stakeholders and
11 drivers but also the riders. To hear the daily
12 struggle of an individual who uses a wheelchair who
13 is not able to have easy access to a taxi or livery,
14 to hear the cries the mother who has lost a child,
15 uh, as he crossed the street, to hear about the daily
16 struggle of a taxi livery driver into this economy,
17 or to simply hear about the impact that a fair
18 increase will have on the riders and also on the
19 stakeholders. I care about all these matters, and if
20 confirmed I hope to continue working on them. I'm
21 proud to have built a reputation in the Commission,
22 that I'm fair-minded, approachable, understanding and
23 honest. I'm proud to accept this nomination by Mayor
24 de Blasio to continue to serve in the capacity of
25 Commissioner and continue to look after the safety of

2 all. I look forward to answering your questions.

3 Thank you.

4 FRANK CARONE: Thank you. Thank you,
5 Chair Lander, Council Otaño, members of the
6 Committee. Uhm, listening to you mention how long my
7 proposed term could be, through 2022, it sounds...
8 sounds like a long time, but it allowed me to reflect
9 on the six years that I've served on Taxi and
10 Limousine Commission, and it went by very, very
11 quickly. Uhm, I also thought back on when I was...
12 when I first heard that my name was being considered
13 to represent the Brooklyn delegation on the Taxi and
14 Limousine Commission as one of the Council appointees
15 how proud I felt and how serious I took that... that,
16 uhm, potential appointment, and I thanked then
17 Council Member Erik Dilan and present Council Member,
18 uhm, Darlene Mealy who were then co-chairs of the
19 delegation who had the confidence in me to put my
20 name forward, and I always thought of myself as a,
21 although always concerned about policy that affects
22 the overall city of New York which I hold and love
23 dearly, I am primarily a Brooklynite, a third
24 generation, and I always try to think about the regs
25 that were proposed from a vantage point of Brooklyn

2 and the overall city as... as a whole. And I think,
3 uh, the uniqueness in Brooklyn, uhm, kind of opened
4 my eyes to many different issues. Most... most... most
5 importantly service to the outer borough and from my
6 perspective, uh, proudest moment was the Hail Act
7 where we implemented the Green Taxi system which
8 brought service to the outer boroughs in a meaningful
9 way for the first time. Now... now today challenges,
10 uhm, still exist. How to propel and advance the
11 taxi... the Green Taxi so that, uh, those small
12 business owners who made that investment, uhm,
13 actually have a rewarding investment but also serve
14 the boroughs and all the boroughs as... as much as... as
15 much as they possibly can. It's been a great
16 privilege working with, uhm, other Commission
17 members, past and present. Uhm, we debate and we get
18 to know, uh, each other and hear different points of
19 view, whether they're professionals, whether they're
20 business owners, work for the not-for-profit segment,
21 elected officials, doesn't matter. We all, uh, kind
22 of debate and have a mutual respect, and also I
23 always enjoyed working with the staff at TLC that I...
24 I always say just, uh, incredibly impresses me on how
25 professional and hard working they are, and I

2 consider them to be some of the staff in the... in the
3 city of New York. Mostly very honored to be sitting
4 next to Commissioner Polanco who also sits next to me
5 on the Commission (**INAUDIBLE**). We, uh, whisper once
6 in a while when... whether we're bored or when we want
7 to hear something that, uh, we really didn't... we have
8 to learn a little bit further or we're not ready to
9 vote but we take our... our... our mission very, very
10 seriously, work hard, meet with stakeholders
11 routinely on our own time, and truly try to do the
12 best job that we can. So I... I am honored to be once
13 again be considered by the Brooklyn delegation and,
14 uh, and really humble to be before this committee.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very much to
17 both of you for your opening statements. It's, uhm,
18 obviously been... the last few years have been times of
19 great change, uh, within the TLC system, uh, largely
20 though not entirely sort of led by technology and...
21 and the new presence of players in the field and
22 plenty of those changes have put various stakeholders
23 and constituencies within the system at odds with
24 each other as we saw here at... at City Council and has
25 obviously played out in some of the different

2 applications. So I just wonder if you could talk a
3 little about how you approach that, kind of valuing
4 the different actors and players across the system,
5 uh, you know, all the taking into account new
6 technologies and the goals we have and then balancing
7 all these competing interests, and I guess, Ms.
8 Polanco, for you, since as you said you come to this
9 with... with a close set of relationships within one
10 piece of the sector which is a valuable prospective
11 and something we want represented on the board but
12 also creates a requirement for, you know, being fair
13 across all the stakeholders. If you could just both
14 give your... your perspective on that issue?

15 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: Thank you. As you
16 mentioned, it's about striking a balance among all
17 the sectors, the regulated sectors, so we take it
18 very seriously when we hear about any... any complaints
19 or any concern, uh, that the stakeholders or
20 passengers or riders have in a particular sector and,
21 uh, we, through the collaboration with City Council,
22 uh, we have conducted studies. We have, uhm, enacted
23 regulation. For example, uhm, we just enacted a
24 pilot program, uhm, where we have changed the, uh,
25 the 12-hour shift in the Yellow Taxis. Also, uh,

2 we're looking forward, uh, to... for the legislation
3 that is currently before Council, uhm, regarding the
4 universal licensing which basically makes no
5 distinction between yellow taxis or livery drivers',
6 uh, licenses. Same requirements. Uh, basically now
7 FHV or livery drivers will take the education program
8 that is currently, uhm, that taxi drivers, Yellow
9 Taxi drivers have, and, uh, they will have to attend
10 those programs as well.

11 So we have expanded. We're being more
12 flexible. Uh, we have let... you know, it's a market.
13 It's a marketplace. We have let business... you have
14 to let the market run its course in terms of that.
15 Passengers should have a say or have choices, but at
16 the same time we're ensuring, first of all, safety,
17 uh, to the passengers and having a balance among the
18 sectors of the industry.

19 FRANK CARONE: We're going in order, okay.
20 Uhm, I just want to make sure I understand that the
21 question was two-pronged. One, how do we deal with
22 the different stakeholders that sometimes are at odds
23 and how do we integrate technology? Uhm, so with
24 dealing with different stakeholders, uhm, that can be
25 challenging. We... we sometimes are asked to meet with

2 a variety of stakeholders that can be on opposite
3 ends of the spectrum, uhm, whether it's a proposed
4 regulation or, uh, regulations not yet proposed but
5 one segment would like us to consider. So it takes
6 time and patience to listen to the variety of
7 stakeholders, uhm, but you always have to keep, and
8 from my estimation, what is in the general public's
9 best interest as a... as a, uh, a baseline concern.
10 How is whatever is being proposed going to affect the
11 riding public, how is it going to affect the small
12 businesses, the drivers, but always with the goal
13 towards the most efficient, safest system for the
14 riding public of which I'm a member of.

