

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FIRE & EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

Jointly with

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

And the

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY

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November 12, 2019
Start: 1:25 p.m.
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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Robert F. Holden
Chairperson

Donovan J. Richards
Chairperson

Joseph Borelli
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Diana Ayala
Costa G. Constantinides
Peter A. Koo
Brad S. Lander
Eric A. Ulrich
Kalman Yeger

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne Adams
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Carlos Menchaca
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Keith Powers
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Paul A. Vallone
Alan N. Maisel

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

Nicolyn Plummer
Barrier Free Living

Maureen Belluscio
New York Lawyers for Public Interest

Margaret Arnold
Court Legal Interpreting Coalition

Genna Teitelbaum
Staten Island Legal Services

Vincent K. Jenkins
Jewish Board of Family Services

Lourdes Rosa-Carrasquillo
Center of Independence for Disabled New York

Eusebio Formoso
Commissioner of DoITT

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

Rachel Laiserin
Assistant Commissioner for Procurement and Vendor
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Jessica Tisch
NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Technology

Oleg Chernyavsky
Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Legal Matters
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Steven Harte
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John Winker
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Katherine Bouton
Hearing Loss Association New York

Mark Fliedner
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Christopher Schuyler
New York Lawyers for Public Interest

Lucy Joseph Smith
Science and Law Committee of New York

Kelly Grace Price
Close Rosie's

Grace
EMT

Greg Waltman
G1 Quantum

3 UNIDENTIFIED: Again, if anybody wants to
4 testify, go to the table, Sergeant at Arms to my
5 left, far left. We're waiting for the okay to start.
6 Getting set up.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Good afternoon. I
8 am Council Member Holden, Chair of the Committee on
9 Technology. I want to welcome you all to our hearing.
10 We are pleased to be joined by the Committee on Fire
11 and Emergency Management chaired by Council Member
12 Borelli, to my left here, and the Committee on Public
13 Safety chaired by Council Member Richards to my
14 right. Today, we will focus on the state of New York
15 City's 911 system and the process transitioning to
16 Next Gen, Next Generation 911. New York City's 911
17 operators handle the largest number of calls in the
18 nation, receiving an astounding nine million phone
19 calls every year. The 911 system is integral to the
20 responsiveness of our City's Fire Department, Police
21 Department, and Emergency Medical Services.
22 Technology has changed the way we communicate. We
23 now send text messages, images, videos and more.
24 However, the way to contact 911 in New York City is
25 to call the number directly and speak to a dispatcher

3 over the phone. This not only limits potentially
4 life-saving information to first responders, but it
5 also creates life-threatening barriers for
6 individuals desperately needing emergency services.
7 In emergency situations, making a phone call could be
8 either impractical or ineffective for many residents.
9 For example, the deaf and hard of hearing, non-verbal
10 persons, people with limited English proficiency and
11 more. Also, in some emergencies such as, but not
12 limited to active shooter, domestic violence,
13 kidnapping situations, talking over the phone would
14 be dangerous and often counterproductive. For
15 example in Bartholomew County, Indiana, a woman
16 fearing for her life during a domestic dispute could
17 not speak over the phone because the aggressor was
18 threatening her with a firearm. Instead, the victim
19 and the dispatcher were able to communicate over
20 text, leading to a successful arrest of the
21 aggressor. The ability to transmit information
22 quickly and efficiency is crucial for the emergency
23 response. As such, we must update and improve our
24 City's 911 system. Today, we will focus on the state
25 of 911 in New York City and how the city can
effectively implement next generation 911, including

3 text 911. We look forward to establishing a better
4 understanding of the current state of New York City's
5 911 system and its effects on New Yorkers and
6 learning more about the next generation 911, its
7 potential impacts, and the city's transition to this
8 new system. We look forward to working together with
9 the Administration, industry experts, community
10 advocates, and residents in maximizing the
11 capabilities of our 911 system in our city. New York
12 City should be the leaders not only in technology,
13 but also on first response. Instead, we lag behind
14 other cities and counties. This must change. I'd
15 like to recognize my fellow Council Members who are
16 present today, Council Member Lander, Constantinides,
17 Ayala, Yeger, as I mentioned, Borelli, Cabrera,
18 Richards, Menchaca, and Lancman. Did miss anybody?
19 I'd like to thank the staff of the Committee on
20 Technology, Counsel Irene Bahavski [sp?], Policy
21 Analyst Charles Kim, Financial Analyst Sebastian
22 Bocky [sp?], and Florentine Cabhor. Also my staff,
23 my Chief of Staff Daniel Coscina [sp?], and
24 Communications Director Ryan Kelly. I will now turn
25 it over to my co-chair, Council Member Richards.

3 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Thank you, Chair

4 Holden and Borelli. Good afternoon, I'm Donovan
5 Richards of the 31st District in Queens, and I'm the
6 Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. I'll be
7 brief, because what I have to say on this issue is
8 really simple. We need to get this done. It's been
9 too long. The Council passed a bill three and a half
10 years ago requiring you to report on the plan for
11 getting this done, and I'm pretty sure the plan was
12 not for it to take four years. Whatever the cause of
13 the delay is, texts to 911 services are too important
14 to let this get caught in a bureaucratic maze.
15 Domestic violence victims can't call the police
16 because their abusers are on their home. Hearing
17 impaired and deaf individuals need to be able to get
18 emergency services. People on subways whose call
19 will get interrupted in the tunnels, the technology
20 solution to those communication challenges has
21 literally been in our pockets for over a decade and
22 text messages have become the preferred and more
23 efficient means of communication for most people. So
24 why haven't we been able to translate that into an
25 emergency response system that works the way everyone
communicates? I'm sure we're going to hear answers

3 today, and I bet there are some legitimate
4 operational considerations that I haven't thought of.
5 So I want to say this, I trust the witnesses before
6 me and the agencies that represent understand just as
7 well as I do, if not better, the need to get this
8 done. I know you want to get this done. So I'm not
9 going to sit here and waste our time and your time
10 playing the blame game. It's taken too long, and
11 that's why we're here, because it's not going to
12 solve anything to dwell on the delays. Instead, what
13 I want to tell me and the public today is this, what
14 needs to happen going forward. What do we at the
15 Council need to do? What do you at DoITT need to do,
16 and what do you, NYPD and Fire need to do? Let's
17 work together and get this done. Thank you, Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Council Member
19 Borelli?

20 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Thank you. In the
21 interest of sparing you the same statement, I will
22 just say thank you and welcome to this hearing. And
23 I think I speak for all of us when I say we are
24 hoping to get to the bottom of why this contract has
25 taken so long to be implemented. What have the
challenges been? And what is the plan going forward

3 to deliver this vital upgrade and critical new
4 services to the people of New York? Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. We have
6 our first speakers, first panel, Nicolyn Plummer,
7 Margaret Arnold, Dennis Martinez, Vincent Jenkins,
8 Lourdes Rosa-Carrasquillo, Maureen Belluscio, and
9 Genna Teitelbaum. Nicolyn?

10 NICOLYN PLUMMER: Good afternoon,
11 everybody. Good afternoon. Good afternoon
12 Chairpersons and the Council Members. My name is
13 Nicolyn Plummer. I'm a senior Social Worker at
14 Barrier-Free Living. I'm Senior Social Worker
15 Coordinator of Outreach and Advocacy at Barrier-Free
16 Living. It's [inaudible] partner organization
17 helping individuals, helping New York with
18 disabilities live independently. I'm also a founder
19 of Court Legal Interpreting Coalition [inaudible]
20 advocate, communicate [inaudible] for the victim in
21 the court room. And I'm also a co-founder of Deaf
22 Justice Coalition focused on interacting with law
23 enforcement. The primary- the reason why we're here
24 is we're trying to figure out, this Coalition
25 [inaudible] 911 accessibility for New Yorkers with
disabilities. The bill passed on June 28th of 2016

2 after working collaboratively with the New York
3 Technology and Telecommunication, DoITT. I also work
4 with the Mayor's Office of Legislative Affairs as
5 well as New York Police Department and Fire
6 Department. We first met on January 2017. At that
7 time, we had an opportunity to discuss how they could
8 increase the 911 accessibility to accommodate people
9 with disabilities. At that time, we-- at that time
10 we learned that the agencies work collaboratively
11 with the New York Police Department and the Fire
12 Department [inaudible] and we advocate that the deaf
13 [inaudible] on the force [sic] to access
14 accessibility for the hard of hearing community.
15 From that time, the earliest [inaudible] we learned
16 if it does [inaudible]. This time we're having a
17 meeting [inaudible] that's happening. At that point
18 we just started to-- we had an emergency [inaudible]
19 on July 22nd of this year. That's where we learned
20 that this test 911 will not be really available
21 another year. I'm a person [inaudible] was not able
22 to give us an answer. So we're trying to figure out
23 what's going on. We're dealing with an answer. We
24 don't know what's happening. They said the third
25 party is-- the third party, we don't know the third

2 party at that time was not at the meeting to answer
3 our question. Why we have to wait another year? We
4 don't know why we are waiting for another year. Why
5 it cannot be ready at the moment instead of wasting
6 another year? Another thing that I do acknowledge,
7 we do acknowledge DoITT have commit and dedicated
8 implementing 911 to realize that the process is too
9 slow to do what the community needs. So, we are
10 continuing-- we want to-- my hope is to continue the
11 collaboration with DoITT, with the city agencies, to
12 move forward with this project, and I thank you for
13 the opportunity. We're looking forward with the
14 meeting and why we hope we will find-- make this
15 project move forward if possible. Thank you. I'm
16 open to the questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. Thank
18 you. Margaret Arnold?

