

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION, JOINTLY WITH THE  
COMMITTEE ON WATERFRONTS

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September 18, 2017  
Start: 1:20 p.m.  
Recess: 3:11 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
14th Fl.

B E F O R E:

MARK LEVINE  
Chairperson  
DEBORAH L. ROSE  
Co-Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Darlene Mealy  
Fernando Cabrera  
James G. Van Bramer  
Andrew Cohen  
Alan N. Maisel  
Mark Treyger  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Corey D. Johnson  
Joseph C. Borelli  
Carlos Menchaca

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

Nate Grove  
Director of Citywide Marine Operations  
NYC Parks & Recreation

James Wong  
Director NYC Ferry  
NYC Economic Development Corporation

Rob Buchanan  
Representative  
NYC Water Trail Association

Edward J. Kelly  
Executive Director  
Maritime Association of the  
Port of NY/NJ

Roland Lewis  
President  
Waterfront Alliance

Jacquelyn Krogh  
Board Member  
Kayak Staten Island

Pamela Pettyjohn  
President  
Coney Island Beautification Project

Graeme Birchall  
President  
Downtown Boathouse

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

David Matten  
Representative  
Long Island City Boathouse

Jennifer Ratner  
Representative  
Friends of the East River Esplanade

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3 [background comments]

4 [gavel]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Good afternoon.

6 You can say good afternoon back. [background  
7 comments] I like that, ooh, participatory stuff.  
8 Good afternoon. The joint committee of the Parks  
9 Department and the Waterfront Committee is now in  
10 session.

11 My name is Debi Rose and I'm the chair of  
12 the City Council's Committee on Waterfronts. I'd  
13 like to thank Council Member Mark Levine, the chair  
14 of the Council's Committee on Parks and Recreation,  
15 for agreeing to hold this joint hearing today. I'd  
16 like to welcome the Administration, the advocates and  
17 members of the public to our hearing, which will  
18 focus on reexamining the role of the Parks  
19 Department, Marine Division in regulating waterfront  
20 access.

21 The waterfront is booming; there is a  
22 renewed interest in all sorts of activities  
23 associated with the waterfront, whether they be  
24 recreational, environmental or commercial. We have  
25 seen steady increases in boating, both recreationally  
and commercially, with New Yorkers enjoying

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3 waterfront parks, taking ferries to work and even  
4 swimming and kayaking in several places in the city,  
5 and that once would be considered untouchable from a  
6 recreational standpoint.

7 This rise in waterfront activity has led  
8 to the potential for more safety hazards. For  
9 example, nationally, in 2015 there were 4,158 boating  
10 accidents involving 626 deaths and 2,613 injuries  
11 which resulted in \$42 million in damage to property.  
12 In 2015, New York State had 16 reported boating  
13 fatalities, with 2 in New York City. In 2014, New  
14 York's fatality rate was 6.0 deaths per 100,000  
15 registered watercraft; putting 30th in the nation.  
16 According to the Coast Guard, the major contributing  
17 factors in boating accidents are careless or reckless  
18 operation, operator inattention, no proper lookout,  
19 or operator inexperience.

20 In the coming years, safety issues will  
21 be a paramount concern on the waterfront, especially  
22 as recreational boating continues to boom. The Parks  
23 Department, through the Marine Division, is the main  
24 City entity that interacts with recreational boaters.  
25 DPR, or the Parks Department, has jurisdiction over  
15 marinas, three of which are operated by the

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3 Division, with the remaining marinas being operated  
4 as concessions; it charges fees, charge for docking,  
5 which vary based on the size of the vessel, the  
6 season during which one is docking, and the location  
7 of the marina. For example, prices can vary from  
8 \$1,325 for a vessel 20' long or less during the  
9 summer at the World's Fair Marina in Queens to \$3,000  
10 for the same period at the West 79th Street Boat  
11 Basin.

12 The Division's work includes posting  
13 kayak and powerboat safety rule signage at each  
14 launch site and coordinating with the U.S. Coast  
15 Guard to distribute all City advisories issued by the  
16 Department of Homeland Security. The Division also  
17 works with the Department of Citywide Administrative  
18 Services to remove derelict vessels that may pose  
19 public and environmental safety hazards to the City's  
20 waterways. The Division's dockmasters also conduct  
21 safety inspections to custom vessels, docks and  
22 mooring field equipment and facilities annually.

23 Further, the Division engages in  
24 educational efforts by distributing no wake and safe  
25 boating advisories at the beginning of each boating  
season to permitting boating customers and to

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3 concession marina operators, providing via website  
4 and physical copies to kayakers and boaters a kayak  
5 and boating safety information package for all  
6 boaters who apply for annual launch permits. The  
7 information in these packets typically includes  
8 navigational and safety guidelines, equipment  
9 recommendations, published launch site rules, vessel  
10 float plan instructions, and emergency contact  
11 information.

12 It is clear that the DPR Marine Division  
13 plays a crucial role in regulating recreational  
14 boating and waterfront access for New Yorkers; that  
15 is why it is incumbent upon City policymakers to  
16 ensure that the Division is well equipped, staffed  
17 and funded to deal with the increased amount of  
18 recreational boating.

19 Waterfront advocates have long called for  
20 the need to ensure that recreational boaters are  
21 trained and aware of the rules when it comes to  
22 boating in City waters. This hearing will examine  
23 whether the Marine Division is sufficiently equipped  
24 to address these concerns as well as whether  
25 additional efforts need to be taken by the Division

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3 to train boaters in safety and regulatory  
4 recommendations.

5 Thank you again and welcome. And now  
6 Chair [background comment] Mark Levine.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Well very briefly,  
8 because you gave exactly [background comment] a  
9 thorough and concise summation of the issue; I'll  
10 just point out that we wanted to hold this hearing  
11 today because while all New Yorkers know that the  
12 Parks Department manages parks; not everyone knows  
13 that the Parks Department manages miles of beaches  
14 and piers, marinas; all sorts of waterfront assets,  
15 all of which are getting used at record levels as the  
16 waterfront has come back alive as waterways have  
17 become cleaner in recent years, so now is the time to  
18 ask the kind of questions that the Chair laid out  
19 about safety, about pricing, about public vs. private  
20 uses, and I'm really thrilled we can have this  
21 conversation now on a topic that is more current than  
22 ever.

23 I guess I'll do the honors in  
24 acknowledging our colleagues that are here; over here  
25 we had Council Member Borelli, Council Member  
Deutsch; we have Council Member Cabrera, Council



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2 Member Johnson, Council Member Maisel, and -- did  
3 anyone else depart? We'll acknowledge them later.  
4 And I guess we're gonna open it up to the Administ..  
5 [background comment] oh, we had [background comment]  
6 Jimmy Van Bramer... [background comment] and Joe  
7 Borelli, and we're gonna turn it over to the  
8 Administration for their testimony. [background  
9 comments] Yes, we'll ask Committee Counsel Kris  
10 Sartori to do the affirmation.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Kris Sartori,  
12 Committee Counsel. Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
13 the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your  
14 testimony before these committees today?

15 NATE GROVE: I do.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

17 NATE GROVE: 'Kay. Well thank you, Chair  
18 Rose; I feel like you've already presented what we do  
19 very well, so thank you.

20 Good afternoon, City Council Waterfronts  
21 Committee Chair Rose, City Council Parks Committee  
22 Chair Levine, and members of the Council Waterfronts  
23 and Parks Committees. My name is Nate Grove and I'm  
24 the Director of Citywide Marine Operations for New  
25 York City Parks. Thank you for inviting us to

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3 testify today regarding recreational waterfront  
4 access. I'd like to begin by providing some context  
5 on New York Harbor and the Parks Department in  
6 relation to boating in the City's waterfronts.

7 On any given day in New York Harbor  
8 you'll see a variety of users sharing our waterways,  
9 from recreational human-powered kayaks and standup  
10 paddle boards to small speed boats, sailing schools,  
11 ferries, water taxis, cruise ships, and commercial  
12 vessels. New York Harbor is the third largest port  
13 in the nation, and as Michael Day, the U.S. Coast  
14 Guard's Captain of the Port of New York and New  
15 Jersey has stated; our harbor sees the most diverse  
16 range of maritime uses.

17 As you're aware, the Coast Guard is the  
18 primary entity responsible for protection of the U.S.  
19 maritime domain and the U.S. Marine Transportation  
20 System and those who live, work or recreate near  
21 them, including 520 miles of shoreline here in New  
22 York City. Coast Guard personnel inspect commercial  
23 vessels, investigate marine casualties, license  
24 merchant mariners, and in cooperation with local  
25 authorities, manage our waterways.

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3 As it relates to our waterways, New York  
4 City Parks has a dozen marinas, vessel mooring  
5 fields, motorboat launches, and mobile boat hoists  
6 that support recreational, commercial charter,  
7 passenger ferries, and human-powered boating  
8 throughout New York City. Parks also maintains over  
9 40 human-powered boat launches located throughout the  
10 five boroughs. We work with a variety of nonprofit  
11 and for-profit on-water groups that operate from park  
12 land, including Manhattan Community Boathouse, Inwood  
13 Canoe Club, Harlem River Community Rowing, Row New  
14 York, East River CREW, Long Island City Boathouse,  
15 Sebago Canoe Club, Red Hook Boaters, Kayak Staten  
16 Island, Wheel Fun Rentals, and others. Generally  
17 speaking, human-powered boats storage, excursions and  
18 rentals departing from City park land are facilitated  
19 by these third parties or our concession marinas and  
20 are not managed directly by New York City Parks.

21 Parks Marine Division is presently  
22 comprised of 18 full-time dockmasters, marine  
23 mechanics, maintenance workers, and City park  
24 workers. The Division's primary responsibility is  
25 staffing, maintaining and securing Parks' three in-  
house-run marinas; these are the World's Fair Marina

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3 in Queens, Sheepshead Bay Piers in Brooklyn and the  
4 79th Street Boat Basin in Manhattan. Permittees pay  
5 to dock their vessels with us year round, and in the  
6 case of the World's Fair Marina and 79th Street Boat  
7 Basin, this requires that we have staff coverage at-  
8 site at all times, 24 hours a day; 7 days a week.

9 Through our operation of these three  
10 marinas, Parks Marine Division also hosts a robust  
11 series of marine and water safety education programs  
12 throughout the year. Thousands of New York City  
13 students visit our marinas each year to take part in  
14 water safety instruction from our expert dockmasters  
15 and participate in educational sails aboard the  
16 historic tall ships, for which we reserve dockage  
17 space throughout the year.

18 On the topic of vessel operator safety,  
19 Parks' dockmaster staff works directly with the Coast  
20 Guard and NYPD's Harbor Unit to promulgate New York  
21 State navigation rules as determined by the New York  
22 State Marine Services Bureau, as well as best  
23 practices for safe boating in New York Harbor and its  
24 surrounding waterways; this includes posting slow and  
25 no wake signs on relevant Park properties, as well as  
installing and maintaining no jet ski buoys in Park

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2 waters. Kayak and motorboat safety rule signs are  
3 posted at each Parks launch site and our staff  
4 coordinates with the Coast Guard to distribute all  
5 New York City advisories issued by the U.S.  
6 Department of Homeland Security, including the U.N.'s  
7 visit in town this week.

8           In support of its responsibility to  
9 manage our waterways, the Coast Guard also promotes  
10 and facilitates the activities of harbor safety  
11 committees. These harbor safety committees are local  
12 associations comprised of maritime stakeholders who  
13 meet regularly to discuss and develop local solutions  
14 to waterway safety issues. Members of these  
15 committees typically include commercial and  
16 recreational vessel operators, kayaking and paddling  
17 clubs, terminal representatives, marine pilots, state  
18 and local authorities involved in port operations,  
19 and other interested parties.

20           In addition to the Coast Guard-organized  
21 New York Harbor Safety Navigation and Operations  
22 Committee, or Harbor OPs, Parks' dockmasters  
23 participate in a range of boating safety and security  
24 committees throughout the year, including the Port of  
25 New York and New Jersey Maritime Security Committee,

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3 the NYPD Operation Nexus Counterterrorism Program,  
4 the Passenger Vessel Association Council, as well as  
5 No Wake Zone and Educational Tall Ship Water Trail  
6 Task Forces.