15 Uhm, one of the ways that we deal with,
16 uhm, issues that are controversial is through which I
17 think is a terrific program, the Pilot Program, where
18 we try something for a short period of time, get back
19 data, data gets reported back to the Commission, and
20 then we could consider if it's... whether it's worth
21 making a permanent rule or whether it's, uh, needs
22 some adjustments. So really, uhm, considering what's
23 in the best interest of the riding public and using
24 the Pilot Program is the best way to handle, I think,
25 the two questions.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you. Uhm, and
3 just my last formal question and then I'll turn it
4 over to any colleagues who have questions. Uhm,
5 neither of you are identified either by COYB (SIC) or
6 by our Council as having any conflicts that require
7 you to recuse yourself or disclose, is that correct?
8 We sometimes see many of our candidates do and we..
9 they get a letter from COYB but in your case you have
10 no COYB letters because you have no conflicts that
11 needed.. for which you needed guidance, is that
12 correct?

13 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: Correct, correct.

14 FRANK CARONE: That's correct.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Great. Uh, thanks to
16 both of you. Uh, Council Member Dickens, uh,
17 followed by Council Member Vacca.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you, Mr.
19 Chair. Good morning, and I want to thank both of you
20 for your... your service on the TLC and, uhm, because
21 it's... it's very important that... that we have members
22 of the public, uhm, participating and... and being a
23 part. My question deals with the handicap-
24 accessible, uhm, taxis. Uh, I was injured in the
25 latter part of last year and had, uhm, significant

2 opportunities for the utilization of... of... of such
3 taxis myself and found that although the industry
4 talks about those taxis they really are not readily
5 available. Uh, in several instances, uh, the... the
6 wheelchair did not... was not accommodated in what was
7 termed a... a handicap taxi, and my concern is not only
8 about the physical challenges faced but other
9 challenges that are faced, uh, by members of the
10 public in need of handicap-accessible, uhm, taxis.
11 Can you tell me, because particularly, Ms. Polanco,
12 you mentioned that, uhm, you had worked and had been
13 vocal in seeking changes in regulations. Have you
14 been in active in that, and if so, tell me what you
15 have done and what you intend to do in working
16 forward because I'm not... I... I've now used handicap-
17 accessible taxis, and I don't find them handicap-
18 accessible.

19 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: So I'm... I'm sorry to
20 hear about your accident and the experiences that you
21 have... that you have gone through. Uhm, I will have
22 to say accessibility is a serious issue at TLC. For
23 example, right now we just started the phase in
24 program where 50 percent of the Yellow Cabs, uh, will
25 be accessible by 2020. I know it's some years away

2 but it's a phase in program, and also by 2024, uh,
3 the Green Boro Taxis will also be accessible. Right
4 now we're also working, because not only the Yellows
5 and the Green Boros, we're also working on the
6 livery... the livery side also to be accessible. We
7 have worked very hard because one of the major issues
8 has been cost converting vehicles to wheelchair-
9 accessible and so forth. So now we have grants.
10 Grants to the... to the owners to convert their
11 vehicle. Basically if, uhm, making it more
12 appealable for them, uh, to convert their vehicles to
13 wheelchair-accessible, and recently passed the
14 legislation because the grants basically was just for
15 the new applicants where now it's retroactive, so
16 people who in the past, uh, have wheelchair-
17 accessible vehicles now could apply for the grants
18 and get the benefit as well. So we're working
19 towards it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Alright, thank
21 you. Uhm... uhm, Frank, it's good to see you here.
22 Thank you so much, Mr. Carone, for being here. Now
23 can you tell me... can you tell me something about
24 those grants and the application and the cost, do you
25 know the cost? You may not have it with you but are

2 you familiar with the cost for the conversion and how
3 much... what is the percentage that the grant covers in
4 the course to help an owner to be able to convert
5 several cabs to handicap accessibility?

6 FRANK CARONE: I don't think I... I... I could
7 answer with complete accuracy or 100 percent accuracy
8 the exact cost of the grants 'cause the grants are an
9 amalgam. They come from different places. Some
10 federal grants, some state grants. We... we do know
11 that in totality the grants do cover, uh, a large
12 wide percentage of the cost of an accessible vehicle
13 which is... and the cost has been coming down. We also
14 put in... in place a surcharge, uhm, recently,
15 approximately a year or so ago and I... and I... the last
16 I asked or heard about what the bucket of money has
17 come from that surcharge is quite significant, uhm,
18 and... but the challenge is deploying that money now
19 and... and... and how do you motivate drivers to drive
20 the vehicle? As I understood your question you had
21 an accessible vehicle but you felt it uncomfortable,
22 it didn't serve its purpose, so your experience was
23 not pleasant. I think the goal should be, and I've
24 always said this from the beginning, 100 percent
25 accessible. Not that it's just a... a... a vehicle is

2 available but it's a smooth comfortable ride, whether
3 you're a person with a disability or not, so it's
4 interchangeable. And that's a challenge that we're
5 working on now and together with the grants that are
6 available and our... our, uh, our surcharge, like we
7 believe the economics are there so we're, as we
8 speak, working on a set of regulations that will
9 encourage all drivers to utilize the vehicles on
10 more... not just for a person with disabilities but
11 others so that the riding experience is pleasant.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you... thank
13 you so much, Chair, because the... the issue with me
14 was that in some instances they were unable... the
15 drivers were unable to hook the, uh, wheelchair so
16 that it stayed stable during the ride. That was one
17 challenge. The other thing was that the wheelchair
18 did not fit... they could not close the back of the...
19 the... the cab, uhm, so that the wheelchair could go
20 all the way in, and the third thing is about sight.
21 I'm concerned about those who, uh, have sight
22 disabilities and that there is a... a device where it
23 tells them, for instance, the cost of... of their ride
24 versus being told so thank you so much.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you, Council
3 Member. And, you know, I think in general this is an
4 issue that the Council... I know that TLC is not done
5 with it, that the Council is not done with, not only
6 in the Yellow Cabs where at least there is some, uh,
7 meaningful provision, but in the FHV, uh, sector
8 where there's really no meaningful provision and that
9 we have a lot of work to do and I think a lot of us
10 will not be satisfied until we get to some rules that
11 make that, uh, a reality, and we unfortunately still
12 have a long way to go so thank you for raising this
13 critical issue. Council Member Vacca.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you. Thank
15 you, Mr. Chair. And I want to be supportive of both
16 of you. Uh, it was my pleasure to be Chair of the
17 Transportation Committee in the last Council.
18 Working with TLC and working with both of you I that
19 your commitment and I know that you know what you're
20 doing which is very important. Uhm, the industry is
21 evolving. Every day is something different. I... when
22 I took over the Transportation Committee in 2010 I
23 really didn't think taxis would be a big issue, and
24 then all of a sudden it exploded. And having people

2 like you there as experienced hands is very important
3 to the Council.