19 MARGARET ARNOLD: Good afternoon
20 everyone. My name is Margaret Arnold. I am a deaf
21 interpreter. I am also representing the Court Legal
22 Interpreting Coalition. I would like to share a
23 story of my experiences that happened before. I went
24 to a deaf event in Washington D.C. I really wanted to
25 go and I left New York City. My friends said, "Come

3 join me in Washington D.C.” So we went to Washington
4 D.C. together, and she actually drove me and dropped
5 me off there. She planned to stay for a few more
6 days, and I needed to be back for work. We hung out
7 that day, and late into the afternoon I decided that
8 I needed to go back to New York City that same day.
9 So there’s no way to get back home other than buying
10 a ticket for the bus. I bought a ticket online
11 through my phone. I got the last bus to New York
12 City. I don’t remember if it was Bolt or Mega Bus or
13 which bus it was, but I got there. I got on the bus,
14 and around five, ten miles outside of Washington
15 D.C., the bus had to transfer. I get to the location
16 and the bus drops me off in a massive parking lot in
17 a mall area. It’s dark outside. I couldn’t quite see
18 where to go. I didn’t know where my transfer bus was
19 to the New York area. There were many buses coming
20 and going. I went-- each bus company was there. I
21 quickly wrote down and passed to the bus driver,
22 “Where is the bus to New York?” And the bus driver
23 pointed like over there. I saw a bus in the
24 distance, and I ran across the parking lot to see.
25 Unfortunately, it was the wrong bus. I ran back,
looked at other buses around. They were all the

3 wrong buses. There was plenty of buses coming and
4 going, and I could not find my bus, and finally all
5 the buses were gone. There were no buses, and I was
6 stranded in this parking lot alone at night in an
7 unfamiliar area. I was terrified. It's dark. There
8 was nobody there. I didn't know what to do. I
9 decided to go by the highway to see if I could flag
10 down a car. I went and stood by the highway hoping a
11 police car would come by and see me. Maybe it would
12 pick me up. Nothing came by. It was desolate, and I
13 waited a long time. Finally, I texted 311 services
14 for New York City from this rural location outside of
15 Washington D.C. I said, "I need help, please. I'm
16 stranded. I have nobody to help me. I don't know
17 what to do." 311 said call 911. I said I can't call
18 911, I'm deaf. What do I do? 311 said, "I don't
19 know how to help you." Finally, I saw a McDonald's
20 in the distance. It looked like they might be
21 closed. I went over. I knocked on the door, and I
22 said please help me. They said, "Call 911." I said,
23 "Please, I can't, I'm deaf." And the manager
24 thankfully decided to call 911 for me. I waited for
25 an hour. The police finally arrived. They picked me
up. They brought me to the station where I stayed

3 overnight. The next morning they brought me and
4 dropped me at the bus services for the correct bus to
5 get back home to New York City. That is my story
6 that I wanted to share with you today. Thank you for
7 your time.

8 DENNIS MARTINEZ: Good afternoon,
9 everybody. My name is Dennis Martinez. I work for
10 Harlem Independent Living Center here in New York
11 City representing deaf people as an advocate. I am
12 here to tell you a story about 911 services. I know
13 that the bill passed quite some time ago, but this
14 actually happened recently. I was-- we have deaf
15 people, about 2,000 deaf people live in New York City
16 who struggle to get access to 911 services in
17 emergency services. I myself actually had a similar
18 situation where I needed to call 911 and I couldn't.
19 On November 5th I was riding the subway train. There
20 was a large group of people, and I saw a fight break
21 out. A man actually pushed another man who is
22 elderly in his 60's or 70's into the ground, and he
23 hit his head and started bleeding, and I saw the
24 hearing people around him call 911. Unfortunately, I
25 was powerless in the situation. I couldn't do
anything to help him. At that point, the man began

2 to have a seizure. All of us on the train were
3 afraid. People were yelling, "Call 911. Call 911."
4 And I could see how hearing people were able to step
5 in and to assist this stranger, but I couldn't. I
6 couldn't call 911. Unfortunately, I was unable to
7 participate in that, in helping this person who
8 really needed help from me. Because of the hearing
9 people around me being able to call 911, the police
10 arrived on time and took him away to services, but
11 that got me thinking. What would happen if I was on
12 the subway and my deaf friend had a seizure, if I was
13 in a subway where it was abandoned and somebody had a
14 seizure? I wouldn't be able to contact 911.
15 Somebody could die, and I really would like to see
16 this service improved for the 2,000 deaf and hard-of-
17 hearing New Yorkers in this city. Thank you for your
18 time.

19 VINCENT K JENKINS: Alright, hello
20 everyone. My name is Mr. Vincent K. Jenkins. Thank
21 you for your time and good afternoon to everyone, and
22 that the City Council is here listening to me today.
23 So, I am a community activist for disability rights,
24 and civic engagement with the Jewish Board of Family
25 Services, and I was the facilitator and the former

3 president. And so I want you guys to all get an idea
4 of the importance of text 911 and the generative
5 process. It's very, very serious that you all
6 understand how important it is for our community.
7 And so we're working with the Department of
8 Information and Technological Services as well as
9 MOPD, the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities,
10 so that we can quickly and easily contact the police
11 and Fire Department in case of emergencies and their
12 various departments. We want to work together to
13 figure out how to create a beta test for an app, and
14 if that is possible, and if we can make that app,
15 would the government pay for it? Is that something
16 that we can get the City of New York to host and
17 create, and it's not only for deaf people? It's for
18 people who maybe can't speak, but for all people just
19 to be able to have a text 911 operator, because we
20 have 311, but 311 doesn't always do what we need it
21 to do. So, if we could have a 311-- if we could just
22 focus on a 911 text system, then that would
23 definitely make me as a deaf person feel a lot more
24 comfortable, because if something happens at my
25 apartment with anyone who I know or if someone falls
over, or if there's any kind of emergency in general,

3 I need to be able to text. And so we would like to
4 just make sure to create an app, and if we did that,
5 would we approve it or not, and would the government
6 pay for it or not, and if we did established this
7 app, we would want to make sure we could yes, of
8 course, translate from the English language, but deaf
9 people, many deaf people don't speak English as their
10 first language. Their first language is American
11 Sign Language. So that's a very important thing to
12 remember. And we as the deaf community and to make
13 sure that we are involved in these-- in all of this.
14 and to make sure that we have technological
15 assistance, and to ensure that our society remains
16 progressive and helpful with deaf people and people
17 who have disabilities, and to make sure that we have
18 the proper installments of technology in the future
19 so that if anything happens in the future that is an
20 emergency, that we can make sure to grab an
21 interpreter really fast, you know. If we can't
22 contact 911, then there's going to be a lot of
23 communication break-downs. So it's very important
24 that we have that ability, the equal opportunity to
25 be able to contact 911 through an app. It's very
serious. Thank you very much.

3 LOURDES ROSA-CARRASQUILLO: Hello, my
4 name is Lourdes Rosa-Carrasquillo. I'm the Director
5 of Advocacy for the Center of Independence for
6 Disabled New York. We serve people with all
7 disabilities including, of course, deaf, hard-of-
8 hearing and blind, deaf. I'm not going to repeat
9 everything that it seems most people have repeated,
10 but I do think that the agencies involved should be a
11 little embarrassed and ashamed of themselves for
12 taking, putting us aside and telling us we have to
13 wait more and more. We understand that-- at one
14 point they said it was training requirements for the
15 operators. I think that should have automatically
16 been part of the programming and concept and thinking
17 of developing this. I am a person who is hard-of-
18 hearing. I wear hearing aids, and 101 about hearing
19 aids, I do not need higher volume. My hearing aids
20 are programmed for pitch and alpha, which is
21 significantly different than what people think of
22 when people think people wear hearing aids. So in
23 two incidences, I called 911 and because I could not
24 understand, they kept yelling, which only made it
25 more difficult for me to understand especially in an
emergency situation when you're trying to get to a

3 hospital. I really think the delay is what caused
4 this problem, and I really think that they really
5 need to step up and move forward on this, because
6 lives-- our lives matter as much as everyone else.
7 This technology, yes, is great for everybody, but
8 it's crucial for the deaf, hard-of-hearing, and
9 blind/deaf. So, I would really like a better
10 explanation than the last time, which they said they
11 didn't have the authority to tell us why they could
12 not move forward, which I find totally disrespectful
13 and inconsiderate, and not being very forthright in
14 working as a team, which is what they expected. They
15 stated we were part of it, but yet, they did not keep
16 us involved all the way. They told us we have to
17 wait, but never a clear explanation or how we could
18 help the process. Yes, they had a beta training.
19 That was fine, but nothing to move forward. You
20 could train with a group of us all you want, that's
21 not going to help the community. So, I just want to
22 put that forward, and I hope you're going to have
23 better responses now that we have the City Council
24 here that's accountable to. Thank you.

24 MAUREEN BELLUSCIO: Good afternoon. My
25 name is Maureen Belluscio. I'm an attorney with New

3 York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and New York
4 Lawyers for the Public Interest is a nonprofit civil
5 rights organizations in New York City. We have a
6 robust disability rights practice, and we do quite a
7 lot of work with the deaf community, including the
8 Deaf Justice Coalition that Nicolyn also mentioned in
9 her testimony. I echo the testimony of my colleagues
10 here today, and say that New York City must implement
11 text to 911 immediately. This issue is stark, and
12 current 911 services are not accessible to the deaf
13 and hard-of-hearing communities in New York City.
14 Every single day that New York City delays
15 implementing this service is another day that New
16 Yorkers' very lives hang in the balance. Text to 911
17 would finally make 911 services accessible to the
18 estimated 208,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing people who
19 live and work in New York City, to say nothing of
20 those who visit the city. It is our understanding as
21 others have mentioned that New York City has both
22 developed the technology to make text to 911 possible
23 and that New York City has also trained 911 staff in
24 text to 911 protocols. The communities and all New
25 Yorkers deserve answers. When will text to 911 be
implemented? What else needs to happen? And what is

3 taking so long? A recent article in the city
4 reported that the New York City agencies with
5 overlapping jurisdiction over 911 are blaming each
6 other's bureaucratic processes for ongoing delays.
7 This explanation is unacceptable to use as advocates.
8 We demand that New York City no longer use the
9 bureaucratic quagmire as an excuse for not providing
10 accessible services and do everything possible to
11 implement text to 911 immediately. The Americans
12 with Disabilities Act prohibits state and local
13 governments from discriminating on the basis of
14 disability and the services and programs that they
15 offer, and that includes 911 services. State and
16 local civil rights laws also prohibit disability
17 discrimination and require that New York City provide
18 accessible services. The benefits of text to 911 are
19 obvious. Text to 911 has been implemented in
20 approximately 2,000 municipalities, cities and
21 counties across the United States. It is time for
22 New York City to stop lagging behind other parts of
23 the country and implement text to 911 immediately.
24 New Yorkers' safety, security and health depend on
25 it.