7 In addition to ensuring the myriad users  
8 and stakeholders in our harbor are receiving relevant  
9 and current maritime regulations and advisories,  
10 these committees also provide a forum for cooperation  
11 and open discussion among the harbor's diverse  
12 parties to address the challenges of our shared  
13 waterways and develop nonregulatory solutions to  
14 better ensuring the safety of all uses.

15 These committees have been established to  
16 both develop harbor best practices and also create  
17 mechanisms for relaying these best practices and  
18 recommendations to its users. For example, as part  
19 of the Harbor Operation Education Subcommittee, Parks  
20 helped organize last year's Shared Harbors Tour that  
21 assembled recreational boaters, paddlers, ferry, and  
22 other commercial operators aboard a New York  
23 Waterways ferry to identify potential conflict areas  
24 and to get an on-water view of the harbor from each  
25 other's perspectives. We are working on making this  
tour an annual collaborative event among the harbor's

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2 various users. At our marinas, Parks' dockmasters  
3 conduct safety inspections of customer vessels  
4 annually, at minimum. We also host Vessel Safety  
5 Days at our Parks-run marinas in coordination with  
6 the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, where customer  
7 vessels are boarded and inspected for all required  
8 safety gear. Parks Marine Division distributes no  
9 wake and safe boating advisories annually to our  
10 permitted boating customers, as well as to our  
11 concession marine operators located in each of the  
12 five boroughs for distribution to their customers.

13 In addition to a rules of the road  
14 document highlighting best practices, Parks Marine  
15 Division also provides a kayaking and boating safety  
16 informational packet, received by all boaters who  
17 apply for an annual launch permit at any of our five  
18 permit offices located in each borough. This  
19 informational packet includes navigation and safety  
20 guidelines and equipment recommendations as well as  
21 our published launch site rules, vessel float plan  
22 instructions, and emergency contact information.  
23 This packet also includes links to boating safety  
24 courses for both motor and human-powered vessel  
25

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3 operators. All this information is available for  
4 download via the Parks website as well.

5 Our website also links directly to the  
6 New York City Water Trail Association website, where  
7 human-powered vessel operators have access to  
8 additional resources regarding safety and best  
9 practices. At this website, boaters can view a  
10 comprehensive safety video describing the challenges  
11 of our multi-user port environment, as well as videos  
12 specific to paddlers, motorboaters, sailors and  
13 pilots, Sharing the Blue Highway, and Operation Clear  
14 Channel respectively. This is a very well-documented  
15 instructional video series, with interviews, live on-  
16 water footage of vessel interactions, and practical  
17 demonstrations of best practices and safety measures  
18 recommended for the full range of vessels operating  
19 within our port, from paddlers to massive cargo ships  
20 and everyone in-between.

21 Finally, on an important issue related to  
22 boating safety, we would also like to note that New  
23 York City Parks has been leading the effort to  
24 address the issue of derelict vessels and other  
25 marine debris abandoned in our city's waterways and  
shorelines. Parks Marine Division worked with the



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3 Department of Citywide Administrative Services to  
4 establish the City's first-ever standing requirements  
5 contract which enables us to remove derelict vessels  
6 that pose public and environmental safety hazards  
7 throughout the city. In addition to the grant  
8 funding we have secured for this work, we continue to  
9 work to identify reoccurring operating funds to  
10 address these issues on an as-needed basis as they  
11 arise.

12 As we hope today's discussion will make  
13 clear, New York City's waterfront offers a wide range  
14 and tremendous variety of recreational opportunities  
15 for all New Yorkers and New York City Parks works  
16 closely with other city, state and federal entities  
17 to ensure that every New Yorker can enjoy our city's  
18 waterways safely.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify  
20 today; I would be happy to answer any questions you  
21 may have.

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. And for  
23 the record, could you identify yourself and your  
24 position?  
25

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2 NATE GROVE: Sure, Chair Rose... or... yeah.

3 So Nate Grove, Director of Citywide Marine Operations  
4 for New York City Parks.

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, thank you.

6 JAMES WONG: I'm James Wong with New York  
7 City Economic Development Corporation; I'm co-  
8 director of NYC Ferry; here for Q&A.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay. Let's start  
10 with some numbers. Can you track trends on how many  
11 boats are using public assets to launch into our  
12 waterways; is that number increasing?

13 NATE GROVE: Sure. What we can track are  
14 the number of individuals who arrive at one of those  
15 five permit offices -- one in each borough -- to sign  
16 up for a kayak launch permit, and that has increased  
17 since we launched the water trail about a decade ago.  
18 Last year we had 471 individuals go into a permit  
19 office to get a kayak launch permit, so that's about  
20 double what I saw several years ago, so there are  
21 definitely more recreational boaters on the water;  
22 that's largely also though -- I mean that number is  
23 small when you think about the number of paddling  
24 groups that are out there, The Downtown Boathouse,  
25 the Manhattan Community Boathouse, the Long Island

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2 City Boathouse -- I see a lot of them in the room.

3 So the predominant count are gonna come through those  
4 groups; we don't get those numbers directly from  
5 those groups **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: And how do you  
7 measure mechanized boats?

8 NATE GROVE: Okay. Yes, Chair Levine.  
9 That's a harder one. We look at trends in the  
10 industry; we... I don't wanna put myself out of a job.  
11 Boating is an expensive activity; I haven't seen a  
12 huge increase in boating during my tenure; what we  
13 saw was a decrease after Hurricane Sandy, with people  
14 taking their insurance payments and calling it quits.  
15 What are the sayings -- everyone's probably heard  
16 them before, but so spare me -- the two happiest days  
17 of a boater's life; the day they get their boat and  
18 the day they get rid of their boat. But truly,  
19 [laughter] they're expensive amenities and you know  
20 we're in the business of trying to make it  
21 affordable. But more directly to your question, our  
22 numbers have stayed current at our marinas because we  
23 make them accessible. You mentioned the rates,  
24 Chair Rose, World's Fair Marina, for instance, we  
25 make it affordable for people to stay in boating.

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3 You do see some developments, like Brooklyn Ridge  
4 Park Marina, and that's a good litmus test to see if  
5 people will come out and fill these marinas at market  
6 rate. 79th Street Boat Basin, for instance, takes 12  
7 years to get a slip; it's one of the best deals in  
8 town.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: That's even harder  
10 than getting a rent-regulated apartment. [background  
11 comment, laugh] What about safety numbers, numbers  
12 of fatalities or nonfatal accidents per year and is  
13 that trend going in the right direction?

14 NATE GROVE: So I have to profess; really  
15 not something that would come across our radar;  
16 that's truly -- no pun intended -- that's truly U.S.  
17 Coast Guard's domain. The incidents that I've  
18 observed that seem to get the mindshare, I think  
19 rightfully so, have involved jet skis. I remember  
20 after a 4th of July in Coney Island Creek two people  
21 fell off the back of a jet ski; there was an accident  
22 out in Long Island. We as an agency have banned jet  
23 skis in our waters, across the city. We've had  
24 lobbyists come up from D.C. trying to get us to  
25 reverse course; we have banned them. We found that  
they are disproportionately -- because people sit on

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2 top of these things; not in a secure cockpit -- that  
3 the number of -- I won't say fatalities -- accidents  
4 and incidents related to jet skis far outweigh the  
5 benefit of allowing them on Parks waters... [crosstalk]

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: So any time I see  
7 someone on a jet ski in New York waterways, which is  
8 fairly frequently, they are breaking the law?

9 NATE GROVE: Not... no, and we get the  
10 question a lot. We don't allow them in our waters,  
11 in Parks waters; we don't allow them at our launches,  
12 however, private operators are allowed to use them on  
13 their property, sure, and when you get out into a  
14 navigable channel you're allowed to use them; they're  
15 not banned; this is a City policy.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Got it. So you  
17 don't have numbers on fatalities, so [inaudible]...  
18 [crosstalk]

19 NATE GROVE: We do not.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay. Would that be  
21 the Coast Guard or the NYPD?

22 NATE GROVE: Coast Guard.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: And you don't know  
24 what the trends are on that?

25 NATE GROVE: I do not.

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2 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay. James, you're  
3 here because of the NYC Ferry.

4 JAMES WONG: Yeah.

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Are any ferries  
6 launching from Parks properties or are they all DOT  
7 owned properties?

8 JAMES WONG: A number of the ferry  
9 landings that we have for NYC Ferry are on Parks  
10 property where the upland is managed by Parks and we  
11 are building a landing that's in the water from  
12 there; some of them are -- but most of them are on  
13 Parks property, yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay, so does the  
15 Parks Department pay for the capital upgrades in  
16 those cases or does DOT cover that cost?

17 JAMES WONG: So during the implementation  
18 of NYC Ferry, EDC was building out the landings, so  
19 that's the barge and the gangway; EDC built those and  
20 paid for that and will be maintaining those going  
21 forward. Things that are from the actual esplanade  
22 and the upland continue to be Parks'  
23 responsibilities.

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay. I'm gonna  
25 pause and see if my colleagues have questions.

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2 [background comment] Council Member Treyger.

3 Welcome and please.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you. I  
5 wanna thank first both chairs; this is actually a  
6 very, very important and timely hearing topic. The  
7 reason why I ask is because in my district, which  
8 includes actually Coney Island and the beaches of  
9 Brighton too, the way their district was drawn. One  
10 issue and challenge that we have is jet skis that  
11 often sometimes get very close towards the beaches  
12 and this is actually an issue that came up this past  
13 season where -- actually, NYPD Harbor patrols our  
14 waterways as well in addition to the Coast Guard --  
15 NYPD Harbor asks the Parks Department to place  
16 markers -- I'm not sure if the technical terms are  
17 buoys maybe or buoys -- and the Parks Department has  
18 concerns that swimmers like to go out to these  
19 things, which causes unsafe conditions for them, but  
20 it becomes an enforcement challenge for NYPD Harbor  
21 because they don't know where the jet skis need to  
22 stop getting close to the shore. Some jet skis have  
23 been pictured and photographed getting very close to  
24 the shore, almost near the sand, so if you could  
25 speak to this. Are you aware of this, kind of this

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3 issue and tension between NYPD Harbor and Parks and  
4 where do we stand right now?

5 NATE GROVE: Well sure, Councilman  
6 Treyger. I didn't prepare that topic directly; I am  
7 familiar with it, however; I know it was looked at at  
8 a commissioner level, and what was described to me  
9 was in 1996 Parks did exactly what you recommended;  
10 they put out those buoys and they found that it led  
11 to more conflicts with jet skis and swimmers; people  
12 absolutely swim out to them, they absolutely do.

13 However, I believe -- did that come up at the town  
14 hall; I think that was one of the items... [crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Not the town  
16 hall, but it came up at a community board meeting  
17 where really the NYPD is expressing concern about  
18 enforcement issues because when they try to write  
19 tickets, sometimes they get beaten because the jet  
20 ski folks say well, where is the markings where I can  
21 go up to? And then I get complaints from beachgoers  
22 saying the jet ski is literally right by my child who  
23 is has just entered the water. So how do we deal  
24 with this?

25 NATE GROVE: Well unfortunately, would  
have to get back to you on that, Councilman; I



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2 haven't been briefed exactly on what the  
3 determination was. Certainly maintenance would be a  
4 consideration; whenever you drop anything in the  
5 water, it becomes a real maintenance issue, getting  
6 out on the water, making sure they don't drift and  
7 you don't create a bigger hazard. However, we'd have  
8 to get back to you on exactly the specifics from the  
9 Agency's perspective.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Okay. Chair,  
11 I'll turn back to you, but I just wanna make the  
12 Committee aware that this was a challenge of this  
13 past season.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Good to know,  
15 Council Member Treyger, and I believe Council Member  
16 Deutsch has some questions.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you,  
18 Chair. So I represent Sheepshead Bay, and I'm sure  
19 you're well aware of what's been happening in  
20 Sheepshead Bay, and it just amazes me that I'm  
21 looking through the testimony and we're speaking  
22 about safety in our waterways and it doesn't mention  
23 one word about safety once the boats come back to the  
24 shore. So first of all my question is, is that, does  
25

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3 the permit process go through your office or is it at  
4 the discretion of the borough commissioner?