4 Council Member Dickens did touch on one
5 of two things that I wanted to touch on, and that was
6 the issue of accessibility. And we need your
7 sensitivity and your awareness and, uhm, again having
8 you there with your experience, Mr. Carone and Ms.
9 Polanco, is very important to me as a member of the
10 body. The handicap accessible vans, uh, and cars,
11 many of them are green out-of-borough vehicles, and
12 many of them are sitting in garages. They cannot be
13 used, hundreds of them, because dri... no drivers want
14 them. So we have the legislation which Mayor
15 Bloomberg, at that time, got passed through Albany.
16 We have the green out-of-borough disabled-accessible
17 cars, and we have no one driving them. So the out-
18 of-boroughs really don't have the... the degree of
19 accessibility we should, and the other issue which
20 again Council Member Dickens, uh, touched on and that
21 is accessibility for the blind. I was involved in
22 that with former Governor Patterson when I was Chair
23 of the Committee and I don't want those efforts to be
24 diminished in any way. The visually handicapped
25 people of our city number around 200,000, and we did

2 make efforts with the Yellow industry. We work
3 really hard on this. We need to expand those efforts
4 to other sectors of the industry, so that people who
5 are visually impaired do not have to depend on the
6 word of the driver as to how much their fare is and
7 what it cost, and we need to expand those efforts.
8 So in light of what we're going through and in spite
9 of the challenges, I think both of you merit
10 reappointment and, uh, I know you've been there for
11 us, but I... I wanted to bring these issues to the
12 forefront again. I know you must be aware of them,
13 but we have to move forward, not backward. We have a
14 lot of work to do and the TLC has become an increasingly
15 important agency. So I thank you for your service.

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And now we've been
17 joined by Council Member Mark Levine from Manhattan
18 and also former Council Member Mark Weprin. Thank
19 you for joining us. Uhm, and Council Member Vacca,
20 thank you for your continued advocacy on... on... on that
21 issue and obviously as we continue to look at this
22 question of how we get accessibility in the FHV
23 realm, making sure that those vehicles, which are
24 already accessible, but are not economically as
25 attractive to be out there. That's something that

2 we'd have to find a way through, so thank you. Uh,
3 Council Member Greenfield.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you very
5 much. I just wanted to add my voice as well in, uh
6 supporting the nomination of Ms. Polanco and Mr.
7 Carone, and I just wanted to add that Frank Carone is
8 the pride of Brooklyn. We're very happy to have him
9 and the work that he's doing is outstanding work at
10 the TLC and we're grateful. I just want to encourage
11 you folks, it's not a question, it's just a comment,
12 to just think a little bit broader about how we can
13 level the playing field between the Yellow cabs and
14 the new for-hire vehicle app services like Uber and
15 Lift, especially when it comes to flattening the
16 rates between the two. This has nothing to do with
17 the fact that I happen to have legislation that would
18 cap surge pricing at 100 percent. It's just a
19 general comment that you might want to think about
20 trying to flatten the playing field between those
21 two, but I want to, uh, congratulate you and thank
22 you both for your service and especially, uh, Frank
23 Carone for your long time service, uh, to Brooklyn.
24 Uh, you're a... a lot of people don't know this but
25 you're actually a military veteran as well and we

2 thank you for your distinguished service there as
3 well. And thank you for all the many different
4 charitable activities that you're involved in, uh,
5 within Brooklyn within the city of New York. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member
8 Levine.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you, Mr.
10 Chair. And, uh, good morn... good afternoon, uh, Ms.
11 Polanco and Mr. Carone. I'm also very pleased to be
12 thanking you for your service until now and to be
13 supporting for your reappointment. Uhm, the price
14 of... of Yellow Medallions has been dropping on the
15 market, uhm, and some have been, uh, making the
16 suggestion that the city actually has an interest in
17 avoiding too steep of a decline in the market value.
18 I wonder if you could comment on whether you think
19 either of you... well, that... that is truly an interest
20 of the city.

21 FRANK CARONE: Thank you, Council Member
22 Levine. Yes, yes. The... the stakeholders that we
23 regulate, uhm, would be real obtuse for us to say
24 it's not our concern, uhm, about the value of those
25 businesses because they employ people. They leverage

2 them with banks that have an interest. Uhm, the...
3 the... sometimes the, uh... uh, medallions are refinanced
4 to purchase other medallions which employ other
5 folks. Uhm, so it is a... an absolute concern, uhm,
6 but it doesn't mean that we should right away
7 regulate, uhm, without really knowing the
8 consequences of new entrants into the marketplace
9 such as the app-based service providers. Uhm, every
10 time we try to do that another idea comes along and...
11 and... and things change again. So it's... it is
12 something that we talk about. We're concerned about.
13 We should be, I believe, uhm, but we have to be real
14 careful, uh, to regulate it so that we don't, uhm,
15 have un... unattended consequences through, uhm,
16 regulation that really doesn't achieve the purpose.
17 But to your specific question, it is something that
18 we think about often and are looking for the right
19 balance.

20 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: And to expand on
21 that, that's why Frank and I both mentioned before we
22 have the Pilot Program. We meet with the
23 stakeholders to come up with solutions to
24 alternatives. For example, for the change in the 12-
25 hour shift. Uhm, for example, with, uh, with City

2 Council, with the universe... universal licensing.
3 Having flexibility for the drivers. Uhm, it's... it's
4 a way, for example, to increase because one of the
5 major complaints the taxi industry... the Yellow Taxi
6 industry has made is that they have lost drivers, so
7 that's another way that we are, uh, meeting at least
8 with, uh, at least meeting with that... with that
9 issue.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Interesting. Some
11 people assume that a solution might require a
12 financial intervention but it seems like you're
13 talking about just easing the rules, uhm, to make the
14 businesses more successful, therefore more
15 profitable. Uh, it seems kind of hard to argue with
16 that, is that right? Alright, thank you very much.

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member
18 Levine... Rose... thank you Council Member Levine.
19 Council Member Rose followed by Council Member
20 Dickens for a follow up question.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I just have a
22 comment. Uhm, should you be appointed, Ms. Polanco,
23 and reappointed, Mr. Carone, I want you to bring back
24 to the entire board that Staten Island is very
25 appreciative of the opening of our, uhm, TLC center.

2 It was something, you know, I advocated and fought
3 for, uhm, when I first got here, uhm, and it has
4 happened. So I just wanted you to relay, you know,
5 our thanks and gratitude. Thank you.

6 FRANK CARONE: May I just, uh, comment?

7 Uh, thank you, Council Member Rose, and I... I think a
8 lot of the congratulations also, uhm, belongs to, uh,
9 Commissioner Elias Erute (SP?) who served for 22
10 years on the Commission and pushed and advocated and
11 focused on Staten Island like you couldn't believe.
12 Uhm, that's all he talked about. It could be a
13 question like Councilman Levine said he would ask
14 what about the base on Staten Island, and he was just
15 zero... zero like and laser like focus but, uh, we're
16 gonna miss him and he was... he is a great man and was
17 a terrific Commissioner.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Now I'll just note,
19 we... we sometimes, Council Member Rose is treated as
20 an honorary member of the Brooklyn delegation so we
21 know, Mr. Carone, that you will treat her as one of
22 your... one of your own as well in your service. So,
23 uh, Council Member Dickens.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Just one more
25 question, can you tell me where... where you're at on

2 SheRides, particularly for the Jewish and... and Muslim
3 communities? SheRides. The SheRides app that has
4 been discussed, uh, for women of religious
5 backgrounds, Jewish women as well as Muslim women
6 that... that, uhm, are not secure riding in a taxi
7 driven by men, and so there is a... there is... was a
8 discussion and it was called SheRides so I'm asking
9 about that... are you at all familiar with it?