3 GENNA TEITELBAUM: Good afternoon, and
4 thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My
5 name is Genna Teitelbaum and I am a Senior Staff
6 Attorney in the Family Law and Domestic Violence Unit
7 of Staten Island Legal Services, a division of Legal
8 Services New York City, and the largest provider of
9 free civil legal services in the country. I also
10 represent LSNYC on the Deaf Justice Coalition, whose
11 mission it is to improve access to police and other
12 government services for New Yorkers who are deaf or
13 hard-of-hearing. As an attorney representing DV
14 survivors, I see my deaf clients struggle to access
15 emergency services that are critical to escaping
16 their abusive partners. I had one deaf client who
17 was brutally beaten by her boyfriend in Brooklyn.
18 unable to call 911, she took a bus from Brooklyn to
19 my office in Staten Island where she could
20 communicate in ASL and where I helped her to make a
21 police report. On another occasion, a deaf client
22 reported to me that after hitting her, her husband
23 stole her identity documents and forcibly left their
24 home with the child. The client could not call 911.
25 Only after several months of litigation were we able
to return the child and the IDs to our client. The

3 situation might have been avoidable had she been able
4 to access 911 during the incident. Even hearing
5 survivors cannot always call 911 during a DV
6 incident. Many survivors do not call 911 because
7 they fear the violence would escalate if their abuser
8 overheard that call. For deaf and hearing DV
9 survivors alike, direct communication to 911 is
10 critically important. When texting is the only or
11 the only safe option, survivors may not seek help at
12 all or they must rely on third parties. This creates
13 barriers such as the third party might not respond
14 right away. They may have conflicting allegiance to
15 the abuser. They may not have all the pertinent
16 information or the call may not be routed to the
17 appropriate dispatcher depending on where the call
18 originates. Perhaps most importantly, deaf and
19 hearing DV survivors deserve autonomy, equal access,
20 and the opportunity to advocate for themselves
21 without gatekeepers, particularly in an emergency.
22 Additionally, whether or not a survivor calls 911 is
23 often used a litmus test for credibility in court.
24 Where survivors fail to call the police during or
25 immediately following an incident, courts will often
doubt the voracity of their claim. This impacts not

3 only the likelihood that the perpetrator will be held
4 accountable in criminal court, but also a survivor's
5 ability to get an Order of Protection in Family Court
6 or when custody of children in common. This summer,
7 the second department upheld a Staten Island Family
8 Court decision in which an abusive husband was
9 granted full custody of a child fighting that the
10 wife's claims of domestic violence were not credible
11 because she did not call 911 or seek medical
12 attention. Text-to-911 would significantly improve
13 accessibility of emergency services to deaf and
14 hearing DV survivors. Such access is critical and
15 potentially life-saving and may have implications far
16 beyond the initial point of emergency. Thank you
17 again for the opportunity to testify today and for
18 your dedication to making 911 services available to
19 all New Yorkers.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you all for
21 your great testimony. I just have a general question
22 for anyone on the panel. Has anybody on the panel
23 visited other cities that had Next Generation 911 or
24 Text-to-911?

25 NICOLYN PLUMMER: Yes, I have-- I
[inaudible] in [inaudible] and others they already

3 implemented text-to-911 accept New York. They're
4 real far behind. Others they are implementing as
5 well.

6 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. Thanks.

7 And when you visited other cities, when you see that
8 they have text-to-911, do you feel that we are so
9 behind? And why are we so behind in New York City?

10 I mean, the advocates would know this. There's

11 bureaucracy, obviously. Is it the cost? We'll find

12 out, but this has been promised for a while. I guess

13 the panelists, many of the panelists has their hopes

14 up that this would be implemented already and it

15 would make it so much easier. So, any-- does anybody

16 else have any nightmare situations that you couldn't

17 get help because you couldn't call 911?

18 VINCENT K. JENKINS: Yes, hello.

19 Vincent, again. I just want to tell you guys, the

20 Council, that yes, we do have beta testing, but we've

21 also-- I have also worked with Mr. Victor Kalis

22 [sp?], and he's at the MOPD, Mayor's Office of People

23 with Disabilities, and we worked with him for four--

24 four years ago. It might even been nine years ago.

25 It's been a while of working with Victor. And we've

discussed this text-to-911 with him often, and we

3 understand that as a government agency, with the
4 MOPD, it's incredibly important to be able to call
5 911 while there's an emergency. So if the train is
6 messed up, that's another example. That's an
7 emergency. If-- any other kinds of emergencies,
8 respiratory. If any-- any particular thing that
9 happens in a public space for government agencies,
10 this is a very important thing. So, we do need to
11 catch up, absolutely, immediately, New York City.
12 Just letting you know. Thanks.

13 UNIDENTIFIED: Actually, there is a site
14 where it shows the map, nationwide, and you click on
15 the state, and it tells you the percentage that they
16 have accessible. Pennsylvania has 26 percent.
17 Connecticut has 87 percent. So, our neighboring
18 states, New York is substantially lower, and I'd be
19 honest, I'm a little bit embarrassed that
20 Pennsylvania is beating us. So, I think if you-- I
21 can send you the link and you can see how
22 embarrassing it is that New York City is behind the
23 way it is.

24 UNIDENTIFIED: And to echo that and to
25 also say that in addition to the stories that others
on this panel have shared, to just say that many

3 people never have to reach 911 in their lifetime, and
4 it's only a matter of time before some people will
5 need to, and so to some extent this is a ticking
6 clock where this needs to happen now and not wait for
7 some tragedy other than the ones that people have
8 mentioned on this panel.

9 NICOLYN PLUMMER: I want to add, instead
10 of handling 911 emergencies, technically [inaudible]
11 primarily caused [sic] through the relay. 911 is not
12 [inaudible] and it is time consuming when you have a
13 third party. A lot of time when you call through the
14 third party, through the relay, it's very challenging
15 for EMT or law enforcement to understand what's going
16 on. Most of the time they will hang up on you and
17 think it's not an emergency. Other times
18 [inaudible], well I don't have this time, and they
19 hung up. That's what we're dealing with at this
20 point, specifically that system is very challenging
21 for a deaf person to call 911 [inaudible].
22 [inaudible] call through the relay, but [inaudible]
23 don't put your calls through the relay. It's time
24 consuming to talk to the relay operator.

25 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. One
more? Okay.

3 VINCENT K. JENKINS: I just wanted to add
4 another comment. Vincent, again. I do agree with
5 Nicolyn, because we're talking about the third-party
6 system and the fact that if you call 911 through a
7 vvideo relay service that they will hang up on you,
8 but it makes you wonder if they think that we're--
9 that deaf people are people also. It seems like they
10 think that we're nothing, we're dismissed, and that
11 is absolutely wrong, because we have a voice and we
12 are here, and we also need to have back-up also. I
13 mean, if an emergency happens, it all depends on
14 who's available regarding an interpreter, for
15 example, if I call a three-party system. If there's
16 no interpreters available, then there's still an
17 emergency happening, and I have to rely on a hearing
18 person. Why should I have to rely on a hearing
19 person when I'm a deaf person? And to me, that says
20 that New York City thinks that we as deaf people
21 don't matter and that we're not equal to you as
22 people. But obviously, deaf people can communicate
23 the same as hearing people. It's just the fact that
24 the system is not set up for us. So, if everyone had
25 to set up-- if everyone had to contact 911 every day
as deaf people, then the system would already be

3 fixed, but you don't have to do it like we do. So
4 you need wake up and implement what-- text-to-911 and
5 that's why we're here, because communication and
6 access is incredibly important for all of us.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: What a great panel.
8 Thank you all for your testimony. You are amazing,
9 and I think we'll get to text-to-911 quickly, and I
10 want to thank you all. Thanks so much. Much more--
11 I think we'll get there faster because of your
12 testimony. Thank you so much. Thank you. Oh, one
13 question. Council Member Ayala has a question. Do
14 you have a question for this panel? Okay. Thank
15 you. Alright, thank you, panelists. We've been
16 joined by Council Member Powers, Brannan, Adams, and
17 that's it. Okay, thank you. Cohen, Council Member
18 Cohen is here. Our next panel is the Administration.
19 I'm glad you were able to hear that. Okay, Counsel
20 will read the affirmation.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you swear to tell
22 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
23 before this committee and answer all questions to the
24 best of your ability?

25 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Commissioner, do you
want to start? Formoso?

3 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Thank you. First
4 of all, I just would like to extend my thanks to the
5 previous panel to give us some valuable insight onto
6 how critical it is, the work that we're about to talk
7 to you about today is for them. So, thank you very
8 much for that insight.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Could you pull the
10 mic a little closer? Thanks.