5 [background comments]

6 NATE GROVE: Sure, Councilman Deutsch,  
7 and a sincere thank you for being so hands-on on this  
8 issue, it's really been one we've been focused on  
9 this year, thanks to your advocacy, and other  
10 electeds.

11 I think you're asking: Does the Parks  
12 Department issue permits to the commercial vessels  
13 that dock at Sheepshead Bay Piers? We do. However,  
14 these are commercial operators, so we take lead from  
15 Coast Guard. We have a certain list of requirements  
16 that any commercial operator must follow, so our job  
17 is vetting that all of their paperwork, all their  
18 operations are in compliance -- their passenger  
19 safety vessel plans have been submitted and reviewed  
20 by Coast Guard, they're properly insured, they're  
21 properly Coast Guard documented, properly Coast Guard  
22 inspected, and also that they have valid captains  
23 licenses. Once they satisfy those requirements, then  
24 we're able to offer them a permit on the piers.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So in Sheepshead  
Bay we have issued seven permits with seven different

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3 boats; the capacity of each boat holds about 350  
4 people, so you have approximately close to 2,500  
5 people that leave the piers at any given time and  
6 these are party boats, also known as booze cruises.  
7 So they leave at 7 p.m. and they come back at  
8 midnight and then you have 2,500 people coming off  
9 the boats while you have 2,500 people boarding the  
10 boats at the same given time. So when you talk about  
11 the permitting issue and whatever qualifications they  
12 need to pass, why aren't we taking into consideration  
13 of how many people are actually waiting to come off  
14 the boats and get on the boats at the same given  
15 time; you have close to 5,000 people at one given  
16 time in Sheepshead Bay; that's number one. Number  
17 two is that why isn't it in the permit process that  
18 there has to be proper trash receptacles there when  
19 you have such a large crowd coming off or boarding  
20 the boats, and why isn't it taken into consideration  
21 that there are enough restrooms? Just this past  
22 weekend I have a video that was sent to me that one  
23 individual was urinating near someone's car on the  
24 street in front of parents pushing baby carriages, in  
25 front of waitresses who work at the local restaurants  
with no shame, just urinating right in the middle of

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3 the street. So why aren't these things taken into  
4 consideration when you issue a permit, and because  
5 all these things you're saying -- vessel safety and  
6 everything else, but this should all fall under the  
7 same type of guidelines to make sure that once people  
8 come off the boats people are safe there as well.

9 Again, everyone deserves to have a good time and we  
10 don't wanna, you know take away business from boat  
11 owners, but it has to be done in a way that doesn't  
12 affect the public safety of the people living in the  
13 neighborhood as well as the boat-goers, because it's  
14 a public safety issue for them as well when you have  
15 so many thousands of people and many who may be intox  
16 [sic]coming off of a booze cruise, so it's a public  
17 safety issue all around; it's an issue with trash  
18 going into the bay, where we don't have any vessels  
19 that clean up Sheepshead Bay, and as well as not  
20 having enough bathrooms. I mean if you have 5,000  
21 people and each boat has one toilet and where are  
22 they gonna go while they're waiting to board and when  
23 they come off the boat? I mean it's an issue all  
24 around. So what are you doing as far as Sheepshead  
25 Bay and learning from this in other areas to change  
some of these policies that you have?

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3 NATE GROVE: Sure. Okay. Absolutely and  
4 there's been quite a lot of focus on this, as you're  
5 aware. Regarding public safety, just by way of  
6 context, you know we hear you loud and clear; it does  
7 bear -- my first assign out at Sheepshead Bay was in  
8 2005 when there was a shooting death off of Sea  
9 Queen, George and Patricia Aswad's boat -- I'm happy  
10 to say that we haven't repeated that sort of public  
11 safety incident in the last 12 years since I've been  
12 focused on that site. PD is involved with quality of  
13 life issues out there; you're absolutely right, it's  
14 a lot of people getting off at the same time, but  
15 fortunately, what we did do was coordinate -- we took  
16 a lot of measures; I was heavily involved with U.S.  
17 Coast Guard boarding these boats, making sure they're  
18 not overcrowded; I also worked with NYPD Special  
19 Investigations Unit to make sure that the club scenes  
20 that were proliferating on these were being kept in  
21 check; they were following certain promoters; we were  
22 looking at exactly who was programming these boats,  
23 and we'd have PD there ready for those, and the proof  
24 is in the pudding; it's been 12 years without a  
25 similar incident. These people are operating legal  
businesses; they've satisfied all of the requirements

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2 to run a business at these facilities. We certainly  
3 agree with you though; it is a lot of people; we do  
4 require each of them to have a container or  
5 containers at the beginning of each pier, which they  
6 do do; they have to cart that themselves; it's part  
7 of their license agreement with us. They certainly  
8 have more than one bathroom on their boats,  
9 particularly if it's a K-type vessel, you're gonna  
10 have more bathrooms. We've always looked at that  
11 idea of staggering; that's a challenge; that's an  
12 idea that's always come up. After 2005, with that  
13 shooting, that was one of the topics that was raised.  
14 Unfortunately, the nature of the business is there's  
15 those two cruise times and that's how people plan  
16 those events; they said that they have set customers  
17 that come every year and have the same schedules --  
18 let me make sure I covered all the -- trash in the  
19 water -- well unfortunately we're surrounded by CSOs;  
20 thanks to the -- I was with DEP this morning --  
21 incredible work going on, combined sewer overflows;  
22 however, people always stop me and say: why are  
23 boaters so dirty after a rainfall and we have all  
24 this debris in our waterways? Sheepshead Bay,  
25 unfortunately, is an inlet, that the water... when we

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2 have a CSO event, the stuff just washes right into  
3 it, and you're right, trash on the sidewalks; all  
4 that stuff can wash into there. However, and through  
5 cooperation with your office, we've kept focus on  
6 that; it does wash out; it would be nice if it didn't  
7 pollute our larger oceans, but it does wash out over  
8 time. But this year we heard you loud and clear; we  
9 stepped up enforcement; you've seen that in the last  
10 month and a half, additional Parks enforcement  
11 patrol, incredible expenditure of resources there  
12 from the Parks Department, as well as our 61st  
13 Precinct NYPD. So we're well aware of it, we want  
14 people off the boats, in their cars and not being a  
15 public nuisance, not being a public disturbance. In  
16 addition, the Mayor announced last Thursday at your  
17 town hall that -- I'll just quote the Mayor on that  
18 -- "that we are going to make a change; this current  
19 party boat season is about to end; we will, over the  
20 winter, find a new location for the late night party  
21 boats away from residential areas." So that is a big  
22 move; we'll see what that means for the boaters  
23 themselves. They claim, I think rightfully so, that  
24 they have to run that second charter at night to be  
25 able to make it profitable, but we'll see; we're

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2 gonna work with them to see if we can find other  
3 locations, as the Mayor stated last week.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: And what happens  
5 if you do not find another location?

6 NATE GROVE: We'll have to get back to  
7 you on that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Now I'd like to  
9 know that if there is no -- the Mayor did announce  
10 that next year we're find another location, but if  
11 there is no second location, what will happen before  
12 next season?

13 NATE GROVE: Sure. Well we've got a  
14 little time now, the season is winding down; so  
15 you've got all sites focused on how to figure out how  
16 to accommodate these businesses. Look, obviously New  
17 Yorkers are enjoying it, right; that's the problem,  
18 you know that too many people enjoy this activity and  
19 it's an undue burden on one particular area, so we're  
20 really focused on trying to relocate them. If we're  
21 unable to, we'll have to look at what other remedies  
22 we have. On the issue of garbage, I also think at  
23 the town hall meeting that DEP committed to bringing  
24 a skimmer boat into the harbor twice a year, so kudos  
25 on that as well that we're gonna have cooperation



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2 from DEP in helping to clean up. You're gonna have  
3 to time it however right after a rainfall, 'cause  
4 otherwise they're gonna come and everything's gonna  
5 be **[inaudible]**.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So if another  
7 location is not found, so the commitment would be  
8 that you would reduce the amount of party boats and  
9 still limit the party boat before 11:00?

10 NATE GROVE: Okay. To reiterate -- so as  
11 the Mayor said, we will find another location.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So in other  
13 words, it's guaranteed that by next season that there  
14 will be no evening, late-hour party boats and as well  
15 as reducing the amount of permits; is that correct?

16 NATE GROVE: Two separate questions. The  
17 Mayor said we will look to relocate these late night  
18 charters, we will be doing that. One allowance --  
19 we're gonna see what other facilities present  
20 themselves; we may allow them to still dock there  
21 overnight but not do pickup and drop-offs for that  
22 late night charter. So the number of permits may  
23 stay the same; however, the number of charters after,  
24 I think it was midnight we determined, 11 or  
25 midnight, are gonna end.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So in other  
3 words, you will still have about 2,500 people waiting  
4 in Sheepshead Bay if the permits still remain at  
5 seven?

6 NATE GROVE: At seven?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah.

8 NATE GROVE: You're saying seven boats  
9 carrying 300; it's a little bit less than that;  
10 however, at 7:00, yes, it's... I do... we... [interpose]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So do you  
12 believe that's not a safety issue or a sanitary issue  
13 or an issue for emergency vehicles to respond into  
14 that area when you have 2,500 people waiting outside...

15 NATE GROVE: It...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: in a few short  
17 blocks?

18 NATE GROVE: If we find an issue we will  
19 work with PD to address it, as we have, I...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Well I would  
21 like to have a commitment that you will reduce the  
22 amount of party boats, permits you can be issuing to  
23 party boats for next season. I think it's  
24 unacceptable to have thousands of people waiting at  
25 one given time in a small area. So I appreciate that

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2 the Mayor has announced and that you're gonna be  
3 eliminating the late-night party boats, but having  
4 seven boats, in the past you only had three at a  
5 time, and to have seven permits issued at one give  
6 time is totally unacceptable.

7 NATE GROVE: Okay. Well we could  
8 certainly look at it, Council Member; the issue that  
9 was presented to us was the late-night party boats;  
10 I've been there 14 years; I can't remember when there  
11 were three. For the sake of context, we turn away  
12 party boats; unfortunately, the fishing industry is  
13 heavily regulated by DEC what they can catch and  
14 keep; we still... fishing boats out-number party boats  
15 2 to 1; there's 19 permits, 13 of those are fishing  
16 boats. We continue to accept fishing boats as they  
17 apply and we've accepted the number of permittees;  
18 one has been relocated from another location as we  
19 redo World's Fair Marina. We'll take a stronger look  
20 at the permits over the winter and see what we can  
21 do. I think again though it's really come back to  
22 the increased amount of focus and cooperation; it's a  
23 pretty big measure eliminating these late-night  
24 charters from there; that's a big first step; it  
25 would be nice to see how that goes and then we can

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2 also look at this idea of reducing even the earlier  
3 charters; I wasn't aware that was a major issue.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: How many  
5 officers are assigned to Sheepshead Bay when the  
6 boats -- during the evening hours on the weekends?

7 NATE GROVE: I don't have that  
8 information in front of me, Council Member; we can  
9 get that to you -- how many officers -- sure...  
10 [crosstalk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: How many  
12 officers, yeah. How many [background comments] Parks  
13 employees are out there?

14 NATE GROVE: Sure, we can get you that  
15 information through the borough commissioner's  
16 office.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: When was the  
18 last time you were in Sheepshead Bay when the party  
19 boats left?

20 NATE GROVE: We do a lot with our staff;  
21 I had my deputy director out there watching comings  
22 and goings; making sure that volume on their radios  
23 was down till they're out in the channel. All those  
24 measures we've been focused on over the last decade  
25 plus, so we go out there on a fairly regular basis.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Would anyone try  
3 to drink five gallons of water and wait outside there  
4 for one hour without a bathroom?

5 NATE GROVE: Sorry; can you re-ask the  
6 question?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I said, would  
8 any of your staff members drink five gallons of water  
9 and wait outside in Sheepshead Bay without any  
10 bathrooms for an hour?