10 FRANK CARONE: Uh, I... I am familiar with
11 the app called SheRide, although I haven't... I'm not
12 certain it's still in existence. It... it was an idea
13 that was, uh, put forth almost a year ago, I think...

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Yes, yes.

15 FRANK CARONE: And I was... I had concerns
16 about it. I thought it potentially violated civil
17 rights, uhm, of those that they I thought
18 discriminated against by not allowing them rides in
19 cabs which also violated our rules which, uh... uhm,
20 requires all passengers, male, female, of any
21 ethnicity or racial background, must be provided any
22 service. So to have a service that was only for one
23 segment of our population I thought it had potential,
24 uhm, not only civil rights, uh, legalities but also
25 violated the rules of the Taxi and Limousine

2 Commission and the Administrative Code. Uhm, I don't
3 know if it's a going concern. I haven't heard about
4 it in quite some time or have seen it in any place.
5 So, uhm, if it is I'm... I'm still concerned and if it...
6 if it comes before us I'll look at it very carefully.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you so
8 much. Thank you.

9 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: And I was gonna say
10 that I have not heard of it, but definitely something
11 that I will, uh, look very carefully if it becomes
12 before us.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Alright, thank
14 you. Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you, Council
16 Member. And finally Council Member Rodriguez.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I just have a
18 comment more than a question (**INAUDIBLE**) common
19 question. One is, as you know, I chair the Committee
20 of Transportation and I apologize for not being here
21 from the beginning so having the role of supreme
22 member of this committee. We know that if it is
23 passed by the Council, we... you know, in my role as a
24 Chairman of the Board of Transportation, probably
25 that's, you know, one of the agencies that we from

2 the Transportation Committee oversee the most. And
3 for me, my question is about fairness. You know,
4 how... what is your vision, how and... and I appreciate
5 by the way like all the... all services that you have
6 provide to our city. I know that the last year has
7 been very challenging for all of us, especially
8 knowing that we need to respond to the demand of the
9 consumers which is switching more into the
10 technology, the apps, having today more than 75 apps
11 companies registered at PFC. How can... you know, what
12 is your vision, how... what (**INAUDIBLE**) were you able
13 to get in the year that you serve in the TLC as a
14 board member that you can say now if I continue
15 serving at TLC there was something that I learned the
16 whole discussion about, how to support the new
17 coming, the tech community to say, yes, we support
18 you, and there's a market here for you to be
19 established in our city, but also being fair to the
20 traditional stakeholder. In this case from the
21 yellow, the livery, and the green. Like how do you
22 see the balancing on, you know, where can we rule
23 that the TLC that you can say TLC provide opportunity
24 for everyone from the Uber, (**INAUDIBLE**) Lift and the
25 other 72 as also we know that we had to continue

2 working supporting the traditional stakeholder in the
3 industry, in this case the yellow, the green and the
4 livery and the black car limousine.

5 LAUVIENSKA POLANCO: Thank you for that
6 question. That's a very important question. I mean
7 that's... that's... that's a hot button issue right now.
8 Uh, in the eight years I was with the TLC, basically
9 I have seen a transformation. All of our rules were
10 focusing only on the regulated industry of the yellow
11 taxis and then the green Boros and now the livery.
12 But now the livery has taken, you know, it has... have...
13 have branches. Now we have the app livery bases, and
14 with the app livery bases we have to continue to,
15 uhm, encourage technology. I mean it's evolving.
16 It's always gonna be evolving. There's always going
17 to be something new, but at the same time we have to
18 keep that balance as you mentioned. We have to keep
19 the balance of the yellows, the green Boros, the
20 livery bases, the traditional livery bases, and now...
21 and now the app livery bases. So through
22 participation we have... we have to have more people
23 participate. I mean I... I suppose in the eight years
24 there has been more people in the decision making
25 process. Uhm, I, myself, especially my relation with

2 the livery bases I have seen, uh, a transformation in
3 terms of that more groups, more individuals
4 participating more and more, having to say as to
5 what's going on out there, and I think that's
6 extremely important so it's just the regulations have
7 to... have to be balanced. And collaboration with
8 Council, with the studies that have been made, and
9 we're going to monitor and then regulate accordingly.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Alright, thank
11 you, Council Member Rodriguez. Thanks to both of you
12 for your service in the past, your time here today,
13 uh, answering our questions, and we know in the
14 future. We look forward to continue to work with
15 you. As we've outlined there's a lot of thorny but
16 really important issues for us to continue to work on
17 and we appreciate having you there, uh, both in...
18 working together with the Council and with obviously
19 New Yorkers throughout the city so thank you very
20 much. We'll close this hearing and move onto our
21 next nominees.

22 Next up is Manuel Miranda who has been
23 nominated to the Art Commission also known as the
24 Public Design Commission. If Mr. Miranda, a Brooklyn
25 resident, is appointed to the seat designated for a

2 layperson eligible to complete the remainder of a
3 three-year term that expires on December 31st, 2017.

4 Uhm, the Art Commission also known as Public Design
5 Commission reviews permanent works of art,

6 architecture and landscape architecture proposed on
7 or over city owned property. Uh, projects include

8 construction, renovation and restoration of

9 buildings, installation of lighting or other

10 streetscape elements, etc. Uh, the Commission is

11 composed of the Mayor or his representative, the

12 President of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the

13 President of the New York Public Library, President

14 of the Brooklyn Museum, one painter, one sculptor,

15 one architect, one landscape architect, all of whom

16 should be residents of the city, and three other

17 residents of the city who cannot be painters,

18 sculptors, architects, landscape architects or active

19 members of any profession in the Fine Arts. The

20 Mayor and the Museum and Library Presidents serve in

21 an ex officio capacity. The appointive members whose

22 service is not ex officio are chosen from a list

23 submitted by the Fine Arts Federation, and they're

24 here today to testify, of not less than three times

25 the number to be appointed, and the Mayor appoints an

2 individual from that list. All members serve without
3 compensation for three-year terms or until a new
4 successor has been appointed or qualified. Uhm,
5 we've had some good dialogue in the past with
6 members, uh, individuals who are appointed or
7 nominated to serve on the Art Commission, uhm, and
8 made some good progress, uh, in helping strengthen
9 the relationship between the Council and the Art
10 Commission. One thing I'll note for our members in
11 the public as well is that while the members of the
12 Art Commission are, uh, come before us for our advice
13 and consent, uh, the Chair does not. That's a direct
14 Mayoral appointment, uhm, and that position has
15 actually recently transitioned, uhm, from Faith Rose
16 who stepped down for family business reasons, who
17 some of us have had the opportunity to meet with and
18 talk about these changes, and the Mayor has now
19 appointed Justin Garrett Moore as the new executive
20 director and who is here in the room with us,
21 excellent. That may be a first so that's already a
22 good step in the right direction. Uh, and actually
23 we've already had some back and forth, uh, between
24 the administration and the Council to set up a time,
25 not in the formal setting of a hearing of.. on the

2 appointment, but just as an opportunity to get to
3 know Mr. Moore and talk about our continued work
4 together, both broadly to make sure that there is
5 excellence, uh, and... and all that means in the public
6 realm and also that the Council's historic concerns
7 about making sure that our projects can move forward
8 in a... a thoughtful but also expeditious and, uh,
9 affordable manner, uh, are attended to as we
10 continue. So, uh, and excellent I also said.
11 Excellent, expeditious and affordable (SIC). Uh... uh,
12 very good. So, uhm, so we will not have that
13 conversation, uh, today since this conversation is on
14 Mr. Miranda's qualifications for appointment to, uh,
15 the Commission but we know that those are obviously
16 broader issues Council Members care about and, uh,
17 we'll continue the dialogue and progress in... in... in
18 that regard.