11 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Absolutely.
12 Better? Good afternoon, Council. I'm sorry. Good
13 afternoon Chairs Holden, Richards, and Borelli, and
14 members of the New York City Committees on
15 Technology, Public Safety, and Fire and Emergency
16 Management. My name is Eusebio Formoso, and since
17 June of 2019 I have been the interim Commissioner for
18 the Department of Information Technology and
19 Telecommunications, also known as DoITT. Thank you
20 for the opportunity to testify today about Next
21 Generation 911. With me today is Rachel Laiserin,
22 the Associate Commissioner for Procurement and Vendor
23 Management. I'd like to thank the Committees for
24 their attention to this critical project, and I look
25 forward to working with all of you as we continue to
implement public safety technology infrastructure on

3 behalf of New York City Police Department and the New
4 York Fire Department. Enhancing the technology-- I'm
5 sorry. Enhancing the technological functionality of
6 the nation's largest and most complex 911 system is a
7 top priority, and one that must be executed very
8 carefully to ensure the effective delivery of
9 emergency services to all. As my colleagues from the
10 NYPD will state, upgrading the 911 system is
11 something we all are fully committed to, particularly
12 for the benefit of the deaf and hard-of-hearing
13 community, those with speech disabilities, and crime
14 victims unable to make a voice call. That is why we
15 are working on two separate projects concurrently.
16 Interim Text-to-911 and Next Generation 911. Interim
17 Text-to-911 is being built on the existing legacy
18 analog 911 system, and its purpose is to deliver
19 texting functionality until texting is fully
20 available in the Next Generation 911 system. The
21 Next Generation 911 system will eventually replace
22 the legacy analog 911 system in use today. Next
23 Generation 911 will allow the 911 system to accept
24 different types of digital multimedia from the public
25 including video and other transfer, and other data
transfers, in addition to text. Information on the

3 progress of both of these projects have been detailed
4 in a report issued annually pursuant to Local Law 78
5 of 2016. In addition to the operational advantages
6 of Next Generation 911, there are numerous technical
7 benefits including enhanced support for all
8 communication devices currently capable and/or
9 required to provide 911 service. Two, support for
10 future communication devices and services that may
11 provide 911 service, providing the strategic
12 technical foundation to serve as a platform for any
13 future enhancements. Three, improved system quality,
14 accuracy, and efficiency. Four, increase cost
15 effectiveness by using commercially available off-
16 the-shelf products. And five, an enhanced system
17 supportability and maintainability through the
18 elimination of out-of-date products and technologies.
19 By moving to Next Generation 911 the City will
20 position itself to more effectively and efficiently
21 respond to 911 calls for years to come. The
22 Administration anticipated that the Next Generation
23 911 system would take several years to implement,
24 especially given that the scope of the New York City
25 911 system is incomparable in complexity to any other
municipality in the country. Again, Next Generation

3 911 is a full replacement of the current legacy
4 analog system. After gathering responses from a
5 Request for Information in 2016, DoITT, NYPD, and
6 FDNY drafted a comprehensive Request for Proposals
7 which was released in June of 2017. The RFP, which is
8 available on the DoITT website, consists of more than
9 270 pages and covers over 6,000 detailed requirements
10 which vendors must be able to deliver in order to be
11 considered as a perspective vendor for Next
12 Generation 911. Each company responding to the RFP
13 must also prove financial stability, a successful
14 track record implementing Next Generation 911
15 elsewhere, a long-term commitment to products and
16 services for Next Generation 911 customers, and a
17 business continuity plan. The RFP solicited
18 proposals from companies for three different portions
19 of the Next Generation 911 system. We arranged this
20 into three classes or subsystems: class one, network
21 core infrastructure services. This section of the
22 RFP solicited vendors with expertise implementing the
23 network infrastructure on which the Next Generation
24 911 system will be based. Class two is logging and
25 recording. Vendors were solicited to provide the
technology used for logging and recording calls,

3 texts and other media in order to enable NYPD and
4 FDNY to research incidents, analyze data, and prepare
5 reports. Class three is geographic information
6 systems. This component of the RFP requires a vendors
7 to provide an integrated solution for GIS data
8 management including the aggregation of address
9 points and emergency service boundaries. The RFP
10 allows for separate contracts for each class or
11 subsystem, each of which could be awarded to a
12 different vendor. As the committees may be aware,
13 the RFP procurement process is governed by Section 3-
14 03 of the Procurement Policy Board Rules which we
15 follow for every procurement under our purview.
16 These rules stipulate RFP content requirements,
17 including relative weights of criteria used for
18 evaluation, vendor section notice requirements and
19 evaluation committees. Further, this process
20 includes multiple avenues of oversight including the
21 Mayor's office of Contract Services, the Law
22 Department, a responsibility determination that
23 includes a Department of Investigation review of a
24 prospective vendor's filings and ultimately
25 registration of the final contract by the Office of
the Comptroller. We are confident that this diligent

3 and competitive process will ensure that the City
4 gets the best vendor for the job at the best price
5 possible. Currently, we are still engaged in active
6 negotiations with perspective vendors, and as such,
7 the City has not yet finalized selection of vendors
8 for the subsystem described in the RFP. Any vendors
9 who are selected to deliver any of these three
10 subsystems will be required to be able to meet our
11 specific criteria as outlined in the RFP, including
12 but not limited to cyber security, call volume,
13 redundancy and resiliency. An evaluation committee of
14 10 city employees from DoITT, NYPD and FDNY has been
15 actively engaged in the procurement process,
16 evaluating multiple proposals from each of the three
17 subsystems. The evaluations included assessment and
18 functional demonstrations to the proposed solutions,
19 evaluation of key vendor staff experience a level of
20 overall organizational capability which was done
21 through interviews and customer references, as well
22 as the assessment of pricing proposals. The
23 proposals have been evaluated over 6,000
24 requirements. We have been working closely with NYPD
25 and FDNY to ensure that the procurement process
results in the selection of the best vendor for each

3 class of the RFP. The City expects to select vendors
4 for the RFP and complete the procurement in early
5 2020 and implement Next Generation 911 in 2024. As
6 we work to implement Next Generation 911 with our
7 agency partners, we are committed to delivering an
8 interim Text-to-911 solution next year, and project
9 that we will roll out interim Text-to-911 by the
10 summer of 2020. To reiterate, the Text-to-911 is
11 being built on the existing legacy analog 911 system,
12 and its purpose is to provide texting functionality
13 prior to the full implementation of Next Generation
14 911. Since this interim system is being built to
15 handle the highest 911 call volume in the US, getting
16 the system right is a matter of life and death. We
17 are grateful for NYPD and FDNY's diligence in
18 providing requirements and testing support necessary
19 to deploy a product that is ready for public
20 consumption. DoITT has completed building out the
21 core infrastructure of this project according to
22 NYPD's requirements and has internally released the
23 first version of the software application that
24 manages test sessions. We are currently working with
25 our agency partners including the Mayor's Office of
People with Disabilities to test the system before it

3 goes live. Additionally, to ensure that the deaf and
4 hard-of-hearing community is represented throughout
5 the process, we have had periodic check-ins with deaf
6 advocates and have hired a consultant to liaise with
7 the deaf community on appropriate language usage to
8 help our teams understand the Text-to-911
9 communications through the lens of a deaf or hard-of-
10 hearing individual which, as you will imagine, is
11 extremely important. As with all complex efforts, we
12 have faced challenges integrating the legacy 911
13 system used for voice calls which was built in the
14 80s with the legacy-- I'm sorry, with the digital
15 texting technology. Altogether, we are integrating
16 over a dozen legacy systems to allow for the
17 transmission of texts since during-- sent during a
18 911 call. The purpose of this complex integration is
19 to enable NYC's 911 call-takers to receive all calls
20 and texts to 911 within the same user interface. Of
21 equal importance is ensuring that the overall system
22 has strong cyber security protections in place to
23 prevent malicious actors from impacting the ability
24 of call-takers to properly handle emergency
25 communications. To this end, we have been working
with NYC Cyber Command to test for known cyber

3 security threats. Our cyber security standards are
4 higher than other municipalities who have implemented
5 Text-to-911 systems, which means we are seeking
6 customized solutions tailored to the needs of New
7 York City that have not been deployed elsewhere. We
8 take cyber security risks very seriously, and will
9 not deploy a system that does not address these
10 concerns. Finally, I cannot overstate the importance
11 of launching public safety technology through a
12 careful and deliberate process. We agree with our
13 partner agencies that we must be 100 percent ready
14 before rolling anything out to the public. Both
15 projects have the potential to save lives by
16 providing better 911 access to all New Yorkers. We
17 are committed to relentlessly working towards these
18 goals. I am happy to answer any of the Council
19 Members' questions.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. Deputy
21 Commissioner?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: good
23 afternoon Chair Richards, Chair Borelli, Chair Holden
24 and members of the Council. I am Jessica Tisch, the
25 Deputy Commissioner of Information Technology at the
New York City Police Department, and I am joined

3 today by Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Legal
4 Matters, Oleg Chernyavsky, Assistant Commissioner of
5 Life Safety Systems, Steve Harte, and Deputy Chief
6 Richard Napolitano, the Commanding Officer of the
7 Communications Division. I'd like to thank the
8 members of the previous panel for their testimony,
9 and on behalf of Police Commissioner James O'Neill,
10 we are pleased to join our colleagues from DoITT and
11 the FDNY to speak to you today about the NYPD's role
12 in implementing the City's Next Generation 911 and
13 interim Text-to-911 systems. As Deputy Commissioner
14 of Information Technology at NYPD, I oversee all of
15 the NYPD's technology development as well as all 911
16 call taking and dispatching operations. The NYPD's
17 participation in the Next Gen and interim Text-to-911
18 systems we are discussing today is primarily in the
19 capacity of the end-user rather than the technology
20 developer. As I'm sure you know, the volume of calls
21 New York's 911 system receives dwarfs that of any
22 other city. The dedicated personnel at our 911 call
23 centers received 8.8 million calls for service last
24 year, and 7.7 million so far this year. Over the
25 past six years we have been working hard to hone and
optimize our operations at the 911 call center,

3 including our collaboration with the Fire Department.