11 NATE GROVE: Uhm... [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: This is what  
13 it's like...

14 NATE GROVE: When is Applebee's closing  
15 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Well Applebee's  
17 doesn't allow outside customers to use their  
18 restrooms. So at the end of the day, what I wanna  
19 say is that it's -- you know we spoke about ending  
20 the late-night party boats and to me it's totally  
21 unacceptable when I don't get a response, I don't get  
22 an answer; I don't get a definite answer that you  
23 will be eliminating and reducing those party boat  
24 permits; it has been a public safety issue, a  
25 sanitary issue and all around. So I don't understand

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2 this is the first time you're hearing this; I've been  
3 screaming about this all summer long. So I would  
4 love to have a commitment that the permits will be  
5 reduced, the late-night party boats will be  
6 eliminated and this way the quality of life is  
7 brought back into Sheepshead Bay.

8 NATE GROVE: 'Kay, we hear you, Council  
9 Member; we'll look into it... [crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: [background  
12 comments] Now we've been joined by Council Member  
13 Menchaca as well as Council Member Garodnick and I  
14 believe Council Member Treyger has a follow-up.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you,  
16 Chairs. On the topic, you know, just continuing the  
17 conversation about the health and wellbeing of our  
18 waterways; in addition, you know I share the concern  
19 of my colleague, Councilman Deutsch about Sheepshead  
20 Bay, but I also wanna bring to your attention  
21 Gravesend bay and Coney Island Creek. Earlier this  
22 year, if you're aware, back in early April, I learned  
23 through word of mouth, not through agencies, that  
24 there was a 27,000-gallon oil spill that went into  
25 Gravesend Bay and when I contacted folks from the

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3 Parks Department, the answers that I received was  
4 that it's a state and federal issue, the City really  
5 doesn't have much jurisdiction; I do believe we need  
6 to do better than that. I learned through word of  
7 mouth, someone bravely sent me an email memo that was  
8 circulated within DEC; in addition to being horrified  
9 that 27,000 gallons of oil spilled into the bay,  
10 where people fish, not just for fun but for dinner --  
11 there's a section in the memo that read: media  
12 community interest, none. It was none because no one  
13 knew about it, but the City kept letting me know that  
14 this is a state and federal issue, so I'm working  
15 with state lawmakers to change the state law to  
16 require notification, because DEC claims that they're  
17 not required to notify people when something like  
18 this happens. But I'm also a little bit annoyed and  
19 concerned that the City does have some say here and I  
20 wanna just get your thoughts. Does the City have the  
21 power -- I mean, I'm told the Fire Department has to  
22 notify you within a certain amount of time of an oil  
23 spill; does the City have -- what is the notification  
24 process for the City when oil is spilled in your bay?  
25 Because when I spoke to the Parks Department, they  
seemed to punt it to the state and to the feds, but

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2 I'm also told that FDNY needs to be informed within I  
3 think 24 hours or so. So can you speak to the  
4 notification process, because my concern, in addition  
5 to oil being in our bay, is how do we inform the  
6 public about what just happened?

7 NATE GROVE: Uhm-hm. Sure, Councilman  
8 Treyger, and I did follow the coverage. Certainly  
9 from a boat, from a water perspective, use  
10 perspective my division is interested in those  
11 topics, however, the information you're receiving is  
12 correct, as it stands and we post similar signage  
13 throughout our marinas that when there is a spill  
14 there's an emergency spill response number; it's the  
15 24-hour covered spills hotline number, whether it be  
16 a dumping, whether it be gas; a boat that goes down,  
17 we call that number; my dockmasters are trained to  
18 call that number, and that does go to DEC, it does go  
19 to Coast Guard. Those are the agencies that are  
20 funded to respond to those emergencies -- **[inaudible]**  
21 the Exxon Valdez spill that funded Coast Guard to be  
22 able to get out there and respond to those sorts of  
23 incidences. DEC will investigate, however it's  
24 really Coast Guard that has the maritime muscle and  
25



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2 the contracts in place to respond to those things and  
3 we report those issues out.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: But what is  
5 prohibiting the City from notifying the public as  
6 well?

7 NATE GROVE: We can look into that;  
8 again, the information flow is as I described to you;  
9 it's supposed to be through the U.S. Coast Guard to...  
10 [crosstalk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Well I...

12 NATE GROVE: to local mariners. We get  
13 advisories from U.S. Coast Guard; they blitz out that  
14 information.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Well I have to  
16 tell you; I was not satisfied with the information  
17 flow, 'cause I had to find out through word of mouth  
18 and I had to find out through an email chain that  
19 someone just happened to share with me because they  
20 were courageous enough to share it with me. I'm also  
21 not happy with being told the City has no  
22 jurisdiction when I'm now hearing the City is  
23 considering legislation trying to grant itself  
24 jurisdiction about notification. I am working with  
25 state lawmakers to make it a state law requiring

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2 every municipality to notify the public; I just wanna  
3 hear... you know, and I'm not sure I'm getting an  
4 answer from you; is there anything prohibiting the  
5 City of New York from notifying the public when  
6 there's an oil spill?

7 NATE GROVE: I'm sorry, Councilman; I  
8 don't know what that... exactly that mechanism would  
9 be. As I understand, those mechanisms are in place;  
10 however, if there's recommendations, we could  
11 certainly consider it.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Well a mechanism  
13 was not in place this time; I learned about it from  
14 word of mouth and this is something that we will be  
15 following up on aggressively. Thank you, Chairs.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay, I believe  
17 Chair Rose has questions. Thank you, Council Member  
18 Treyger.

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: As you know, that  
20 the Waterfront Committee has looked at the safety in  
21 our waters, since our waters are shared with our  
22 maritime businesses, our industrial businesses, as  
23 well as recreational and private watercraft and so  
24 safety has been a huge issue for us; in fact, we  
25 convened a task force during the summer and the issue

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2 of boater safety throughout the harbor was a big  
3 concern. And so I was wondering, what are some of  
4 the common infractions that you've seen committed by  
5 recreational boaters?

6 NATE GROVE: I'll leave that to my staff.  
7 No. Common infractions -- well one of the biggest,  
8 without a doubt -- when I came into this position at  
9 Parks, one of the biggest infractions I saw was a  
10 dearth of making sure that people have insurance and  
11 registration for their vessels; it sounds like boring  
12 stuff, however, in my mind, from overseeing the  
13 operations of these sites citywide, it's a really key  
14 thing to focus enforcement on. We took pains to make  
15 sure that everyone who brings a boat into one of our  
16 facilities has insurance and registration; it's  
17 twofold. Number one, the insurance is the obvious  
18 thing; if an accident does occur that there'll be  
19 someone to respond. On a less obvious level, it also  
20 results in fewer abandonments in our waterways; if  
21 it's insured, there's an insurance company that will  
22 come and get it. So we adamantly pursue insurance  
23 with the City of New York as [sic] additionally  
24 insured. Of course I can't do that citywide; I can  
25 however do it for out in-house sites and we've since

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3 rewritten all of our ten concession agreements, to  
4 make sure that all of our concession marinas enforce  
5 that as well. Now registration is an interesting  
6 one; vessels that have a motor need to be registered  
7 at the state level with DMV. For us, first of all,  
8 it's identifying who's really docking at our  
9 facilities. However, secondly, one of the things  
10 we've strongly advocated for was the New York State  
11 Boating Safety Course rule that was put into place in  
12 2014; I'll read you what that rule was. If you were  
13 born on or after May 1, 1996 you are required to  
14 successfully complete a state-approved course and  
15 obtain a boating safety certificate to operate a  
16 motorboat. Additionally, all persons, regardless of  
17 age, must complete a boating safety education course  
18 in order to operate a personal watercraft jet ski on  
19 New York State waters. So we found that requiring --  
20 the important point there is, when you go to register  
21 your boat at the state level now, if you were born  
22 after May 1, 1996; you have to show proof of a  
23 boating safety course. We think that is probably the  
24 most effective measure that we've seen put in place  
25 in our time, and again, that went in place three  
years ago; we were vocal advocates for that.

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2 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so if they do  
3 not posses this certificate, they are not issued a  
4 permit?

5 NATE GROVE: Let's break it down into the  
6 two permits; let's first... I think I understood your  
7 question, let me first make clear; you will not get a  
8 vessel registration from the Department of Motor  
9 Vehicles if you do not present that boating safety  
10 certificate. Similarly, we will not permit your  
11 vessel to dock at our facilities if you don't produce  
12 that Department of Motor Vehicle registration and  
13 insurance.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And what about  
15 human-powered vehicles?

16 NATE GROVE: Uh-huh. So human-powered  
17 vessels aren't required; they're similar to hand-  
18 built vessels; there is no state requirement  
19 requiring them to have registration on those vessels.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And what do you do  
21 in terms of safety training, boating safety for  
22 human-powered vessels?

23 NATE GROVE: Sure. Well I think the  
24 testimony covered that to some extent. We -- got  
25 some of my notes here -- I just wanna make sure I

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2 covered all of those. I wanna stress that the number  
3 one kinda filters -- obviously we talked about all of  
4 the materials we make available that we put at our  
5 launch sites directing them to our permit offices,  
6 every launch site; we just redid a whole new branding  
7 of our signs throughout the city, so every launch  
8 site will have one of these signs, so any boater who  
9 wants to go out and use these launches is going to  
10 see this, they're gonna be directed to our permit  
11 office; it's a nominal fee, it's \$15; it's really  
12 just to get them into our permit offices, get these  
13 best practices into their hands -- vessel flow plan,  
14 emergency contact numbers. Similarly, as I  
15 mentioned, many third parties; many who will testify  
16 today, I'm sure, that we cooperate with, that we also  
17 disseminate this information we learn from best  
18 practices and push out that information; those are  
19 our predominate users are these third parties  
20 throughout the waterways. And again, it is these  
21 harbor operations committees that are required --  
22 Coast Guard is required to organize these throughout  
23 the country where these various groups get together  
24 and share best practices, push out those best  
25 practices as well.

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2 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so you  
3 distribute these best practices when they come to get  
4 a permit?

5 NATE GROVE: Correct, they have to...  
6 [crosstalk]

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Is there any proof  
8 that they read them, follow them; they... how do you  
9 enforce that they even read them or know that these  
10 are actually the requirements of the water?

11 NATE GROVE: Sure. Well where we can we  
12 do and again, there's 525 miles of shoreline in New  
13 York City, so we're happy that they're coming to our  
14 permit offices, number one, and at least getting the  
15 information in their hands, 'cause let's be clear,  
16 anyone can launch anywhere they like, quite frankly,  
17 NYPD Harbor is not gonna be trolling the shorelines  
18 to see people launching their kayaks off their back  
19 yard. However, when we can control it, we do;  
20 namely, at our marinas where we have, as I said, 24/7  
21 coverage; our dockmasters will stop people to make  
22 sure they have the recommended safety gear -- a PFD,  
23 a noisemaking device, navigation lights -- if they're  
24 not compliant, we won't let them launch there; if  
25 there's a reported incident, our Parks enforcement

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2 patrol will get involved, to the extent they have the  
3 resources to do so. Before we permitted SUPs,  
4 standup paddleboards, we had a summons being issued  
5 up in northern Manhattan; someone kept launching  
6 their SUP; we eventually worked it out with legal  
7 that we should catch up with everybody else and  
8 include SUPs as a permitted craft, but so if it...  
9 [crosstalk]

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So how do you  
11 ensure that -- is there someone at each of these  
12 licensed launch sites to ensure that people, the  
13 boats, they're safe and that they have the equipment  
14 that you recommend?

15 NATE GROVE: There is no, Chair Rose;  
16 there are over 40 launch sites throughout the five  
17 boroughs. Again, this was largely a designation of  
18 launches that already existed. A lot of the natural  
19 launches that people were using throughout the city  
20 that weren't marked and there was no formalized  
21 process, but when Commissioner Lewandowski picked up  
22 the project of the New York City Water Trail, and  
23 I've worked on that with her, we made sure that all  
24 those launches that people were already using were  
25 properly signed [sic].



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2 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So what is the  
3 procedure, what's the protocol for an emergency, if  
4 there's a medical emergency on the water?