19 Okay. Mr. Miranda, will you please raise
20 your right hand to be sworn in by our counsel?

21 COUNSEL: Do you swear or affirm that the
22 statement you're about to make will be the truth, the
23 whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

24 MANUEL MIRANDA: I do.

25 COUNSEL: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Please go ahead and
3 give us your opening statement and then we'll ask
4 some questions.

5 MANUEL MIRANDA: Good morning, Chair
6 Lander, members of the Rules, Privileges and
7 Elections Committee of this New York City Council.
8 My name Manuel Miranda and it's an honor to appear
9 before you today.

10 I moved to New York City from Seattle in
11 the year 2000 and settled here as part of what E. B.
12 White calls a third New York, the New York of the
13 person who was born somewhere else and comes to the
14 city in quest of something. My quest which was to
15 find a role through which I could contribute my
16 perspective, voice and energy to the ideal of making
17 the world a better place manifested itself in a
18 career in design, and my adopted city played a
19 central role in helping me find that path.

20 As a graphic designer in New York City
21 I've had the opportunity to become educated, work on
22 significant projects and be involved in a vibrant
23 community of colleagues and friends engaged in the
24 question of how design benefits public life. Being
25 nominated to serve on the Public Design Commission is

2 an amazing opportunity to more deeply engage that
3 question. I'd like to tell you a little bit about
4 how I think design benefits public life. Design
5 makes places legible by creating a mental picture in
6 the mind of the viewer of a space or institution. It
7 makes those places navigable by clarifying pathways
8 and pointing people in the right direction, and it
9 creates a visibility of those places by creating a
10 sense of identity and perhaps civic unity. Design is
11 functional but it also creates identity. Public
12 amenities and utilities such as the Brooklyn Bridge
13 or the New York City subway system are designed to
14 serve purely functional needs, but they are also
15 iconic representations of New York City around the
16 world. At a neighborhood level, Corona Plaza in
17 Queens serves as a great example of how community
18 engagement, strategic partnership, and design can
19 work together to create a vibrant public space which
20 community leaders feel ownership of.

21 Design serves the humanized connection
22 between organizations and the public they serve to
23 create points of accessibility. Designed objects and
24 works of art in public space are the physical
25 components that serve as experiential conduits

2 between the city and its inhabitants. The designer's
3 role in creating these objects isn't solely about
4 taste, style and aesthetic experience though these
5 are valuable and important aspects of any designed
6 object, but to also understand and be aware of the
7 context in which these objects are both created and
8 will exist, to be sensitive to both community needs
9 and institutional realities.

10 New York City is always changing but this
11 seems like a particular moment of change. In recent
12 years there has been a wave of creative thinking
13 about how to utilize and optimize public space in an
14 affordable way. In the wake of environmental change
15 we face the question of how to build a more resilient
16 city. In the wake of rising inequality we face the
17 question of how to make the city accessible to
18 everyone. Community engagement has become a
19 necessary component of any public design project as
20 considering community input in the design process is
21 as important as form making and material choices.

22 If appointed to the Public Design
23 Commission, I'd like to engage these questions about
24 optimizing public space for all New Yorkers. Through
25 my work as a designer I've engaged many of these

2 questions and projects both in New York City as well
3 as around the country. My work is cited within
4 specific communities and embedded in unique
5 collaborative processes with architects, programmers,
6 strategists, community leaders, curators, artists,
7 city officials and real estate developers. I work
8 both parallel to and in partnership with my
9 collaborators. I've been involved in projects for
10 audiences across the social spectrum, from
11 economically disadvantaged communities of color to
12 high level leaders and donors in New York's finest
13 cultural institutions. From this wide range of
14 experience I am keenly aware of the need for design
15 to serve a multiplicity of audiences. Working with
16 the Neighborhood Plaza Partnership, I worked on the
17 campaign called WiFi Para Todos that advertised a
18 Pilot Program offering free WiFi access at the
19 aforementioned Corona Plaza. I gave the campaign a
20 visual look and feel that signaled to the community
21 that the amenity was assessable to everyone in the
22 neighborhood.

23 Working with NYC and Company on a very
24 tight deadline, I designed a campaign that voices
25 city stance against gay bullying in response to Tyler

2 Clemente's suicide. I also designed a campaign
3 called ID Equals which sought to broadcast the
4 benefits of having a state-issued ID to young men of
5 color in New York City. In Patterson, New Jersey
6 I've worked with the National Parks Service to help
7 the service connect to local Latino and Arab
8 immigrant communities through the lens of ethnic
9 food.

10 I come from an immigrant company and have
11 grown up in the United States of a person of color.
12 I believe this gives me insight into the sensibility
13 and experience of minority communities in New York
14 City. I'm excited to be considered for the Public
15 Design Commission because its leadership also seems
16 attuned to emerging demographics which recent
17 appointments to the Commission demonstrate. Thank
18 you again for considering my nomination to the Public
19 Design Commission. I'm happy to answer any quest..
20 any questions you may have.

21 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very much.
22 I appreciate, uh, that. I think it's also valuable
23 for us to hear. You know, it's, uh, we don't have a..
24 a graphic designer position, uh, identified in the
25 Charter but I think thinking about, uh.. uh, the kinds

2 of perspectives that you bring to issues like, uh,
3 way finding and moving through spaces as very
4 helpful, and it's a lot of what, uh, we're thinking
5 about in terms of not only making spaces, uh,
6 beautiful or inspiring but practical and work for
7 our... for our constituents as well so I think it's,
8 uh, it's helpful and... and, uh, as I mentioned to you
9 I'm a big fan of the Neighborhood Plaza Partnership
10 so your work in Corona Plaza is very encouraging to...
11 to me as well. Uhm, do Council Members have any
12 question? Council Member Chin.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank
14 you, Chair. Uhm, Mr. Miranda, I'm really glad that
15 in your opening statement that you talk about, uhm,
16 your experience in... in the community and working with
17 immigrant community and also with, uh, the Plaza
18 Program. And I think that going forward a lot more
19 immigrant community are finally getting involved, uh,
20 in their neighborhood and having a voice in terms of
21 designing, uh, cultural space, historic space, so I
22 think this is really a unique opportunity to bring
23 your perspective to help us, to help our community
24 sort of get involved and also... and to make sure that
25 it is done in a timely manner and that their voices

2 and their input are taken seriously because there is
3 so many opportunity now I think in various immigrant...
4 immigrant neighborhood throughout the city that
5 people are actively taking up some of the public
6 space and really, uh, shaping it into, uh, a town
7 square, a cultural plaza, so I look forward to
8 really, uh, working with you and... and seeing the Arts
9 Commission really taking a more active role in... in
10 that process.