4 These efforts have resulted in a 14.7 percent decline

5 in response time to critical crimes in progress

6 citywide between calendar year 2014 and 2018, and a

7 5.2 percent decrease in response times to crimes in

8 progress over the same period. These gains were

9 hard-fought and greatly aided by this Administration

10 and the Council's support for increased headcount of

11 our police communications technicians who answer and

12 dispatch all 911 calls. In fact, since 2014, the

13 NYPD's authorized headcount for police communications

14 technicians has gone up from 1,398 to 1,590. Our

15 PCTs are thoroughly trained on how to handle each and

16 every one of the approximately 24,000 daily 911 calls

17 we receive with efficiency and precision. PCTs are

18 given nine weeks of initial training. Dispatchers

19 receive an additional five weeks, and in-service

20 trainings are conducted where warranted. Training

21 modules includes use of our ICAD system, new code

22 expansions, understanding cross-streets and routes,

23 and updates on revised memos or directives system

24 wide. If you have never been to our call center in

25 the Bronx, I invite you all to come and spend some

time with us. The work of our PCTs is extraordinary

3 and quite complicated, and something that's best
4 understood by plugging in with them. The NYPD
5 remains committed to working with our public safety
6 IT partners on the continued improvement of our call
7 centers to enhance the technology our PCTs use to
8 perform their life-saving work. We have a strong
9 history of doing so. In 2014, we began working
10 collaboratively with DoITT and FDNY to open a new
11 long-planned Public Safety Answering Center in the
12 Bronx, which we call PSAC2. We began taking 911
13 calls at this facility in 2016. Radio dispatch
14 followed there in 2017. I am pleased to report that
15 today PSAC2 is the primary 911 call center for all
16 call-taking and NYPD dispatching. Building on that
17 collaborative success, we began working with DoITT
18 and FDNY on the Next Generation 911 program as well
19 as building out interim Text-to-911 in 2016. I will
20 now address each. First, Next Gen. Because most 911
21 systems, New York City's included, were originally
22 built using analog technologies, PSACs across the
23 country are now being upgraded to digital or
24 internet-based protocol, commonly referred to Next
25 Generation or Next Generation 911. The purpose of
Next Generation 911 is to create a 911 system that

3 allows voice, photos, videos, and text messages to
4 flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network.
5 Additionally, Next Gen will enable PSACs to receive
6 more precise location information of the caller as
7 well as enhanced interactions with outside systems,
8 such as alarm companies, that today rely on relay
9 services to call 911. In 2016, NYPD started the
10 process of defining our operational requirements
11 associated with Next Gen 911. In the years since, we
12 have been involved in the procurement process as a
13 stakeholder with representation in the vendor
14 evaluation committee. These procurements are led by
15 DoITT's agency Chief Contracting Officer. We
16 recognize, however, that we can offer some of these
17 services without waiting for full implementation of
18 Next Gen 911. In particular, interim Text-to-911
19 will allow a member of the public to text back and
20 forth with NYPD call or text takers years before
21 fully implementation of Next Gen. On each tour, we
22 plan to have call takers dedicated to fielding
23 incoming texts as opposed to voice calls. In 2018,
24 we trained 1,289 of our police communication
25 technicians on Text-to-911. Each call taker received
four hours of training which included a 30-minute

3 module focused on deaf and hard-of-hearing cultural
4 sensitivity with an emphasis on how to text with the
5 deaf and hard of hearing community, and more
6 effectively serve them in their time of emergency.

7 This module was delivered by a member of that
8 community with the assistance of a sign language
9 interpreter. We plan to do a second round of robust
10 training for all members assigned to the
11 Communications Division prior to go live. As for the
12 technology development, NYPD and FDNY have worked
13 collaboratively on this program with DoITT, which is
14 the technology lead for the City's 911 system.

15 Together, our agencies are working to ensure that we
16 roll out a system that is public safety grade. At
17 the same time, we feel a great sense of urgency to
18 make this life-saving system a resource available to
19 all New Yorkers. Ultimately, we know that if a text
20 message is sent to 911 in an emergency and it doesn't
21 reach an operator, that person's life could be in
22 peril. That is a standard that the city is holding
23 itself to when designing the new interim Text-to-911
24 system. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today
25 to these critical issues, and I look forward to
answering any questions you may have.

2 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. We
3 invited the Fire Department. Is anybody here from
4 the Fire Department that can give testimony? Okay,
5 you are, alright. You're-- you want to take the
6 panel there?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you also swear to
8 tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
9 truth and answer all questions to the best of your
10 ability?

11 : I do.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Before you start, do
13 you have testimony?

14 : No, sir, I do not.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: We've been joined by
16 Council Members Ulrich, Gibson, Deutsch, and that's
17 it. Thank you. Per Local Law 78 of 2016, DoITT
18 along with the FDNY and NYPD are to issue a report on
19 the implementation of Next Generation 911 within a
20 911 emergency assistance system. We have some
21 questions on the latest report from 2018, December
22 2018. And I'll give this to the DoITT Commissioner,
23 how long did it take you to draft the report?

24

25

2 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I joined DoITT
3 this past summer. I can't actually-- I don't know
4 how long it took to draft that report, sir.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Do you know who
6 worked on the report, drafting the report?

7 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: No, but we will
8 get back to you with the response to that question.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Because we checked
10 all three reports from 2016, 17, and 18. Are we--
11 you know, and are you aware that outside of a few
12 changes, there is little to no change in those three
13 years. So they're identical reports essentially.

14 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, I reviewed the
15 reports, and I am aware that there are some
16 similarities.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Essentially all--
18 only the dates were changed, which there's nothing
19 new to report. There's nothing-- there's no new
20 technology to implement or to put in. there's nothing
21 to report-- so we're just copying and pasting three
22 annual reports from the previous year. I mean--

23 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] I'm
24 not sure that I would represent that that's what
25 happened, but I did question how the reports were put

2 together when I reviewed the reports to understand
3 the differences in terms of progress on a year-to-
4 year basis.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: So you questioned
6 why they're identical.

7 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I questioned--

8 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: [interposing] They're
9 really identical. One paragraph changed in all three
10 of them.

11 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I questioned what
12 things did we achieve on a yearly basis.

13 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Alright.

14 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: To try to
15 understand what milestones were reached.

16 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Page six of the
17 December 2018 report states that, "In implementing
18 the Next Generation 911 system, city agencies, their
19 employees, contractors and vendors will follow the
20 established citywide information security policies
21 and standards in their latest additions." When were
22 the citywide information security policies and
23 standards last updated?

24 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: so, there's been a
25 number of updates. There's been an update as recent

2 as two weeks ago. I received an update from cyber
3 security command with an update to the city policies
4 for cyber security.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Two weeks ago?

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Right, but these
7 are-- again, this was an update that we received.
8 The cyber command team reviews those on a regular
9 basis and they provide updates to us when they see
10 there may be a new threat that requires the policies
11 to be updated.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Because on the
13 website we didn't see it. The last update that we
14 had was five years ago on September 9th of 2014, and
15 then before that it was April 2012. So it was only
16 two weeks ago, and there was a big gap in there.

17 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Let me follow-up
18 to see how we are making aware-- how we're making you
19 and others aware of the updates that are being made
20 to those policies.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: So, we haven't
22 chosen a vendor for Next Generation 911, right?

23 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Correct.

24 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Alright. The page
25 eight of the DoITT report indicates that 18 highly

3 qualified vendors responded to the RFP. Are you
4 still deliberating on who to choose, is that it, or?

5 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So we're currently
6 in an active procurement process for one of the most
7 complicated and complex systems relative to 911 in
8 the country. So I want to be cautious about what's
9 currently happening during the active procurement.

10 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: But, you know, you
11 think we're kind of behind the curve here where other
12 municipalities around-- 2,000 like it was reported,
13 cities and states. Cities and municipalities have
14 Next Gen 911 or at least upgraded Text-to-911. Do
15 you think New York City is behind the curve here?

16 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: We certainly would
17 like to be further along than we are, however, you
18 have to consider the complexity of what we're trying
19 to do in New York City, the higher standards that we
20 set ourselves to, and the procurement process that we
21 put in place to basically try to identify a best
22 agreed vendor for each of those three categories that
23 I mentioned in my testimony, which requires the
24 committee comprised of 10 people to do very deep
25 analysis of the proposals that we received from the
various vendors.

3 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: I just want to-- I
4 want to get back to that a little bit later, but does
5 the new system have voice recognition capabilities?

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Are you
7 referencing the Next Gen 911?

8 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: yes, the Next Gen,
9 yes.

10 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I am not aware
11 that we are going to have voice recognition
12 capabilities in the Next Gen 911. I stand to be
13 corrected technically, but I'm not aware that that's
14 the case.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Are we planning to
16 have this Next Gen 911 working in the subways in New
17 York City? Is that also part of this whole plan?

18 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: You will be able
19 to text from wherever location a device will be
20 available to a cell network, yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Even in the tunnels?

22 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: To the extent that
23 others-- a cell phone connection in a tunnel, yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Alright, can-- also,
25 can the Next Gen, can we identify the person's
location?

3 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: We-- through one
4 of the services that we're planning to procure, which
5 is the GIS. Our intent is to improve our ability to
6 identify a person's location that is texting us, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: We can pinpoint
8 exactly where they are or just a general vicinity?

9 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I want to be
10 careful. I believe that we're definitely going to
11 improve. To the extent that how accurate it will be
12 versus that information, we are trying to access that
13 within the solutions that is in the current
14 procurement. Which is the vendor that is providing
15 us the best solution to pin down who is texting us.

16 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, so when the
17 Next Gen comes up, we'll be able to send videos and
18 images and photos, audio, and so forth, right?

19 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: and so were there--
21 would there be any limitation on size of photos or
22 videos? Do we know of? Is it-- And the research
23 that you've done on this with other cities, do they
24 have a limit.

25 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Let me just ask
Rachel Laiserin who's here next to me to comment

3 whether she's seen any limitation in that specific
4 requirement.

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: yeah,
6 as part of the contracts, we're actually-- the
7 vendors are going to develop the detailed design and
8 all of that will still be fleshed out at that time.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay. So, the new
10 system most likely would link the phone number of the
11 caller with the existing data, sort of like past
12 calls or just information that possibly was available
13 from previous calls with that person, right? I mean,
14 I would that's a-- they would be identified. There'd
15 be a file on that person or that particular address?

16 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: There is a
17 requirement that addresses that to the extent of how
18 that's going to be designed is yet to be determined
19 based on the final selections.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: So, just in looking
21 around us, and I want to compare-- let's talk about
22 Text-to-911. New Jersey launched Text-to-911 in all
23 21 of their state's counties in 2016. Suffolk County
24 launched Text-to-911 in 2018. Massachusetts started
25 their Text-to-911 service in January of this year,
and nine New York State counties including

3 neighboring Rockland and Dutchess Counties have all
4 had Text-to-911 since the early-- since as early as
5 2013. So, it's kind of weird that New York City
6 doesn't have it, which we have the largest population
7 of people with disabilities that certainly can
8 benefit from this. So, the holdup is alarming.
9 Obviously, you're going to hear from other Council
10 Members. Have you heard of a Smart 911?

11 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: No, I have not.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, Nassau County
13 started using Smart 911 in 2015. Smart 911 is
14 essentially, they have a profile. So when you call,-
15 - when you call 911, the profile would pop up of who
16 you are and if you have any limitations or if you
17 have any other issues possibly, and that's just to
18 identify the person and give more information
19 immediately. So, you know, again, I'm puzzled why
20 New York City-- when Nassau County had it in 2015--
21 and you know, I'm not blaming you. This is what the
22 City-- how far behind New York City in this system.
23 So we have to implement, you know, smart-- it could
24 have-- we could have had Smart 911. That could have
25 been implemented years ago if we have the
wherewithal, if we had the personnel, you know, or

3 the resolve to get it done, and it's not very costly.