5 NATE GROVE: Uhm-hm. Yeah, well that is...  
6 you know we're not on-water agency, so we'll often  
7 overhear from Coast Guard or NYPD Harbor of  
8 emergencies that take place; sometimes they'll use  
9 our facilities and we're learn about it that way.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And when they  
11 register or they get the permit, is there anything  
12 put in place to ensure that they have some kind of  
13 communication device, like a VHF radio or something  
14 that they could communicate to the shore in the case  
15 of an emergency? And I'm talking about human-powered  
16 craft.

17 NATE GROVE: Understood. Well we --  
18 let's be clear about what's required and what's  
19 advised, okay. Maritime law, federal law requires a  
20 PFD, a noisemaking device -- whistle or air horn --  
21 and navigation lights if operating after dark. We  
22 include VHF radios as a measure that, if properly  
23 trained, is a useful tool as well. However, this is  
24 a topic that... [interpose]

25 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Who enforces this?

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2 NATE GROVE: Let... let... well let me...

3 [crosstalk]

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: it...

5 NATE GROVE: Yeah, again, I think we  
6 answered that; in so far as at the facilities that we  
7 have dockmasters, we can enforce that. When PEP is  
8 aware of an issue, they can enforce that. But...

9 [interpose]

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: How many  
11 dockmasters do you have?

12 NATE GROVE: I have six.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You have six. And  
14 you have over, what, 40 launch sites you said?

15 NATE GROVE: Parks has over 40 launch  
16 sites citywide.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Over 40 launch  
18 sites. And so how do you even profess to cover --  
19 you don't... [crosstalk]

20 NATE GROVE: We don't.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You don't?

22 NATE GROVE: You can't. You... you can't...

23 [crosstalk]

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so...

25

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2 NATE GROVE: You... Again, we're...

3 [crosstalk]

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So you're leaving...  
5 you're leaving pretty much boating safety, from your  
6 locations, on the user, on... on the user...? [crosstalk]

7 NATE GROVE: You... Well again, what I can  
8 tell you is, New York City... again, when people come  
9 to this city, there is no better organized city; I've  
10 compared notes throughout the country in fact, 'cause  
11 we've looked at some of these reports, these NTSB  
12 reports; all the recommendations that are in there we  
13 already do, those safety videos that we publish, we  
14 have more groups operating in this city to  
15 disseminate this information and push out this  
16 information. Compared to across the harbor, people  
17 are overwhelmed by the amount of information and  
18 collaboration that the City meets with -- the Shared  
19 Harbor Tour was the first of its type, where all  
20 these collective groups got together and saw the  
21 vantage points. Again, if you have additional ideas,  
22 Chair, we're certainly welcome to them [inaudible]...  
23 [crosstalk]

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Is there any  
25 regulator agency that mandates training for human-

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2 powered vessels that are gonna navigate New York  
3 Harbor?

4 NATE GROVE: Uhm-hm. So yeah again, to  
5 be clear -- and I'll go further -- there was a  
6 national effort to require boaters to have it --  
7 let's start with powerboats, let's start with the  
8 more obvious one -- to get certified in boating  
9 safety; this is a national effort that was started in  
10 2004, National Boating Safety Advisory Council  
11 recommended that the Coast Guard seek statutory  
12 authority to require recreational boaters in U.S.  
13 waters to possess a certificate showing completion of  
14 a boating safety course... [interpose]

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Right.

16 NATE GROVE: this recommendation was  
17 renewed in 2007, sorry. After more than a decade of  
18 working with Congress, the Coast Guard has not been  
19 able to obtain the authority to require boater safety  
20 education and the Coast Guard believes that further  
21 efforts would likely not be successful. So even at a  
22 powerboat level there is no national requirement;  
23 similarly, human-powered craft, there is no precedent  
24 for requiring a boating safety course. We certainly  
25 make all of that information available, there are

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2 courses out there; we make those available on our  
3 website. New York Water Trail Association is an  
4 incredibly robust organization, but there is no  
5 federal nor state mandate requiring a boating safety  
6 course.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: How is that  
8 possible that there is no regulatory agency that can  
9 mandate that boating safety is a requirement? What  
10 are the obstacles to that? You said the Coast Guard  
11 can't do it... [crosstalk]

12 NATE GROVE: Coast Guard [inaudible]...  
13 yeah.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: What are the  
15 obstacles that happening?

16 NATE GROVE: I'd have to guess at it; I  
17 don't wanna guess at it; I can tell you the Coast  
18 Guard and New York State Marine Services Bureau looks  
19 at these issues and the Coast Guard tried to do this  
20 nationally and wasn't successful.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. I hate to  
22 like, you know, beat a dead horse, but we saw  
23 kayakers hurt because of a ferry incident in New York  
24 Harbor and I'm not sure if everybody who goes out  
25 there reads the packet that you give them, it's not

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2 required; there's nowhere that says that someone has  
3 to be certified or know the rules of the water. So  
4 it just seems like since the Parks Department has the  
5 ability to permit, to give permits for use that there  
6 would be some way that you could require a boating  
7 safety course. No. Okay.

8 Could you tell me about your resources,  
9 you have a Marine Division; could you tell me what  
10 your resources look like?

11 NATE GROVE: Sure. So let me just pull  
12 up my... So presently -- It's been fun to... [crosstalk]

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Personnel and  
14 equipment.

15 NATE GROVE: yeah, fun to watch my little  
16 baby grow here; there was no Marine Division when I  
17 came in; the marinas were an extension of our  
18 Riverside Park, in the case of Boat Basin, Flushing  
19 Meadow Parks, they're operated as part of that, just  
20 as any park would be with City Park workers. During  
21 my tenure we've become a division. What it comprises  
22 of now, I mentioned in my testimony, 18 full-time  
23 staff, we're down two; hopefully we'll get those  
24 back, but we are -- so at full count we're at 20;  
25 that's made up of dockmasters, maintenance workers;

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2 marine mechanics... [interpose, background comment].

3 Our budget specifically is \$1.73 million per year;

4 that's comprised of \$1.27 million on personnel

5 services and \$460,000 in other than personnel

6 services. That budget allows us -- we're also a

7 revenue generator for the City, which is nice;

8 through permit fees docked at our marinas, we

9 actually operate, including with fringe, we operate

10 in the black. So that operating budget gives us the

11 resources; we're able to do a lot of stuff we talked

12 about -- the external programming, including Vessel

13 Safety Days, the water safety classes and

14 participation in the various water safety committees

15 -- is all covered within that budget. One of the

16 initiatives we took on three years ago was life rings

17 and call boxes at each of our launches where people

18 can get into water above their head, so it's not at

19 grade; it's not a beach where they can step off a

20 dock. There's eight of those launches citywide. So

21 we also with that budget cover replacement of life

22 rings, we have a contract that we give money to NYPD

23 to repair call boxes in those areas.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Do you have

25 watercraft; how many watercraft do you have?

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2 NATE GROVE: Yeah, sure. So we have... I  
3 think it's four, five on a good day; four that are  
4 typically in operation, and that's really for within  
5 the marinas if we have to tow boats from dock to  
6 dock; we'll do the occasional outing to one of the  
7 islands. I know we took some of the council members  
8 out to North Brother Island... **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And what kind of  
10 craft is that? What...

11 NATE GROVE: It's a 25' Parker; I've got  
12 my chief dockmaster here, but it's a... so those are  
13 just small kind of recreational boats; we have a  
14 Zodiac, which we can do short little ferries; we did  
15 ferries from Barretto Point Park Beach out to North  
16 Brother Island to get people out there if they were  
17 not afraid of getting wet.

18 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Do you have any  
19 kind of watercraft that could assist a boater in  
20 distress?

21 NATE GROVE: We're not trained to do  
22 that.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You're not trained.

24 NATE GROVE: That's not... no, that's not  
25 something that **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]



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3 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And I heard you  
4 tell Council Member Deutsch something about the  
5 skimmer; is that yours...? [crosstalk]

6 NATE GROVE: Sure. Well again, thanks  
7 for the advocacy. No. Department of Environmental  
8 Protection City agency has skimmer boats that clean  
9 our trash booms, the CSOs that... some of the trash  
10 booms they put around there and Sheepshead Bay is one  
11 of the areas that Councilman Deutsch was seeking them  
12 to come into.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And does the Marine  
14 Division engage in any inspection process for any  
15 watercraft that was granted a permit? And if so, how  
16 frequently do you do those inspections?

17 NATE GROVE: Yeah. That was another one  
18 of my lists. When I came in we had a number of non-  
19 running vessels, particularly at the 79th Street Boat  
20 Basin, so one of the... in the last rules change I  
21 worked closely with the boating community and  
22 electeds, our core Council to make sure that all  
23 vessels are seaworthy and operable. So if a vessel  
24 has remained at dock for more than a season, our  
25 dockmasters require them to do vessel safety, a sea  
trial; particularly in this, you know, day and age of

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2 hurricane after hurricane, it's very important that  
3 people be able to leave their slips should they need  
4 to. Similarly, as I mentioned, we do Vessel Safety  
5 Days where we have U.S. Coast Guard come into our  
6 facilities [background comment] and board these  
7 vessels and do vessel inspection checks, and then, if  
8 we feel there is an issue, we ultimately have  
9 authority to board their vessels at our docks; we  
10 don't need a real cause if we feel that there is  
11 security issues or safety issues that we need to  
12 address.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Do you keep some  
14 kind of record of violators or people who have issues  
15 and do you... are there any consequences for the  
16 [inaudible]...? [crosstalk]

17 NATE GROVE: Sure. Yeah, if it's  
18 particularly egregious, we'll get PEP involved, Park  
19 Enforcement Patrol, and we'll issue their  
20 Environmental Control Board summons and we'll have  
21 them -- if they're docked without registration, for  
22 instance, if they're not coming into compliance, we  
23 can do a summons that way. We had an oil spill once;  
24 we called the emergency spills hotline, had PEP come,

25

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2 Coast Guard wrote a violation, and Parks Enforcement  
3 Patrol wrote a violation as well.

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: 'Kay. I know that  
5 Council Member Menchaca has some questions.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you to  
7 the chairs for this discussion, and I know some of  
8 these questions were already answered, so I'll stick  
9 to a couple that I think are gonna be important as we  
10 kind of review the larger question about our  
11 waterfronts and access to them.

12 So I guess the first thing I wanna ask  
13 is, is as you've -- and thank you for kinda giving us  
14 the history of, the evolution of the office and it  
15 sounds like you're kinda growing the presence and  
16 your staff, personnel and new regulations. What is  
17 the current kind of participatory process for  
18 communities outside of the usual suspects to help  
19 think about how we access these launch sites?

20 NATE GROVE: Yeah, sure. Well thank you  
21 for raising it, Council Member. I can really speak  
22 passionately about the participation; it's really --  
23 I'll spare the room, but there's... [crosstalk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Don't spare us;  
25 tell us.