11 MANUEL MIRANDA: Thank you Council Member
12 Chin. Uh, that's... that's my philosophy too, that as
13 I said in my opening statement that in addition to
14 aesthetics, form making, I think taking input from
15 the community groups who will be using these public
16 spaces or amenities is just as important to consider.
17 Uhm, and I've also in preparation for, uh, this
18 hearing process, I've spoken with, uh, the new
19 executive director, Justin Garrett Moore, and I'm
20 very excited about his, you know, perspective on the
21 whole thing as well in terms of, you know, making
22 quality public spaces accessible and, you know,
23 available to all New Yorkers.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you. And, you
25 know, it occurs to me in this regard thinking about

2 the, uh, the people that we have approved for this
3 Commission. Uhm, you know, when you go through and
4 you think, oh, there has to be someone from the Met
5 and the Fine Art Federation, you get a certain sense
6 of what was at least intended by perhaps the charter
7 framers when they established the Public Design
8 Commission and perhaps thought about, uh, maybe
9 protecting the public spaces from the... the rabble,
10 and yet when you think about who this administration,
11 uh, has appointed, Shembay Tai (SP?), Hank Willis
12 Thomas, now Justin Garrett Moore, the new director,
13 and Mr. Miranda, that's a very different perspective
14 on what it means to bring thoughtful attention to
15 public space to welcome people in, uh, and make sure
16 those spaces are high quality but, you know, a way
17 that reflects the true, uh, diversity and classivity
18 (SIC) of... of New York. So that's a credit to this
19 administration and I feel it's something we should be
20 hearing more about so, uh, that's maybe an assignment
21 to the new chair to tell the story of this good
22 Commission and the work it's doing. Uh, Council
23 Member Rose and then Council Member Dickens.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Uhm, I just want to
25 publicly apologize. You did try to reach me. I

2 didn't get back to you. Your resume is very
3 impressive, and I look forward to voting for your
4 appointment to the Commission.

5 MANUEL MIRANDA: Thank you, Council
6 Member, as I look forward to it also.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member
8 Dickens?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: I... I... I
10 apologize. Thank you so much, Chair. Apologize.
11 Uhm, Mr. Miranda, I believe I've read somewhere that
12 you had done some work in Lower Manhattan on the
13 McKean White (SIC) buildings, is that true, did I
14 read that somewhere?

15 MANUEL MIRANDA: Sorry, for which
16 building?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: The McKean White
18 buildings. Did you do some work on those?

19 MANUEL MIRANDA: Uhm...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: In Lower
21 Manhattan? No. If the answer is no... is no, it's
22 okay.

23 MANUEL MIRANDA: Okay. Yeah, I'm not
24 sure. I mean there might've been a business I worked
25

2 with that was in a building called the McKean White
3 building but, uh...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: No, that's
5 alright.

6 MANUEL MIRANDA: Okay.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Now let me ask
8 you something about, uh, I noticed you're still
9 teaching at Yale. What's the frequency of that, are
10 you gonna be able to get back and forth, uhm, to be
11 at... at our meetings here in the city? What's your
12 frequency in going to... up to Connecticut?

13 MANUEL MIRANDA: Uhm, well I'm an adjunct
14 faculty. I'm not a fulltime teacher there, so I
15 teach one semester out of the year on, uh, you know,
16 I can determine the day I go teach the class with the
17 department chair, so that's one day a week which is
18 about 12 classes in the second semester, spring
19 semester so, uhm, I work... I have my own business and
20 I also teach and I'm also a guest critic at various
21 schools in the area, but I can, you know, determine
22 my own schedule with those things. I also served on
23 the... or do serve now, uh, on the New York Chapter of
24 the IGA, which is the professional organization for
25 design. I'm currently the vice president of the

2 board of directors. Uh, I've served a three-year
3 term, and the ending of that will actually coincide
4 with me starting with this, if appointed. Uh, and so
5 I would just use the time that I've used for the IGA,
6 uh, towards my service on the Public Design
7 Commission.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Okay, thank you.
9 Thank you so much.

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very much.
11 Uhm, alright, thank you again for your, uh,
12 willingness to serve and for your time today and
13 talking to a lot of us in advance. Uhm... uh, this
14 will close the... well, I just wanted to say it was so
15 close to hearing. We're gonna, uh, hear from our
16 last nominee Jeanne Lutfy, but then Jeff Bios from
17 the Fine Arts Federation who comes to testify for our
18 Commission nominees will testify after that so thank
19 you very much. Uhm... uh, and again, thank you, Mr.
20 Moore for...

21 MANUEL MIRANDA: Great, thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright, we will now
23 move to our fifth and final hearing and nomination of
24 the morning. Uh, last but not least though, as this
25 is someone who I've known the longest of any of the

2 five appointees, and I'm enthusiastic to see with us
3 today.

4 Uhm... uh, if the Council gives its advice
5 and consent, Jeanne Lutfy, a Manhattan resident, will
6 be appointed, but a... a Brooklyn at heart, will be
7 appointed to the Landmarks Preservation Commission,
8 to the LPC as a Realtor slot and eligible to complete
9 the remainder of a three-year term that expires on
10 June 28th, 2018. Uh, pursuant to the Charter, the
11 LPC is responsible for establishing and regulating
12 landmarks, landmark sites, interior landmarks, scenic
13 landmarks and historic districts, and also regulates
14 alterations to designated buildings. LPC consists of
15 11 members. These must include at least three
16 architects, one historian, one city planner or
17 landscape architect, and one Realtor, and must
18 include at least one resident from each of the five
19 boroughs. The Mayor appoints the members of the LPC
20 with the advice and consent of the Council, uhm, and
21 when appointing the members that fit into the
22 architect, historian, city planner, landscape
23 architect, and Realtor role, the Mayor may consult
24 also with the Fine Arts Federation of New York or any
25 similar organization in the course of making those

2 appointments, though it's not a requirement as it is
3 on the Art Commission. Members are appointed for
4 staggered terms. Uhm, as noted previously, the Mayor
5 designates one of the LPC members to serve as Chair
6 and another as Vice Chair. Uhm, the LPC Chair is a
7 compensated position, uh, but the other members of
8 the Commission serve without compensation. I'm sorry
9 about that. Uhm, we... let's see, we'll skip all these
10 other information on all the excellent things that
11 the LPC does in their relationship to the Council,
12 uhm, and move, uh, directly to your opening statement
13 and questions with us. Thank you so much for being
14 here and for your patience in waiting while we move
15 through all of the other panels. It's wonderful to
16 see you again. Uhm...