4 So, I think we have to look at speeding things up,

5 and I'm a little disappointed that we have to wait

6 until 2024 for Next Gen. I understand that we have--

7 we're the largest city and the most 911 calls, but

8 then we could also employ the most people to get this

9 done. So, I-- you know, you can respond to that, but

10 I think it-- we need action, and I just hope that

11 2024 doesn't become 2026 and so forth and so on like

12 we've seen, kicking the can down the road. Do you

13 want to-- I just want to introduce or at least give

14 the mic to Councilman Richards.

15 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Thank you. Just a

16 few questions, and I think you said that eloquently,

17 Mr. Chair. So can you just go through and just

18 describe some of the circumstances that make Text-to-

19 911 such an important technological development for

20 our city?

21 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Our primary

22 objective with Text-to-911 is to-- within and on top

23 of the current analog call dispatching system, deploy

24 Text-to-911 as quickly as possible before we have to-

25 - before we get to the point where we can do Next

Generation 911. So, our objective for Text 911 is to

2 be able to test the texting capability in such a
3 fashion that it works flawlessly with the current
4 legacy system which as I said was developed in the
5 80s, and therefore, it poses certain challenges for
6 us in order to be able to get that integration to
7 work flawlessly so that the call-takers at the PSACs
8 are able to receive every single one of these texts
9 which are life critical.

10 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Who would benefit
11 most from this service?

12 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: The advocates, you
13 know, the communities that were represented here
14 today, we expect to be able to have the deaf and
15 hard-of-hearing community, people with speech
16 impediments, people who may not be able to make a
17 voice call, but would like to be able to reach 911
18 for whatever reason and will be able to text us.

19 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Right, and just go
20 through it. So you said you've been speaking to some
21 of these organizations, or can you just speak to what
22 has--

23 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] So,
24 within our--

3 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: [interposing]
4
5 whoever you work with.

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Within our Text-
7 to-911 team we have an individual who liaise with the
8 community because we want to make sure that we
9 understand how this community is going to be
10 interacting with us, given that many members of this
11 community their first language is not English, but
12 rather ESL. So we want to make sure that as we
13 develop the system we take into account how they're
14 going to communicate with us and how we're going to
15 communicate back.

16 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: And what about
17 domestic violence organizations, are they a part of
18 this conversation?

19 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Let me re-- let me
20 get back to you. I can't say that I recall that we--
21 how we've included that particular set of
22 constituents, so let me research and get back to you
23 on how we accounted for that.

24 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Do you agree that
25 it would be important to have--

26 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] Abs--
27 as a developer and as someone-- you know, my

3 philosophy has always been to include the end
4 customer as much as humanly possible so that you can
5 take into account how they want to have the system
6 react with them.

7 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: And I know-- I
8 guess, Oleg, if you want to hop in here. I know we've
9 done a lot of work in particular with the SVD Unit
10 and with a lot of those organizations already. Is
11 there any communication happening between all of you
12 around this issue?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CHERNYAVSKY: I mean--

14 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: [interposing] To
15 ensure that their voice is at the table, because
16 they're certainly another constituency that's going
17 to be-- that has been most impacted, because as you
18 know, most DV victims can't make a phone call. So
19 perhaps having, you know, direct text to 911 would
20 enable, you know, us to save some lives here.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CHERNYAVSKY: I think
22 you're making the right point. I think we agree with
23 you that, you know, the need to be able to text when
24 you can't make a voice call is critical for certain
25 victims of crime, especially domestic violence
victims. I'm not intimately familiar with the

3 implementation process, but as soon as we leave here
4 today I'll double check and see what type of outreach
5 and inclusion, you know, the-- what type of outreach
6 we've done towards the advocates in that community.

7 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Another question
8 for Commissioner. At the Executive Budget hearing,
9 Deputy Commissioner Grippo indicated that training
10 for Text-to-911 was a significant driver of the
11 civilian oversight budget. Can you explain why we're
12 spending money if the system isn't online yet? Or
13 does that mean we are significantly closer to Text-
14 to-911?

15 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, we're looking
16 to roll out Text-to-911 in early summer of 2020. The
17 plan called for education at-- you know, which
18 already has happened as Deputy Commissioner Tisch
19 explained and articulated earlier. The objective is
20 to more than likely have to repeat that education.
21 We want to be able to train the call-takers on what
22 the system was going to provide them and we want to
23 be able to train them as close to the cut-over as
24 possible so that that education sinks in as effective
25 as we can make it. Given the critical nature of this
effort, we are looking to-- when we lock down the

3 specific day when we're going to cut over, we're
4 going to come back and say, okay, let's-- when do we
5 plan to retrain everyone that needs to be trained to
6 use the system.

7 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: How many people
8 have been trained thus far?

9 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I'm going to let
10 PD comment on that.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: Over 1,200.

12 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Over 1,200, and do
13 you anticipate that the volume of calls will
14 significantly increase or decrease for Text-to-911?
15 Being that individuals will be able to upload video
16 and pictures, and so do you anticipate we'll see an
17 increase in volume?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CHERNYAVSKY: I think
19 it's hard to say at this point, but we're certainly--
20 the way the system is being constructed, it'll--
21 we'll certainly be prepared for an increase if that
22 increase was to--

23 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: [interposing] And
24 have we looked to other cities? So, I know it's been
25 mentioned Rockland and other counties and cities have
implemented this. Have we spoken to any of those

2 other cities to get their experience, to gauge their
3 experience and to find out perhaps what may have been
4 some of their difficulties and perhaps what, you
5 know, their call-takers have incurred?

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, as part of the
7 Next Generation 911, we spoke to a number of other
8 municipalities, and I'll follow-up with what we
9 learned about their volume increases or volume
10 changes as a result of implementing Next Gen.

11 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: In direct text I'm
12 talking about.

13 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I'm sorry?

14 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: So, you've spoken
15 to them on direct text if you're about to implement
16 it next summer as you said. So you've already had
17 conversations with them or no?

18 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: We-- so when we
19 met with them, we asked them questions regarding the
20 Next Generation products, and therefore, we actually
21 asked questions about what they've experienced so we
22 can infer some of the-- you know, some of the things
23 that they experienced relative to getting text. With
24 Next Generation we should be able to try to draw some
25 conclusions on what that experience will be for us

3 when we do Text-to-911, and that's what I want to
4 follow up with.

5 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: And one of the
6 things, because I did actually visit PSAC2 in the
7 Bronx, and a lot of those, the workers in there work
8 a lot of overtime. It's a significant amount of
9 overtime. There's single mothers, predominantly
10 people of color, and you know, I'm worried are we
11 going to hire up more people? Is there an
12 opportunity here to ensure that if we're going to see
13 a significant increase in volume that those workers
14 are treated with the dignity and respect that they
15 deserve? I don't know if there's been any
16 conversations with the locals at DC37 as well in
17 advance of this technology coming out to make sure
18 that their concerns are certainly being heard as
19 well? And I have not spoken to them yet, but I'm just
20 going back to my experience in visiting PSAC2 and
21 hearing some of the challenges that many of the
22 workers incur on a daily basis there. So, I just
23 wanted to know, are you speaking to the workers?

24 RACHEL LAISERIN: Chief Napolitano, the
25 Commanding Officer of the Communications Division is
going to come up.

2 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Okay.

3 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: Good afternoon.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chief, do you swear
5 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
6 the truth before this committee and answer all
7 questions to the best of your ability?

8 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: I do.

9 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Yeah, so if you
10 could just go through.

11 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: Sure. We speak with
12 DC37 quite often, and working with the Council in the
13 past as Commissioner Tisch mentioned earlier, we
14 increased the headcount in the last several years 14
15 percent. So we want from 1,400 PCTs, supervisors and
16 principals to 1,600, which has been obviously a huge
17 improvement. We've also requested more personnel in
18 regards to this, and they did provide us with
19 additional personnel. So we have been--

20 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: [interposing] How
21 much extra personnel?

22 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: The 200 total.

23 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Okay.

24 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: The 200 total, and
25 we've recently asked for more personnel with-- it's

3 unrelated to Text-to-911, but some of the other items
4 we have going on, and we're going to increase the
5 headcount in total, so that'll help us. Sorry if I
6 confused you on that. Overtime this year, fiscal
7 year, we're down actually this year. So since the
8 beginning of July we've turned the corner. We're
9 cutting overtime and we've been going in the right
10 direction.

11 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: And transportation
12 was a big issue when I visited your site as well. A
13 lot of the workers there can't get to the train
14 station in the winter. So have we made any progress
15 on the transportation issue?

16 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: I believe we have, and
17 the way we have addressed that is we've done a
18 compressed tour where they work three days a week.
19 We recently expanded that to 260 individuals. It was
20 60 not too long ago. We recently expanded to 260,
21 and you may be wondering, well how does that address
22 the transportation issue, but now they're only
23 driving back and forth or using mass transportation
24 three times a week. So, as we expand that through
25 the Mayor's Office and through the NYPD, we believe
that that'll really help the individual PCTs.

3 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: And we talked about
4 a shuttle at some point. Has there been any-- and I
5 know this is off-subject a little bit, but I'm just
6 thinking of individuals who are going to get more
7 volume and have certainly a lot more stress.

8 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: Yes. We've recently
9 finished a survey conducted to address how helpful
10 and how beneficial a shuttle would be. It was
11 overwhelmingly positive that it would be helpful. We
12 submitted that to the Mayor's Office.

13 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Okay.

14 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: I know they're looking
15 into that, the possibility.

16 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Alrighty, and let
17 me just get back to the question I had. So you said
18 you trained how many individuals?

19 CHIEF NAPOLITANO: We trained-- it was
20 almost 1,300.

21 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Alright, so since
22 we trained 1,300. When can you-- give us a date
23 today on when will this system be up, up and running,
24 this Text-to-911?
25

2 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, we're
3 targeting to go live with Text-to-911 this coming
4 summer.