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2 NATE GROVE: there's a truism; it... it's  
3 that this is the undiscovered sixth borough, okay;  
4 it's been thrilling. Why have I stayed at it for  
5 this duration? It's because the amount of  
6 participation, the amount of involvement -- I mean  
7 where to start and stop -- Billion Oyster Project,  
8 Harbor School -- it's thrilling, it's really  
9 thrilling and it's wonderful to see the  
10 participation; you've got a lot of people out for  
11 your committee here. You know we should all be  
12 focused on this, absolutely and how to navigate it  
13 safely -- pun intended. So in more specific answer  
14 to your question, Council Member, one of the missions  
15 I saw was trying to make these for boaters and non-  
16 boaters alike, okay? So when I first got there it  
17 was gates -- just boat owners only; 79th Street Boat  
18 Basin A Dock, which we recently completed  
19 reconstruction of, that was the first public pier --  
20 when I got in, I said we should make this public, we  
21 should have a kayak launch and we should host open  
22 houses, boating safety days, learn about boating -- I  
23 call it LAB and our dockmasters take out school  
24 groups; we work in cooperation, and it's nice seeing  
25 the Parks Department; we can provide pro bono dockage

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2 to our educational partners -- tall ships. The  
3 demand is there; we had a nice task force trying to  
4 -- we worked closely with EDC on that as well -- in  
5 terms of where to position these boats throughout the  
6 city. It never gets old, you get kids down there who  
7 are surrounded by water and their eyes light up, they  
8 light up when they see -- wow, I didn't know I'm  
9 surrounded by these waterways and the marine growth,  
10 you know the marine growth **[inaudible]**, you know, we  
11 also have to stay vigilant in our capital  
12 infrastructure; as our waters get cleaner our  
13 **[inaudible]** rates go up very high, so. But I don't  
14 know if I answered your question directly; in terms  
15 of forums to garner those opinions -- I shouldn't  
16 take too much credit; you're gonna hear from  
17 Metropolitan Waterfront... or Waterfront Alliance --  
18 sorry, Roland -- you're gonna hear from North  
19 Brooklyn Boathouse; you're gonna hear from Long  
20 Island City Boathouse. The groups keep growing; it's  
21 fantastic and the amount of advocacy -- you'd have to  
22 have your head in the sand if you can't find one of  
23 these groups and figure out how to participate. The  
24 City of Water Day, when Waterfront Alliance took it  
25 from Governor's Island and Liberty State Park to in

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2 your neighborhood, I mean we're partners with them  
3 and to a large extent, Guardians of Flushing Bay --  
4 every time I wake up there's a new group advocating  
5 and we're doing cleanups twice a year with Guardians  
6 of Flushing Bay to clean up those waterways; we're  
7 doing Open Paddling Days; it's insatiable, the end.  
8 And again, that's why this is appropriate to really  
9 talk about how are we navigating that; how are we  
10 getting best practices out there; how are we engaging  
11 the public so that they're informed.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Again, thank  
13 you and I'm glad you kinda gave your kinda full  
14 energy to this, because I really agree with you; I  
15 think that this is gonna be the catalyst that will  
16 expand the work to communities that have never been  
17 engaged before. I don't know if you've heard about  
18 the Red Hook Regatta in -- have you attended before?

19 NATE GROVE: I have not; we had the... we  
20 have a very popular paddling program out at Valentino  
21 Park... [crosstalk]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yeah, Red Hook  
23 Boaters.

24 NATE GROVE: Red Hook Boaters  
25 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [inaudible]

4 every year; real excited about it. Come September  
5 30th, 1-5; it's -- the energy that I heard from you  
6 is manifested there and it really kinda brings -- and  
7 I'm not gonna go too further into it; I have another  
8 question -- it's gonna I think manifest -- it has  
9 manifested a kinda community organized effort to  
10 bring communities that had never been there before,  
11 so I really hope -- and Pioneer Works is one of the  
12 big -- and they're working with a whole bunch of  
13 other artists and scientists and they race the boats  
14 off the landing.

15 The other big area that I think is still  
16 in its infancy is Bush Terminal Park, a Parks  
17 Department park on EDC property and is yet to fully  
18 realize its potential, including a possible landing,  
19 official landing, which we don't have; we have a dock  
20 yet to happen. So the reason I ask about  
21 participatory process is; there's a lot of  
22 participatory excitement in the district and we wanna  
23 work with you to really think about how we put  
24 energy, effort and capital dollars to do that but  
25 also allow that to be -- you don't get new landings  
all the time and so because it could be a new landing

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2 it can really take all the points that were discussed  
3 today and think about how do we wanna craft it; can  
4 this be a new model as we move forward that I will  
5 also kinda offer my expertise and energy as well.

6 And then finally, the consistency, so you  
7 have a sense of consistency that... or a need for  
8 consistency with multiple agencies that are engaging  
9 in waterfront access; not only do you have EDC and  
10 Parks; you have Port Authority, and these things make  
11 it difficult -- Dock NYC as a contract -- make it  
12 difficult for people to understand why can I do it  
13 here and I can't do it there. And so speak to me on  
14 that front about where we are going citywide to think  
15 about this holistically and where you could do things  
16 in parks and you can't do some stuff in others and  
17 vice versa; what do you see your vision from where  
18 you're growing your constituency within the city  
19 about how we can get to more consistent policy?

20 NATE GROVE: Uhm-hm. It's a great  
21 question, Council Member, thank you and I'm sure  
22 you'll make good on what you said about getting the  
23 community involved, so thank you, you know Red Hook's  
24 an exciting place out there. My thoughts -- I kinda  
25 have to sleep on that question a little, but I'll



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2 take a whack at it. You're right, there's a panalopy  
3 [sp?] of these kind of -- you know, who's responsible  
4 here, you know whose jurisdiction is here -- it  
5 really... I mean it really comes back to creating those  
6 forums, and I've gotta give credit to originally,  
7 Municipal Arts Society that spawned Waterfront  
8 Alliance, you know those waterfront tours, those  
9 conferences that are held, everyone getting in a  
10 room, having these panels, having these sessions that  
11 we're of course -- I wait every year for it; it's  
12 really the forum you know to get everyone on that  
13 same page and think about how are we coordinating  
14 these various interests and parties and being  
15 mindful, not only not stepping on each other, but  
16 also getting some of the synergies that we could see.  
17 So I don't have a neat answer for you, unfortunately,  
18 you know there used to be a ports and terminals back  
19 in the day, or ports and trades -- it's your guys...  
20 ask EDC about that. Recognize however that certainly  
21 I wouldn't stay at this if I didn't feel that there's  
22 progress being made, that people are getting out of  
23 their silos more; that certainly -- again, EDC and I  
24 are talking every other day, if not every day about a  
25 new project, about how do we sync up on different

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2 initiatives throughout the City -- the educational  
3 tall ship water trail is a great initiative, Dock NYC  
4 -- so the sharing of information and it's undeniable  
5 now, it's just... you have to talk; these things are  
6 interconnected. What happens when you do land? What  
7 happens when you get off your boat? You know all  
8 those connection points and sorry I don't have a  
9 cleaner answer, but it's happening... [crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Well it's...

11 NATE GROVE: at government speed perhaps,  
12 but it's happening.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Right. And  
14 it's not too slow, it's happening. So thank you so  
15 much for your time and my last vision statement  
16 really is about thinking about places like Red Hook  
17 that were impacted by Sandy, and so many of our  
18 waterfronts were, that these places and spaces, these  
19 launching sites become more than just access to the  
20 waterfront; it becomes a real opener for people to  
21 think about the water as it comes up, sea levels are  
22 rising and our young people are, you know are gonna  
23 have to take the helm very, very soon and so these  
24 access points can be just the beginning of a whole  
25 realization about how they can think about waterfront

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3 communities, especially those who live in it, like in  
4 Red Hook Houses and never get to go experience it,  
5 and they can be part of shaping the next version of  
6 our waterfront cities. And finally also, immigrants  
7 and thinking about people who aren't speaking English  
8 and I think Waterfront Alliance and partners have  
9 done a better job of really using multi-lingual  
10 resources to make sure that people from every  
11 community get invited, welcomed to the table and  
12 engage; so many of the cultural experiences from our  
13 immigrant communities come with waterfront histories  
14 and that needs to be part of this discussion too. So  
15 thank you so much for your time and sleep on it and  
16 let's keep talking. Thank you... [crosstalk]

16 NATE GROVE: Sounds good to me [sic].

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council  
18 Member Menchaca. Alright, we are... I think we're  
19 gonna let you go...

20 NATE GROVE: So soon?

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: yeah [laugh,  
22 background comment] oh... [laughter] yes, but I do  
23 wanna piggyback on that. Council Member Deutsch has  
24 a very real concern that needs to be addressed and  
25 I'm sure you'll get back to him with some concrete

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2 answers; right? 'Kay. And I want you to work on  
3 some way to make sure that the public really knows  
4 how to be safe on the water, and I think it should be  
5 mandated that they have some sort of communication  
6 device to indicate if there's a need for help or a  
7 safety issue. [laughter] Good... that was good...  
8 [crosstalk]

9 NATE GROVE: Am I... Am I done? 'Cause the  
10 marine radio conversation, just to be clear, has  
11 consumed a lot of mindshare among the various  
12 stakeholders throughout the harbor, without a doubt;  
13 there was harbor operations committees where that was  
14 the whole topic, and as a division, we certainly feel  
15 that it's important for people to know what tools are  
16 out there and they're properly trained; however,  
17 there's a lot of consternation about putting marine  
18 radios in the hands of untrained individuals, that  
19 oversaturation is a real concern; this is a device  
20 that neo-Panamax vessels are communicating with  
21 pilots; if you clog those airways, there's a real  
22 concern that you could create bigger hazards out  
23 there. Similarly, the human-powered boating  
24 community themselves have said that they don't feel  
25 that that's necessarily the most effective way of

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2 ensuring their safety to communicate efficiently. So  
3 it's -- look, it's absolutely an ongoing  
4 conversation... yeah... [crosstalk]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I understand and..  
6 and that's a legitimate concern. Is there something  
7 that's a little lower tech than... [crosstalk]

8 NATE GROVE: Yeah.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: that? I mean... you  
10 know, because... I mean we're in the 21st century; you  
11 can't tell me that we can't have some kind of  
12 communication device that will not influence the  
13 Panamax vehicles and... and our ferries and their  
14 navigational system, you know and that's what I'm  
15 talking about... [crosstalk]

16 NATE GROVE: That's the noisemakes [sic]..  
17 that's the whistle or an air horn, yeah, and that's  
18 mandated by Coast Guard.

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: That's not good  
20 enough. Okay. Thank you; we'll talk offline. Thank  
21 you... [crosstalk]

22 NATE GROVE: Yeah, look forward to it.  
23 Thank you, Chair Rose.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. Thank you.

25

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2 Our next panel will be Roland Lewis from  
3 the Waterfront Alliance; Edward J. Kelly from the  
4 Maritime Association of the Ports of New York and New  
5 Jersey; and Rob Buchanan, New York City Water Trail  
6 Association. And you guys are pros at this, so  
7 identify yourself and we can begin. And in order to  
8 give everyone the opportunity to testify, we're going  
9 to ask that you keep your remarks to two minutes.

10 [background comment] And can we set the clock?

11 [background comment] Thank you. And thank you so  
12 much for your patience and you can begin.

13 [pause]

14 ROB BUCHANAN: Hi. My name's Rob  
15 Buchanan; I'm from the New York City Water Trail  
16 Association, which is a group that aims to represent  
17 the common interests of the community boathouses and  
18 the independent human-powered boaters in the harbor.  
19 I don't have written comments today; did not think  
20 I'd be able to come until the last minute, but I just  
21 wanted to respond to two things very quickly.

22 And the first is the idea that a mandated  
23 training program for human-powered boaters would  
24 somehow be an improvement over the system that we  
25 have; I don't think that a centralized state-designed

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3 or city-designed training program would be better  
4 than what we've got; we've got a lot of great  
5 community boathouses that have done a lot of really  
6 hard thinking about the particular place that they're  
7 in and their training programs and safety protocols  
8 are designed around what they do and they're carried  
9 out by people who have the most experience and the  
10 most knowledge. So I don't think, for instance, that  
11 a mandatory Coast Guard training program would  
12 address the specific issues of small boat navigation  
13 in the New York Harbor nearly as effectively as the  
14 non-mandated programs that we have now, and I think  
15 there's a collective desire to find, when possible,  
16 non-regulatory solutions and this is a good example  
17 of that.

18 I also think it's really a mistake to  
19 point to the ferry/kayak accident last August as an  
20 example of a training shortfall; I just don't think  
21 that that is a good example of that at all; in fact,  
22 if there's any training shortfall that I see, having  
23 read, very carefully read the Coast Guard report,  
24 that would have to be on the ferry operator side. So  
25 I'd like to hear some more discussion about mandatory  
safety training for ferry operators as those systems

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2 continue to grow. I really think, read closely,  
3 that's what that report says.

4 And the third thing I'd like to say is  
5 that in ongoing -- if we're gonna have -- and I'm  
6 glad that you've convened this discussion and you've  
7 stuck with it, because I don't think it should just  
8 be Coast Guard or even a state discussion, but the  
9 City Council is interested [bell] in this. But what  
10 I would like to say is; if we're gonna convene a  
11 group to discuss these things, like the Waterfront  
12 Management Advisory Board, you've got to make sure  
13 that one of the voices on that board is from the  
14 human-powered boating community; without that voice,  
15 I just don't think it's a real and complete  
16 discussion and I'm not clear on what the makeup of  
17 the board is gonna be, but I haven't heard that there  
18 will be a representative of our community. That's  
19 it. Thanks.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I just -- since you  
21 said that, I just want you to know; we did expand the  
22 number of people who would be on the WMAB and what  
23 that would look like and we did include people from  
24 the human-powered recreational boaters also.