17 JEANNE LUTFY: No. Thank you. It's great
18 to see you.

19 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Please raise your
20 right hand to be sworn in by our counsel.

21 COUNSEL: Do you swear or affirm that the
22 statement you're about to make will be the truth, the
23 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

24 JEANNE LUTFY: I do.

25 COUNSEL: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Please go ahead and
3 proceed with your opening statement.

4 JEANNE LUTFY: Thank you. Good afternoon,
5 uhm, Committee Chair Lander and members of the
6 Committee. Now we're fortunate we have a very
7 intimate conversation. Uhm, I appreciate the
8 opportunity to appear before you this afternoon and
9 answer any questions that you may have. I'm
10 delighted to be here, and I consider it a real honor
11 to be nominated to the Commissioner of the Landmarks
12 Preservation Commission by Mayor de Blasio. Unlike
13 many of the LPC's sitting Commissioners, I'm not an
14 architect, a preservationist or an urban planner by
15 trade. I'm a native New Yorker who loves our great
16 city and who's been very fortunate throughout my
17 professional career to have been able in a variety of
18 capacities to enhance its physical, economic, and
19 cultural landscape. I've loved every moment of it,
20 and it would be a real honor and a privilege to join
21 Chair Srinivasan and LPC's Commissioners in their
22 efforts to preserve and protect our city's wonderful
23 architectural treasures. To me, this feels like a
24 perfect fit given my deep experience and economic
25 development in real estate, my knowledge of the

2 city's landscape, and my strong interest in design
3 and architecture.

4 I was born and raised in Brooklyn, and I
5 spent quite a bit of time in my youth playing in its
6 lush and concrete parks, exploring its diverse
7 neighborhoods, charming, gritty, and historic, and
8 just being in all of the city's majestic
9 architecture, both modern and historic.

10 I was raised in Bay Ridge and attended
11 high school in Park Slope where I first fell in love
12 with brownstone Brooklyn and Vaux and Olmsted's
13 Prospect Park. As a result, after returning to New
14 York City from college in the 1980s, I shooed living
15 in Manhattan or the City as we called it then for the
16 chance to live in the newly renamed or minted Cobble
17 Hill neighborhood. After many years of living in
18 brownstones I eventually bought a co-op in a really
19 beautiful distinctive prewar Rosario Candela building
20 on Grand Army Plaza.

21 Professionally, I cut my teeth in
22 economic development in the city's economic
23 development corporation during the Koch and the
24 Dinkins administrations. It was a really exciting
25 time to work in government. EDC was just a fledgling

2 entity back there tasked with protecting the city's
3 industrial base as well as retaining and expanding
4 its corporate and community uses. As head of
5 Marketing and Communications, I marketed and
6 positioned many major city sponsored projects,
7 including the conversion of Cass Gilbert's Brooklyn
8 Army Terminal for light industry and back office
9 uses, the creation of new business districts in the
10 boroughs outside of Manhattan such as downtown
11 Brooklyn with Metrotech, Long Island City, as well as
12 repositioning the South Street Seaport Project and
13 promoting the Times Square redevelopment, among many,
14 many others.

15 I moved to the private sector at the end
16 of the Dinkins administration, but I just kept
17 feeling an internal tug back to the world of city
18 sponsored public private development, so in 1999 when
19 the opportunity presented itself to work with BAM's
20 legendary Harvey Lichtenstein to create a mixed use
21 cultural district in downtown Brooklyn, I jumped in.
22 As president of the BAM Local Development
23 Corporation, I worked with a diverse base of
24 constituents to transform vacant city owned
25 properties adjacent to BAM into an innovative project

2 with affordable space for nonprofit arts groups,
3 mixed income housing, public open space, and
4 amenities. We hired some of the brightest
5 architectural thinkers and planners of the time, Rem
6 Koolhaas and Diller Scofidio Renfro to help us
7 develop a very thoughtful and forward looking master
8 plan that definitely needed the district's new
9 buildings and open spaces with existing architecture
10 in the adjacent Fort Green community. It was a lot
11 of work and it's come a long way today, and you know
12 it required a lot of, uh, partnerships not only with
13 the city but working closely with elected officials,
14 community groups, and arts organizations. It was
15 really very fulfilling.

16 I'm currently a real estate agent at
17 Holstead (SP?) Property where I'm able to tap into my
18 experience in the world of public private
19 development, my knowledge of the city's
20 neighborhoods, and my love of architecture plus
21 marketing to help my clients. Working with them is
22 extremely rewarding in many ways, and it also helps
23 me to see the city's landscape through their lens
24 which I think is important.

2 I continue to be involved with the arts.
3 I'm currently Board Chair of Issue Project Room, a
4 nonprofit arts group that is New York City's foremost
5 presenter of experimental and avant-garde music. In
6 this capacity, uh, I am leading the thoughtful
7 renovation of issues. 5,000 square foot performance
8 space which is located on the ground floor of the
9 historic McKim, Mead and White designed 110
10 Livingston Street in downtown Brooklyn. By the way,
11 we did win a Public Design Commission award for our
12 work there. Work Architecture Company is designing
13 the project, uhm, and it's really been a great
14 partnership between issue, uh, DCA and the Department
15 of Design and Construction.

16 I'm also Director of the 47 Plaza Street
17 Co-op Board. In this capacity, I'm responsible... I'm
18 responsible for special capital projects, and I am
19 currently leading the restoration of the building's
20 300 linear square feet of cast iron fence working
21 with restoration landscape architect Robin Key (SIC)
22 Landscape Design.

23 I think the Landmarks Preservation
24 Commission's mandate is a very, very important one.
25 If my nomination is approved I will bring my passion,

2 energy, and commitment to be a thoughtful voice and a
3 preservationist-minded Commissioner. I'll bring a
4 broad-based perspective and collaborative approach to
5 the Commission, and I will do my utmost to respect
6 our city's incredible architectural legacy. It would
7 be an honor for me to serve on the Commission and a
8 capstone for my career in so many ways. I thank the
9 Mayor for having nominated me and the Speaker... the
10 Speaker, the City Council, and this committee for its
11 consideration of my candidacy. Thank you so much.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you for that,
13 uhm, great opening statement. It's especially, you
14 know, I think, uh, in the last term I chaired the
15 Landmark Subcommittee and probably our most
16 contentious, uh, process that we considered was the...
17 the downtown Brooklyn and historic skyscraper
18 district, uhm, where quite a few real estate
19 interests did not want us to designate some of those
20 gorgeous buildings like 110, uh, Livingston and, uh,
21 so it's great to have someone who understands the...
22 the needs and issues in the real estate community,
23 uhm, and will be sitting in the Realtor's seat, but
24 who really appreciates the value of thoughtful, uh,

2 designation and preservation. So, uhm, I see Council
3 Member Dickens with a question.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chair, and thank you, Ms. Lutfy for, uhm, your
6 testimony and thank you for being here today and
7 thank you for, uhm, being willing to serve. Uhm,
8 you're formerly a constituent of mine. You've been
9 drawn out of my district but that's alright. And..
10 and I... I apologize, you...