5 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: What does that
6 mean in terms of--

7 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] We
8 are targeting to see if we can lock and load to go
9 live on or around June of this coming summer. That
10 is all going to be dependent on our ability to
11 completely pass all of the tests that we are working
12 with our agency partners to ensure that those tests
13 are completed with 100 percent success. We cannot go
14 live unless the system works correctly, and unless--

15 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: [interposing] And
16 when will you start testing?

17 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: We are currently
18 testing as we speak.

19 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: So it's going to
20 take you six months you would say?

21 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: It's going to take
22 us a better part of the six months to verify and
23 react, not only verify that the tests are completed
24 successfully, but then react to any test that is not
25 completely successfully. Any defects need to be

3 corrected, and then the entire system needs to be
4 retested.

5 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Okay. I want to
6 thank you, Chair. I guess the last question I would
7 have is how is the-- You going to get the word out to
8 the public on this? Will there be campaigns? Will
9 there be posters and literature put out there and
10 certainly to--

11 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] We
12 can get more details to you on that, but the DoITT
13 External Affairs Team is working on a communication
14 plan that obviously will be reviewed with the partner
15 agencies and with others to make sure that the plan
16 is approved before we begin the communication
17 externally.

18 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Okay, so June
19 2020, okay, which means August 2020. We're going to
20 say August 2020 is the--

21 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: [interposing] The
22 summer of 2020.

23 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: It's been a summer
24 for four years, but okay. God bless you all. Thank
25 you, Chairs.

2 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. Before I
3 introduce Council Member Borelli, I just have a
4 question to follow up on that. The structure, you
5 said you trained 1,300 911 operators for Text-to-911.
6 How is the structure going to-- so an operator will
7 handle both voice and text, or just you'll have
8 operators just handling text?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: On any given
10 tour there will be operator or call-taker assigned--
11 call-takers assigned just to text or just to voice.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Text, okay. Alright,
13 so and-- so you plan to train more, but will there
14 be-- and like you mentioned about outreach to the
15 public, will you educate the public on the format of
16 texting? That means who, what, when, where, how,
17 that kind of thing. Will there be a format that's
18 going to be recommended?

19 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Yeah, the
20 communication plan that we're putting together will
21 include information on how the public should interact
22 with us, and obviously we're going to review that
23 with advocates and people who have expertise on how
24 to make sure that that message gets out and it's very
25

3 clear to the intended recipients how they should
4 interact with us.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, Councilman
6 Borelli?

7 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Thank you. The now
8 targeted date for Text-to-911 is June of 2020. Was
9 that the original target date when the first contract
10 was signed?

11 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: No.

12 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: What happened
13 between now and then and what were some of the
14 problems with the vendor or whoever meeting the goals
15 of the contracts?

16 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So there were a
17 number of problems that the project ran into that had
18 to be addressed so that we could achieve the high
19 standards for delivering the project. The two
20 problems that I would share with you that I've
21 observed since joining the DoITT team. In late 2018
22 when we were doing cyber security testing we
23 discovered that the system had some issues relative
24 to dealing with denial of service attacks, and we
25 also discovered a problem with one of our key modules
which actually resulted from some of the testing, and

2 these were major issues that we have been working
3 with the vendor and are currently testing to see if
4 the solutions to these two problems are correct, and
5 whether the solution to these two problems will be
6 able to pass the testing that we're currently doing.

7 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: So, the major
8 issues, did they-- was there an impact on time and
9 cost?

10 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Is the vendor
12 that's operating the Text-to-911 system, are they the
13 current vendor that's in procurement for the Next Gen
14 911 system.

15 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I'm going to allow
16 Rachel to respond to that question, Councilman.

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: Because
18 we're in active procurement we can't really comment
19 on who is being evaluated for Next Gen 911 right now.

20 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: The-- why can't
21 you?

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: Because
23 it's a closed procurement process. We're still
24 evaluating, and we don't want to impact the results.

3 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Was the-- how many
4 vendors are you currently negotiating with for the
5 Next Gen 911 system?

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So,
7 again, I can't really comment on that because we're
8 in active procurement, but I just will remind you
9 there are three separate classes in that RFP, all of
10 which are being evaluated right now.

11 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Can you say
12 definitively that the contractor that had a problem
13 delivering the existing Text-to-911 contract to which
14 there were problems in terms of cost and time will
15 not be the person getting the far more lucrative and
16 larger contract to deliver Next Generation 911?

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So,
18 again, I can't comment on current procurement and who
19 we're evaluating.

20 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Is the-- so looking
21 at the RFP, specifically Section 5A dealing with the
22 evaluation procedures, Section 5A states that
23 basically if the vendor doesn't meet the requirements
24 set out they'll either be initially labeled
25 responsive or nonresponsive, and if the company
doesn't meet certain requirements set out by another

3 Section 4B, would they be deemed nonresponsive at the
4 outset?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So, I
6 don't have the RFP in front of me, but in general,
7 yeah, the first step is a responsive determination,
8 and we've already passed that point in the process.

9 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: So, you're
10 confident in saying that all the proposals that met
11 the requirements have been deemed responsive and
12 moved onto the next stage?

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: That's
14 correct.

15 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Just looking at
16 the-- just look at the, again, RFP. Main part says
17 the agency goals and objectives is to replace two DMS
18 100 tandem switches and all associated network
19 facilities that are currently in service supporting
20 emergency 911 call delivery with standards compliant,
21 Next Gen 911, ESI Net, and core services. That would
22 be a specific requirement that a vendor would have to
23 meet?

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So, I
25 mean, that's a description of one of the classes.

CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Sure.

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So,
4 yeah, there was a lot more detail requirements in
5 RFP, as you can read.

6 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Right, but
7 replacing the switches was fundamental to answering
8 the RFP and being responsive.

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN:
10 Correct.

11 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: So, in order to be
12 considered responsive, the bid had to include the
13 cost of replacing two tandem switches.

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: Yeah,
15 as laid out in the RFP, that would be correct.

16 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Section 4B6 states
17 that the city requires five years audited financial
18 reports for any contractors and subcontractors. Did
19 the vendor now operating in stage one, are they-- did
20 they comply at the outset and were deemed responsive
21 to that requirement?

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: I'm not
23 sure I actually understand the question.

24 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Section 4B6, it
25 states the city requires five years audited financial
reports, including such reports from subcontractors

3 where subcontractor's portion of the total contract
4 cost is valued at one million or more. That's on
5 page 107. So, all of the proposal that were deemed
6 responsive to this RFP had those attachments?

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN:

8 Correct, and we would evaluate their financial
9 stability.

10 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Was any bidder to
11 the contract able to amend their bid after being
12 deemed responsive or nonresponsive.

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: I mean,
14 I can't speak to the details, but in general, no,
15 they're not allowed to change their bids unless they
16 withdraw.

17 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Okay, thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, more
19 questions. Council Member Gibson?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Chair
21 Holden. Good afternoon and thank you Chair Borelli
22 and Chair Richards. Good afternoon everyone. Thank
23 you for being here and really giving us a greater
24 understanding of some of the work that's been done,
25 the progress made, challenges that were made, and
obviously how we can collaboratively work together to

3 get Next Gen 911 up and running. So, I think I have
4 an understanding of what's been happening over the
5 last several years. I was one of the sponsors of the
6 legislation that called for DoITT to conduct a study
7 initially to look at what a Text 911 mechanism would
8 look like and understanding, you know, there are
9 thousands of calls that come into the 911 system
10 every single day. I've had the opportunity on more
11 than one occasion to visit the center at Metro Tech
12 [sic]. I visited PSAC2. So I really understand the
13 day-to-day operations of the 911 system, and so all
14 credit first and foremost to the agencies, but even
15 more credit to the 911 call-takers. These call-
16 takers do not get a lot of credit. They are under
17 the radar. You never see them, but they are working
18 every single day, and a majority of these 911 call-
19 takers are women and women of color, and I appreciate
20 the work they do, and simply because I was there and
21 I sat with a call-taker. I sat with a dispatcher. I
22 went to EMS. I went to FDNY to see the full
23 operation. So one thing I want to make sure we go on
24 record and understanding the PSAC2 center when we did
25 open that, there were a lot of hitches with
transportation to get to the Hutchison Metro Center.

3 The BX24 was extended in terms of the hours of
4 operation so that you are able to travel. There is
5 no immediate train station nearby, but the BX24 is up
6 and running. New York City Transit agreed to do
7 that. And then obviously, looking at capacity on
8 parking and other measures is still an ongoing
9 conversation. So, I wanted to just understand in
10 terms of what you've already done, what DoITT has
11 already done, what NYPD has already done to look at
12 the other localities and jurisdictions here. Even
13 before you go out of New York State, there are other
14 jurisdictions, Upstate New York and some of our
15 smaller counties where texting to 911 has been
16 implemented and has seen success, videos, imaging,
17 texting, and really making sure for me this is about
18 a choice and about an option. For those that are
19 able to call 911, we obviously encourage them to do
20 that through a voice mechanism, but for others that
21 are not able to, I look at this as really option, and
22 so I understand it's an enormous undertaking. So I
23 want to understand what have you already learned in
24 terms of how other localities upstate are doing this,
25 and obviously because it's New York City, 27,000
calls a day, it's going to be a really enormous

2 transition. What have you learned and how can we as a
3 Council be supportive over the next several months to
4 get us to an actual implementation in June of next
5 year?

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, let me start.
7 Since I joined DoITT I've reviewed the material
8 relative to the Next Generation 911 visits. I can't
9 say that I can speak intelligently about what's going
10 on in other agencies, in other localities other than
11 New York City. so, let me follow up to understand
12 what lessons can we learn from some of our closer
13 neighbors that have already implemented Text-to-911
14 and get back to you with a response to your valid
15 question.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. Has there
17 been a working group formed? I'm sure-- other
18 colleagues have talked about different advocates and
19 stakeholders that should be or are probably already a
20 part of the conversation. So do you actually have a
21 working group or an advisory board? What has been
22 formed since we as a Council last talked about this
23 that you could speak to where there are other
24 advocates included in the implementation?