25



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2 ROB BUCHANAN: Oh okay; it'd be good to  
3 know who those people are, 'cause I haven't heard  
4 anything about that yet... [crosstalk]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Well you know I  
6 would like to too, because my frustration is and  
7 continues to be that it has not been convened, that  
8 people have not been appointed on the Administration  
9 side, and that it's being held up. So as soon as I  
10 know you will know and I want you to know that I'm  
11 pushing that, I'm really pushing for that to happen  
12 and for us to be able to appoint and convene a  
13 meeting. So as soon as I know, you'll know.

14 ROB BUCHANAN: Okay. Thank you.

15 EDWARD KELLY: Good afternoon. My name  
16 is Edward Kelly; I'm the Executive Director of the  
17 Maritime Association of the Port of NY/NJ; we  
18 represent over 560 corporate and individual members,  
19 paid membership; since 1873 we have been the primary  
20 voice for the commercial maritime industry,  
21 representing international shipping lines, marine  
22 terminals, longshore labor, pilots, and a host of  
23 others.

24 We might point out; first of all, it's  
25 interesting that we're moving here and speaking about

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3 the Parks Department when in fact most marine traffic  
4 has nothing to do with the Parks Department, so every  
5 little piece that can be addressed and fixed is  
6 helpful. There have been over 4,800 deep sea vessels  
7 that transit this port and enter it every year; none  
8 of them having sunk, that means 9,600 various  
9 transits in and out and the Coast Guard vessel  
10 traffic system reports over 455,000 harbor transits  
11 in the course of a year. We are an estuarine port,  
12 we're subject to currents, tides and there's  
13 exceptional cross-traffic. This port is complex,  
14 congested and yes, dangerous to those who do not know  
15 how to operate properly. The key to safety is to  
16 have knowledgeable, experienced personnel operating  
17 properly maintained and equipped vessels. Our  
18 organization, the Maritime Association, does in fact  
19 host, and we are the sponsor of very many committees,  
20 several of whom I've heard mentioned during the  
21 course of the morning, including our Harbor  
22 Navigation and Operating Committee, since World War  
23 I, was instituted in 1914 at the request of the War  
24 Department, continues today; that is our committee;  
25 it is not co-sponsored, but they are heavily  
involved. The Education Subcommittee is one of ours;

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2 we have tug and barge committees, passenger vessel,  
3 marine terminal vessel committees, etc. Our  
4 Education Committee is where we primarily try to  
5 interface with recreational boaters -- I'm glad to  
6 see that people do appreciate -- we were the sponsor  
7 -- we paid for, so I guess that makes us the sponsor  
8 of the Safe Harbor U.S. [bell] video; we were the  
9 organizer of last year's Shared Harbor Tour and we're  
10 in the process of looking to set one up again this  
11 year, and we are willing to work with any  
12 organization that promotes safety and safe  
13 interaction among anybody who's on the water, whether  
14 it be from Parks, commercial, private, out of state,  
15 federal, military; whomever. So we stand ready to  
16 work with anybody. Just one very quick thing; we do  
17 feel that New York State is inadequately regulated as  
18 far as motor vessels compared to most other sea  
19 states; there was legislation put through with Sandy  
20 Galef that was referenced in 2014; in our estimation  
21 it's insufficient; there should be a higher standard,  
22 and we feel that in most cases we preach to the  
23 choir. Most of the boathouses, especially human-  
24 powered craft, are very well organized and there is a  
25 very responsible and professional group of people out

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3 there that are conversant with the rules of the road,  
4 that know how to operate with tides, currents, cross-  
5 traffic, federal channels, etc. and we're very  
6 pleased to work with them, and I think we all need  
7 collectively to find ways to better educate those who  
8 are not properly educated and set some standards to  
9 safety on the waterway. We would not allow our  
10 children to walk on the FDR; we should not allow them  
11 to be on our harbors either without proper  
12 supervision, training and/or certifications. Thank  
13 you.

14 ROLAND LEWIS: Good afternoon, Chairman  
15 Rose. Roland Lewis, President and CEO of the  
16 Waterfront Alliance, an alliance of now over 1,000  
17 different businesses and civic organizations  
18 dedicated to an open, resilient and healthy harbor  
19 for everybody.

20 I'll just sort of second my two  
21 colleagues here and give them a lot of credit. The  
22 level of safety, actually on our harbor is  
23 remarkable, given the traffic that goes on and the  
24 variety of uses; it's the busiest harbor in the  
25 United States of America; maybe one of the busiest in  
the entire world, and the fact that there isn't more

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3 accidents is remarkable; if we had the same level of  
4 safety on our streets, Vision Zero would be more than  
5 a dream right now, so I just wanna -- we also co-  
6 sponsor with my colleague, Maggie Flanagan, Captain  
7 Flanagan helped organize the Shared Harbors Tour and  
8 we will work with Ed and Rob and others to make sure  
9 that this dialogue and education goes forward.

10 I would like to just pivot toward a  
11 couple of other issues that were brought up today and  
12 finish up with WMAB, our favorite topic.

13 We recently released a harbor scorecard  
14 which, among other things, was a neighborhood by  
15 neighborhood analysis of the amount of resilience,  
16 water quality and access and it showed that there are  
17 many parts of the city, including your own district,  
18 where access to the water is severely limited. We  
19 have points of access, including them all, but one  
20 every four miles, of linear miles, but that is just  
21 not enough in many neighborhoods. Creating more  
22 spots where there can be -- whether it's ferry  
23 traffic, kayak launch; whatever's appropriate in that  
24 area, to be created and having the capital dollars do  
25 to that will allow this burgeoning use of the  
waterfront happen in safe and good places. And

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3 again, remind us that these boathouses that create  
4 these safe **[inaudible]** are key to that. We've also  
5 done a job for the Brooklyn Bridge Park, called the  
6 [bell] -- I'll be done in a minute -- Maritime  
7 Activation Plan, which -- we went to dozens and  
8 dozens of experts, talking about how that park could  
9 better utilize its maritime resources; that's great  
10 for that park with the resources to utilize our  
11 expertise there, but that kind of work should be done  
12 for every park, every... whether, you know,  
13 **[inaudible]**, Canarsie, all these waterfront parks in  
14 all the neighborhoods should be thinking more  
15 creatively about points of access; how it could be  
16 safely incorporated into planning; break the fourth  
17 [sic] wall to get people into the park.

18 And the last thing I'd like to -- this is  
19 about WMAB -- I hope we do get that together; I share  
20 your frustration; as I say **[inaudible]** I'm the most  
21 knowledgeable person outside of city government, but  
22 I don't know nothin' about what's goin' on, so. But  
23 what Councilman Menchaca was talking about and I  
24 think Nate Grove was alluding to; we have a 21st  
25 century waterfront now; it's different **[inaudible]**  
was active and governed much of the waterfront

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2 before; there's all sorts of activity going on and we  
3 don't have governance to match. So the WMAB is a  
4 step in the right direction for a civic voice, but I  
5 do still believe there should be a Mayor's Office of  
6 the Waterfront or a Department of the Waterfront or a  
7 Waterfront Development Corporation or something  
8 that's thinking holistically about the different... you  
9 know the very active port we have, the transportation  
10 we're enjoying now, the new recreation we're all  
11 doing; all these things are important and need to be  
12 meshed together with a holistic way of looking at it  
13 and we just don't have it right now; **[inaudible]**  
14 still **[inaudible]** amongst agencies and it's something  
15 I hope this committee can take a strong leadership  
16 role in trying to bring forth.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I totally agree. I  
18 thank you all for your comments. There is no mayoral  
19 agency that has oversight and I think that's really a  
20 problem, especially for a 21st century waterfront and  
21 it's something that I would like to look into  
22 changing. The WMAB, like I said, I am doing  
23 everything I can to get that onboard and started up  
24 and running and I think before the end of this year  
25

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2 we should see something; I'm hoping... [interpose,  
3 background comments]

4 ROLAND LEWIS: And one... May I add... May I...  
5 The one existential issue I did not mention -- sea  
6 level rise and climate change; again, that impacts  
7 our harbor too, so that... you know... [crosstalk]

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: It's something we  
9 need to...

10 ROLAND LEWIS: that... that... that... knitting  
11 all this together in one **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: be on top of.

13 ROLAND LEWIS: Yeah, exactly. Sorry.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Right. And I just  
15 wanted to say to Rob: I meant no slight for the  
16 training that's going on in the boathouses and among  
17 the advocate groups, but my frustration is is that I  
18 want to make sure that everybody gets it. I don't  
19 want it to be, you know voluntary or contingent upon  
20 you know if they get the information; if they take  
21 the boating safety class. I want everybody to have  
22 that body of knowledge getting into whatever craft  
23 they choose to navigate the waters of New York  
24 Harbor, and that was not... and I did not mean any  
25 slight to the groups that are doing it; I just wanna



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2 make sure that everybody knows it and that was my  
3 point. So I thank you all for your comments.

4 And the next panel is Jacquelyn Krogh  
5 from Staten Island -- alright, you took the ferry  
6 [background comment] -- and Grace... Grace Birchall  
7 [background comment]. Oh I'm sorry, Graeme... you know  
8 Graeme, you're gonna have to print differently,  
9 'cause I always call you something other than Graeme.  
10 [background comment] I'm sorry. And Pamela  
11 Pettyjohn from Coney Island Beautification Project.  
12 If you can just get seated, identify yourself and you  
13 can begin your testimony.

14 [pause]

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You can begin  
16 whenever you're seated. [background comment] Your...  
17 check your microphone. [background comment]

18 JACQUELYN KROGH: There we...

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay.

20 JACQUELYN KROGH: I'm Jacquelyn Krogh;  
21 I'm a board member of Kayak Staten Island; we are a  
22 nonprofit group under the umbrella of the Gowanus  
23 Dredgerates [sic] from Brooklyn. I'm a medium  
24 ability kayaker with nine years' experience managing  
25 public programs through Kayak Staten Island. In my

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3 professional life I'm a genetic counselor, working at  
4 both hospitals in Staten Island. I would also like  
5 to thank the Committee for inviting me to testify.

6 In regards to safety and regulation of  
7 kayaking in New York waterways, I an Kayak Staten  
8 Island feel education should be emphasized and  
9 supported before and eventually coordinated with any  
10 future regulation. Currently the permit provided by  
11 the Parks Department, from my understanding, it  
12 pertains solely to launching from the designated  
13 Parks Department launch site; you can launch anywhere  
14 along the shoreline in Staten Island and you don't  
15 need that permit and from my understanding, it's not  
16 recognized by really any other entities -- if you  
17 meet the Coast Guard out in the water, they don't  
18 really care about the Parks permit, but it's, you  
19 know a first step. I don't feel that those have been  
20 that accessible; I think that's greatly improved; I  
21 feel we should discuss whether -- and just as  
22 Councilwoman Rose had mentioned, whether an  
23 educational component should be tied to obtaining a  
24 permit and if the permit should be expanded and  
25 recognized by other agencies. You know regulating  
itself costs money and I think money could be better

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3 spent supporting some of the education programs that  
4 are already out there. I personally did not know  
5 that there was a video on the Parks Department  
6 website; I know in my work at hospitals for ethics  
7 compliance I have to watch a video, I have to click,  
8 click, click at certain times [bell] and to get  
9 through the... and then you could print your permit;  
10 that might be an idea, that it's a required watching,  
11 because although I agree with the other gentleman  
12 that was here that the kayaking programs are doing a  
13 great job with education, there are people that  
14 aren't involved with us; there are fishermen that go  
15 out on their own, and in fact, many times they want  
16 nothing to do with us; they want to be on their own.  
17 So and from living on Staten Island, those tend to be  
18 the ones that get in trouble, that have to be  
19 rescued, [background comment] they don't have the  
20 safety equipment, they've got the wrong boat for what  
21 they're doing; I think the education program should  
22 just be a standard kayaking safety; it should be what  
23 boats work in the New York... it should be specific to  
24 New York waterways -- what boats you should use, you  
25 know, fishing, paddling around the shoreline versus  
going into the shipping channels, so that should be

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2 included in that. And I have more here, but I've  
3 gotta stop. [laughter]

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

5 JACQUELYN KROGH: Thank you.

6 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Okay.