11 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: We're busy trying to
12 get her back to Brooklyn so, you know, forget the
13 redistrict thing in Manhattan.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: We're not letting
15 her go. We're not letting her go. But, uh, you... you
16 did work on the McKim, Mead and White and what was,
17 uhm, 'cause it can be challenging to renovate within
18 a historic district or... or a landmarked building, and
19 so I think that, uhm, your experience and the fact
20 that you are on both sides, uhm, of understanding
21 the... the significance of... of restoration, the
22 significance of the maintenance of our historic
23 properties and at the same time, uh, involved with
24 real estate I think, uhm, is... is great that you bring
25 this to... to the Landmarks preservation because of the

2 cost that sometimes can be prohibitive when we
3 renovate within a historic district. So I... I really
4 commend you. I thank you and I strongly support,
5 uhm, your nomination. So I just wanted to say thank
6 you more than ask you a question.

7 JEANNE LUTFY: Thank you so much.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Particularly
9 since I... I live in a McKim, Mead and White building.

10 JEANNE LUTFY: Is it... is it landmarked?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: It's in the St.
12 Nicholas Historic District.

13 JEANNE LUTFY: Right, right.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: It's a brownstone
15 in the Saint... and it's Striver's Row.

16 JEANNE LUTFY: Right.

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Uhm, and I'll say
18 thank you for the... the BAM LDC work which obviously
19 as you mentioned but as we're seeing now is really,
20 uh, coming to fruition in so many ways so that long,
21 uh, work that you did to lay the... the ground for it
22 is really coming through in quite extraordinary ways.

23 Uhm, as I asked the other candidates,
24 I'll just confirm there were no conflicts identified
25 that required you to seek guidance COIB (SIC) that

2 you would need to recuse yourself or seek any
3 guidance?

4 JEANNE LUTFY: Right.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you. Uhm, any
6 other questions?

7 (BACKGROUND NOISE)

8 JEANNE LUTFY: If I'm appointed I will
9 certainly be working on projects (**INAUDIBLE**).

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you so much for
11 your time this morning. Yes.

12 JEANNE LUTFY: Thank you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: You know we don't
14 bite here, except when necessary. Uhm, uh, okay, we
15 do have one.. I'm sorry, we do have one individual,
16 Jeff Byles from the Fine Arts Federation to testify,
17 uh, given that they have the formal role in the
18 process for the Art Commission.

19 JEFF BYLES: Thank you. Good afternoon,
20 Committee members. My name is Jeff Byles. It's a
21 privilege once again to testify on behalf of the Fine
22 Arts Federation of New York, and to tell you how
23 thrilled we are to support Manuel Miranda's
24 appointment to the Public Design Commission.

25

2 Throughout his career Manuel has been
3 devoted to advancing the public interest in his work
4 as a graphic designer and through collaborations with
5 architects, planners, public agencies, nonprofits,
6 neighborhood groups and others. Manuel has proven a
7 resourceful advocate for public space and the people
8 of New York City. As you've heard today, Manuel has
9 helped organizations such as the National Park
10 Service connect immigrant communities of color to
11 spectacular cultural resources. His campaigns for
12 New York City agencies including the office of the
13 Mayor and the Department of Health have helped expand
14 access and opportunity for all New Yorkers, and his
15 inspired work as a member of the AIGA New York
16 Chapter has advanced innovation, supported economic
17 development, and built community resilience in places
18 like East New York, Red Hook, and the Rockaways. In
19 all of these efforts, Manuel has sought to understand
20 and respect the many different parties who have a
21 stake in the public realm. We commend his
22 collaborative design practice and believe he will
23 bring a public spirited perspective to the
24 Commission. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very much
3 for, uh, nominating him and for being here today to,
4 uh, to support his candidacy.

5 JEFF BYLES: Okay, thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you. Alright,
7 and I'm told we have a... a final guest, uh, to testify
8 as well. As I mentioned earlier, Justin Garrett
9 Moore who is the newly appointed Executive Director
10 of the Art Commission is here to, uh, testify on Mr.
11 Miranda's nomination, and we're very happy to have
12 you here.

13 JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE: Alright, good
14 afternoon, thank you. Uhm, so today is my first day
15 so I don't have a... a whole lot to say. Uhm...

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: It's a great sign
17 that... it's a great sign that on your first day you're
18 here at the City Council talking to us, indeed.

19 JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE: But I... I did want
20 to really echo I... I think a lot of the comments that...
21 that came from you about the... the work that we want
22 to do with the Design Commission and, uh... uhm, Manuel
23 really representing both an expertise and graphic
24 arts and design but also important work that's been
25 happening in immigrant communities and.. and really

2 making the Design Commission a body that can, uh,
3 sort of reach out and to redevelop a process for
4 promoting design in the city and really looking at
5 that in all of its communities. So I think that his
6 appointment will represent really great progress and
7 a step forward in that direction, and we're looking
8 forward to working with the Council and many other,
9 uh, interested parties and city agencies on... on
10 delivering the highest quality of spaces for... for our
11 New Yorkers.

12 (BACKGROUND NOISE)

13 JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE: Expedient, right, I
14 believe. So, you know, it's gonna be a process... it's
15 gonna be a process, but we'll... we'll... we definitely
16 are a hundred percent, uh, toward that goal.

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And in all
18 seriousness, I don't think it's... you know, we won't
19 do it now at the end of this hearing with a lot of
20 the members, uh, gone, but I think it will be
21 wonderful to be able to really sit down and have a
22 thorough conversation about those issues, maybe when
23 you've gotten a little chance to, you know, uh, some
24 of... most of us, I think have never even been up past
25 the chain, you know, at... at places like, uh, it's

2 like the Wizard of Oz or something. We never go up
3 there and peek behind the curtain. There must be
4 some people up there but I... I've never been. Have
5 you guys ever even been? Alright, so, uhm, but in
6 all seriousness I think, you know, we touched today
7 on a... on a couple of really critical issues, and I
8 think the fact that the Commission is thinking about
9 the public realm from the point of view of all New
10 Yorkers is wonderful. Uhm, you know, but those
11 issues that... that Council Member Rose was joking
12 about, about how to make sure that the process is
13 efficient, doesn't have more time than necessary, I
14 believe that there was great progress made under
15 Faith Rose's leadership, uhm... uh, and I know that the
16 relationship between the Parks Department and the...
17 the PDC is dramatically improved, but those of us who
18 live in the world of capital projects and trying to
19 get them done, who on the one hand, love the idea
20 that they reflect the best of the public realm, but
21 also spend eight years trying to move forward
22 projects in our... in our district. Those are
23 important issues for us to really just keep thinking
24 about how we can improve and... and work effectively on
25 together. So, uh, we appreciate you being here as a

2 great sign of continuing that collaboration and we
3 look forward to working with you on all those issues.

4 JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE: Likewise, thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you.

7 (BACKGROUND NOISE)

8 JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE: Yeah, exactly,
9 exactly. And thank you very much.

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright. Uh, with
11 that we will go ahead and close the hearing and the
12 Committee will stand in recess until Wednesday.

13 [gavel]

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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 April 20, 2016