7 PAMELA PETTYJOHN: Oh okay. Good  
8 afternoon and thank you so much, uh this... [crosstalk]

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Good afternoon.

10 PAMELA PETTYJOHN: My name is Pamela  
11 Pettyjohn; I'm the President of the Coney Island  
12 Beautification Project. The statement that we do  
13 have in front of you is from my colleague, from  
14 Charlie Denson and [inaudible] Project... [crosstalk]

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay.

16 PAMELA PETTYJOHN: I'm just gonna read  
17 one paragraph at the bottom, which is addressing the  
18 jet skis in Coney Island Creek. We think that it  
19 should be reduced to 5 MPH, limited to 5 MPH and  
20 place warning buoys located at the mouth of Coney  
21 Island Creek, at Calvert Vaux, Kaiser Park, Six  
22 Diamonds Park. Jet skis endanger park visitors along  
23 the shoreline and stir up pollutants in the shallow  
24 waters. These watercraft also disturb wildlife  
25 including waterfowl, breeding horseshoe crabs and

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2 turtles. It's an ongoing problem. This is  
3 addressing some of what... [crosstalk]

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Right. Right.

5 PAMELA PETTYJOHN: Councilman Treyger  
6 [background comment] was saying. But we'd like to  
7 talk about -- we still -- Coney Island Beautification  
8 Project is an environmental advocacy group; we work  
9 with about 15 schools and about 100 organizations;  
10 some of them are sitting right here in this room  
11 right now. We still do independent water testing  
12 [background comment] with Rob Buchanan and we are  
13 still finding that there are extremely high levels of  
14 contamination and biologicals in this water. We also  
15 have found that DEC, one of their programs is dumping  
16 contaminated water into Coney Island Creek. We have  
17 tried -- I think it was the gentleman from the Parks  
18 Department -- it was hard to see from around the  
19 pillar -- but we talk about the kids and lighting up  
20 of their faces when they are interacting with the  
21 water. Graeme is one of our partners also; we've  
22 been trying to bring kayaking. We did not get  
23 permits from the Billion Oyster Project in order to  
24 put the oyster project in Coney Island Creek to clean  
25 up the waters, EDC -- no, I'm sorry, [bell] DEP said

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2 that the water [background comment] was too  
3 contaminated and refused to permit, and a day later  
4 we see that the Governor launched an oyster project  
5 in Long Island Sound to clean it up. We need help  
6 with continuous dumping; this is a viable waterway  
7 where people are fishing, they are swimming; people  
8 are being baptized here. Coney Island Beautification  
9 Project is also a very proud member of the -- well we  
10 have the City of Water Day -- I'm so sorry, 'cause  
11 I'm tryin' to rush through my testimony -- we are one  
12 of the anchor sites for City of Water Day, so we have  
13 been working to bring water programming and  
14 activities to Coney Island Creek, to the community  
15 and we are still being **[inaudible]** with dumping of  
16 oil spills, illicit dumping and we need help.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. Thank you.

18 GRAEME BIRCHALL: Hi, I'm Graeme  
19 Birchall...

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Hi, Graeme.

21 GRAEME BIRCHALL: Hi. As you know;  
22 President of Downtown Boathouse. For the record,  
23 again, no other organization represents us in any  
24 way; we are friends, affiliated.

25

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3 I've got two issues briefly I wanna go  
4 over to do with safety, which is the City allows  
5 private developers to write safety studies for parts  
6 of the waterfront of New York City and really this is  
7 just a scam; it's gotta stop; it was used here in  
8 Lower Manhattan to take what is the best beach in  
9 Manhattan and basically say people can't even walk on  
10 it, right? So I'd like the City to stop this habit  
11 and I'd like you to review any of these safety  
12 studies that are being done by private developers of  
13 public waterfront land and basically get them out of  
14 there.

15 And then the second issue I'm bringing up  
16 here is the one of that sometimes the City  
17 essentially has lower safety standards for people who  
18 pay to go boating than people who don't pay and of  
19 course most people in New York don't pay; they go for  
20 free. So it's rather annoying that private  
21 concessionaires get access to beaches that I'm not  
22 allowed to access to provide a free community program  
23 to, and the argument is safety; that's why that's  
24 keeping me off, people pay \$500-1,000, they get to  
25 use that beach and go boating; that shouldn't happen.  
It's actually the same beach right here in Lower

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2 Manhattan, you can't even walk on it, right? So  
3 that's the two big -- you know if the City's gonna  
4 play games with safety, that's a problem. Now coming  
5 back to your concern about teaching safety, we have  
6 been working with the Coast Guard; we've taught over  
7 100 people, classes to do with radio safety, but as  
8 other people mentioned, the Coast Guard really  
9 doesn't want you to use a radio, [background comment]  
10 but in the last two weeks we have been teaching those  
11 classes to over 100 people. I personally have  
12 written a "Kayaker's Guide to New York Harbor," it's  
13 free, it's available, it's over 50 pages; describes  
14 everything to do with New York Harbor, so you can  
15 download it, share it, right, it's out there, but  
16 let's turn this around; I want the harbor to be a  
17 safe harbor, the same way I want streets to be safe  
18 streets; you know [bell] we don't regulate bicycle  
19 users; we shouldn't regulate... we should build safe  
20 harbors, right? To give you an example, the Midtown  
21 Ferry **[inaudible]**, the City built the busiest ferry  
22 terminal in the city next to a kayak boathouse and  
23 that kayak boathouse, they gave that concessionaire  
24 to a group that does kayak trips in front of that  
25 kayak terminal. Well who's to blame here? Yeah, the



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2 captain is to blame, the ferry company is to blame,  
3 but the City is to blame. The City is not building a  
4 safe waterfront, right, for 8 million people, right,  
5 for children, for beginner boaters; that's the  
6 fundamental problem. [background comment] That's my  
7 take.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Thank  
9 you. And I think if we had the WMAB in place I think  
10 this would be a good thing to bring to them; you make  
11 a very cogent point; it's like the fox guarding the  
12 henhouse, right? [background comment] Okay. We  
13 have duly noted and we'll discuss that. Thank you.  
14 Thank you all for your testimony.

15 Noah Salem Diary, [background comments]  
16 David Matten, [background comment] and Jennifer  
17 Ratner. Noah, no? [background comments] Okay.  
18 [background comments] Okay. Okay, Noah... Noah, no.  
19 [background comment] Noah, no. Okay. [background  
20 comments] 'Kay. You can identify yourself and your  
21 affiliation; you can begin... [crosstalk]

22 DAVID MATTEN: My name is... My name is  
23 David Matten; I'm representing the Long Island City  
24 Community Boathouse...

25 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Hi.

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2 DAVID MATTEN: we operate free public  
3 programming, boating programs in Long Island City and  
4 Astoria.

5 We would like to see Parks involved not  
6 just in -- well, the main points that have been  
7 discussed today, but in the decision processes that  
8 surround the access points, not just on Parks  
9 property, but on those that we'll call parks  
10 adjacent. So a particular example we'll cite is:  
11 Hallets Cove in Astoria has effectively been Parks  
12 property; the water itself has been Parks -- the only  
13 use for this water has been for a Parks program that  
14 we provide for about ten years. The introduction of  
15 the NYC Ferry to this has put that program into  
16 jeopardy; it may not be able to run next year; it  
17 remains to be seen. As far as we can tell, nobody  
18 from Parks was involved, even though the main upland  
19 access point is through Parks space; nobody from  
20 Parks was involved in the decisions surrounding  
21 particular arrangement of the installation of this  
22 ferry. So the analogy I had was; essentially they've  
23 put a subway stop in the middle of a parkland and  
24 told people it's okay to go play on the tracks as  
25 long as they don't see the train coming. The

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2 involvement we've been speaking to EDC for about two  
3 years -- us and other... these paddling groups -- about  
4 the particular problem here but similar problems in  
5 other places -- Stuyvesant Cove is one of them and we  
6 really didn't get much satisfaction out of the  
7 outcome of the final decisions that were made; they  
8 were made within EDC and seemingly involved no one  
9 else. Councilman Costa's office was not familiar  
10 with this particular difficulty; nor were the  
11 residence groups; they were quite surprised when we  
12 told them that this could mean an end to these  
13 programs, so we would like to see Parks involved in  
14 that decision process [bell] in advance.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. Thank you.

16 [pause] Yes, you can go. Okay.

17 JENNIFER RATNER: I'm Jennifer Ratner;  
18 I'm the Board Chair of Friends of the East River  
19 Esplanade, 60th-120th Street); we're the conservancy  
20 for the waterfront that stretches from East Harlem  
21 down to Yorkville in the Upper East Side; the only  
22 continuous area of accessible, or built waterfront in  
23 that area; we're community members who love and use  
24 the greenway -- runners, bikers, walkers, fishermen,  
25 some boaters; we have one of the boating groups that

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2 was mentioned earlier; East River CREW launches off  
3 of this area of the waterfront and our organization  
4 is dedicated to restoring and reinventing this area.  
5 I'll point out that this stretch of waterfront is  
6 probably -- I think it's the most densely populated  
7 area in all of New York, so we have hundreds of  
8 thousands of community members who live within less  
9 than a mile of the waterfront, and you know the  
10 general assembly you know puts it out there this week  
11 that we're also kind of the gateway to New York City,  
12 and if you look at it, we're actually a waterfront  
13 that is literally falling in. You may be aware or  
14 familiar with the about 50-foot section of this  
15 waterfront that fell in just behind Gracie Mansion  
16 just a few months ago, and there are many other areas  
17 of this waterfront that have holes in them that have  
18 been there not just for days or months but actually  
19 for years and you can see the East River lapping  
20 underneath them; this has really never been  
21 adequately cared for. And my point is a little  
22 different than others here today, because I wasn't  
23 sure of the topic of this, but if fits in where  
24 you're talking about a mayoral office for the  
25 waterfront, because it's not even at this point an

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2 issue of money; there's been over \$35 million  
3 allocated to the restoration of this esplanade of  
4 this waterfront for about four years now and it's the  
5 Parks Department's job to spend that money, and we  
6 love and respect the Parks Department; I work with  
7 them every day as a volunteer, but there needs to be  
8 some [bell] oversight in how that money is spent; it  
9 hasn't been spent, and that area that fell in --  
10 luckily without people on it -- that was on their  
11 Phase I list to repair for years and hadn't been  
12 repaired, and luckily nobody was standing there, and  
13 there are many, many other examples of this along  
14 that waterfront, and so I really urge the Committee  
15 members in Parks and Waterfronts to really -- we have  
16 new waterfronts coming north and south, but we've  
17 gotta take care of what we already have and somebody  
18 has to be doing oversight of the Parks Department  
19 that the money that's been allocated isn't just kind  
20 of PR stunt and actually gets spent and gets spent  
21 appropriately. Thank you... [crosstalk]

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Thank  
23 you for your concern about the waterfront, and yeah,  
24 we have some concerns with Parks and how long it  
25 takes for projects to happen or not to happen, and

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2 I'll be glad to follow up on that particular issue.

3 Our waterfront is really our gateway and we have to  
4 maintain it, we have to maintain it. And what I  
5 would like to do is -- for those of you who have  
6 issues with Parks and the waterfront -- I'd like to  
7 convene a meeting so that we could have a dialogue  
8 with them; I think your concerns are valid and I  
9 think we should facilitate a meeting to have that  
10 dialogue.

11 JENNIFER RATNER: Great.

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So I thank you  
13 again for your testimony and...

14 JENNIFER RATNER: 'Kay, thanks so much.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON ROSE: That's it?

16 [background comment] And that... that concludes the  
17 hearing of the joint session with the City Council  
18 Parks Committee and Waterfronts Committee and this  
19 meeting is adjourned at 3:10 [gavel]. Thank you.

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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 September 29, 2017