3 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: So, I know that
4 there is a state 911, you know, working group.
5 Again, let me get back to you with what is that
6 group, what do they do, and what have learned from
7 them.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. My last
9 question, and I'm thankful for the Chairs and having
10 this hearing today, and what I really appreciate when
11 we have these hearings is that we let the agencies
12 know what the topic is and we try to give as much
13 information and detail as much as we can, but I also
14 appreciate as Council Member representing the Bronx
15 where PSAC2 is located, that we try to have as much
16 concrete information as we can. So we've been
17 talking about Next Gen 911 for a few years now. This
18 isn't something that we just started talking about,
19 and as Chair Borelli mentioned, in terms of the
20 implementation that's been pushed back to June of
21 2020, this is not new, and so I guess I'm hoping and
22 was hoping to come into this hearing to actually have
23 some more answers from the agencies in terms of what
24 has been done, what challenges remain and how we get
25 to June of 2020. And so the final question I'm going
to ask, and there will be a lot of follow-up from the

3 Council with all of the agencies, is the capacity.

4 Today, I believe we have a little over 1,200 911
5 call-takers that handle 27,000 calls every single day
6 no matter what the weather is doesn't matter. I want
7 to understand capacity on the staff side. Asking our
8 call-takers to undertake this new transition and to
9 be able to adjust to that, I want to make sure that
10 we are fully prepared. If we need to talk about
11 staffing and other measures that should be put in
12 place before June of 2020, then we need to have this
13 conversation when the budget process starts in
14 January. What I do not want to happen is we move
15 forward on getting to a June implementation and then
16 we figure out or think that we have to focus on
17 staff. I want to focus on staff now, because I know
18 how hard they work, and I know during, you know,
19 inclement weather there's overtime and all sorts of
20 things. When we have natural disasters they respond
21 no matter what. And I remember when we opened PSAC2
22 there was a huge transition and a lot of call-takers
23 didn't want to travel to the Bronx. A lot of Bronx
24 call-takers traveled to Brooklyn so it was easier for
25 them, but I want to really make sure that as we talk
about June's implementation, whatever we can do as

3 the Council to be supportive of the staff, the
4 hundreds and hundreds of call-takers that are working
5 right now, that we don't lose sight of their value
6 and the work they're doing and also this transition
7 and how that will impact our capacity in terms of
8 staffing.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: We agree.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, I want to
11 get it done. I always talk about my call-takers, as
12 you know.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: I know you
14 do.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: As you know. So,
16 I do want to make sure that we do take care of them.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TISCH: Absolutely.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. Thank you
19 Chairs.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you, Council
21 Member. I have a question on the budget. According
22 to the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Commitment Plan,
23 there is an added 1.6 million to improve the
24 resiliency of the PSAC2 facilities' mechanical,
25 electrical, and plumbing infrastructure. Do you
anticipate an increase in that?

3 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: I'm going to have
4 John Winker who manages our budget regarding the
5 PSAC2 respond to your question.

6 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay.

7 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WINKER: Good
8 afternoon. This is John Winker. As far as the
9 increase, that is for resiliency and some of the-- is
10 it on? That is for increase in some of the single--
11 to address some of the single points of failure that
12 existed within the PSAC2 facility which would descope
13 [sic] years ago when they did the-- I guess the
14 evaluation that went on up there. There will
15 probably be some additional costs down the road.
16 Those numbers are still being determined by DCAS.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: While you're here, I
18 want to ask a question on a contract that we came
19 across on the Comptroller's website. The vendor is
20 Vesta Solutions, and the contract was registered on
21 June 21st, 2017, nine days after the RFP was issued.
22 Originally it was 28 million set aside. Now it's 41
23 million with 18 modifications. The last modification
24 is dated October 29th, 2019. What is this contract?
25 Maybe-- do you know that? Okay. What is it for? We
don't know what that is.

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So, that's
3 our contract that supports the call handling system
4 for 911, and it's basically a maintenance contract on
5 there, but some of the costs for Text-to-911 have
6 been added to that contract.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, so it's not
8 for anything on Text-to-911. It's not anything on
9 that?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: No, there
11 have been some costs for Text-to-911 that have been
12 added to that contract.

13 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LAISERIN: So, some
15 of those amendments are related to Text-to-911.

16 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Alright, just a
17 cyber security question. Would call and text be part
18 of the same software, or would they run on separate
19 systems?

20 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: In Next Generation
21 911 they will be part of the same, and when we
22 implement Text-to-911, there will be-- you could
23 think of them as separate given that we're still
24 going to be handling the voice calls over the legacy
25 system.

3 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay. Okay. Any
4 other questions? Okay, thank you so much panel.
5 Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER FORMOSO: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: That wasn't too bad,
8 right? Our next panel, Katherine Bouton, Mark
9 Freedmen-- it's hard to read some of the handwriting.
10 Mark Fredman [sp?], Lucy Joseph Smith, Christopher
11 Schuyler. Is anybody from the Administration going
12 to stay and listen to the panel? I'll repeat. Is
13 anybody from the Administration going to stay and
14 listen to the advocates or panelists? Do we have
15 anybody from the Administration staying? Well, I
16 guess not. I guess nobody raised their hand.
17 Katherine, you want to--

18 KATHERINE BOUTON: Okay. I'm Katherine
19 Bouton. I'm the President of the Hearing Loss
20 Association of New York. We represent the oral,
21 deaf, and hard-of-hearing. We are very large
22 proportion of that 208,000 people that were mentioned
23 earlier. Basically, the first panel expressed our
24 needs and wishes very clearly, and so I'm not going
25 to repeat them. I want to thank them very much for
what they said. It was terrific. The people with

3 hearing loss, even though we may speak normally and
4 even though we may wear a hearing aid and a cochlear
5 implant, nevertheless cannot really hear on
6 telephones. We can't hear on text phones. We can't
7 hear in the street, and so we are in essentially the
8 same position. The one other point I want to make
9 that wasn't made is that of those 208,000 people, a
10 great majority are the elderly, and I haven't heard
11 the elderly mentioned in this hearing, but I think
12 that they are a demographic group that probably
13 relies even more than the rest of us on 911, and they
14 for the most part are pretty good with text. So I
15 would like to include them as an interest group.
16 Thank you very much for giving me a chance to talk
17 and for hearing your very, very good questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you.

19 MARK FLIEDNER: How about that? Hello,
20 I'm Mark Fliedner. I am the Director of what's
21 called the PAIR Program, Protection and Advocacy for
22 Individuals Rights for Disability Rights New York.
23 We are the protection and advocacy system for people
24 with disabilities, all kinds of disabilities for the
25 state of New York. Nearly three years ago my
particular program at DRNY was compelled to file suit

2 against the City of New York, the New York City
3 Police Department, requiring that these entities
4 provide then direct, immediate, and equal access to
5 emergency services through the activation of Text-to-
6 911 technology. It is-- it was and it is our
7 position that failure to do so violates Title II of
8 the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504
9 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and then of
10 course, state and New York City human rights laws.

11 But I'm compelled to deviate from what I had prepared
12 for you and address some of the things that we just
13 heard about the reality of what's happened since the
14 Council and our entity took this action to compel
15 Text-to-911. You know, at a recent status conference
16 before the judge in the Eastern District, Counsel for
17 the City made some statements that I think all of us
18 in this room would agree are true, and they were--
19 and I quote, "That it's a matter of life and death
20 for New Yorkers, and that with lives on the line
21 every second matters." Well, I think everybody who
22 was sitting here the entire time, and that
23 unfortunately does not include the administrators who
24 just walked out of this hall, would have to agree
25 that the conversation about procurements and the need

3 to re-train people who have already been-- money has
4 been spent to train them for something that's not
5 going to happen for a long time in the future, and
6 all of these different things. They seem to be
7 speaking about a pace of bureaucracy that we all know
8 exists but that is not commensurate with the need,
9 the emergent need, for this action to take place. We
10 heard about a few things that were of great concern
11 in the sense that they sounded like excuses, but
12 they're not valid. New York City, of course, and
13 certainly the NYPD has to be concerned about cyber
14 security risks, but when New York City Police
15 Department started talking about Text-to-911 all
16 those years ago, we were aware of the cyber security
17 risks. They may have morphed and they may have
18 changed, but it was always built into the project
19 that they had to address, and the same thing is true
20 of the conversion to digital. So all of these things
21 that are kind of used as reasons why we have delays
22 here simply are things that should have been
23 addressed starting in 2015. And you know, the plain
24 and simple fact is all of us have some kind of a
25 boss, and sometimes the boss needs to look at us and
say, "You know what, the team before you dragged

3 their feet, and the team before you took some
4 missteps." Like, for example, respectfully, training
5 people-- almost 1,300 folks who are going to have to
6 be re-trained because the interim process is not
7 scheduled to go into place until a targeted date of
8 next summer. These are things that are of real
9 concern. You know, when the Deputy Commissioner said
10 to us, and I'm sure she does take great pride in the
11 fact that response times have rapid-- have decreased
12 significantly. I thought to myself that is awesome,
13 and that is really good news for me, because I can
14 pick up the phone and I can dial 911 and I can talk
15 to the person on the other end of the phone, but
16 there are people in this room who cannot be moved by
17 the decrease in response times because they are still
18 left with no ability to communicate at all. So, the
19 reality is that when somebody comes in, usually a
20 boss, and says, "Team, we've got to play catch-up.
21 We've got to jumpstart this." The response and what
22 we do in the next weeks and months needs to be
23 commensurate with the gravity of the project that
24 we've undertaken. I'm afraid, as the judge and we
25 wait for an answer, that this body may in fact be one
of the most compelling forums for somebody to say

3 it's time to jumpstart this. I won't go over all the
4 delays that we've all heard in court and elsewhere,
5 but every single day that these folks wait is a day
6 that they are at risk. You know, at DRNY we're
7 spending a lot of time now talking at emergency
8 preparedness in relation to weather emergencies, for
9 example. There's going to be another Sandy in New
10 York City. There is. we know it's coming, and those
11 of us who sat through this entire process, and even
12 those of us that were here for some of the process
13 today are either going to look back and think of
14 ourselves shame on us because we didn't jumpstart the
15 process based on what we've heard today or take some
16 pride in the fact that we did everything we could to
17 make sure that the people who cannot communicate at
18 all by 911 today were in fact being protected from a
19 risk of life and a loss of life. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you very much,
21 Mark. Thank you so much.

22 CHRISTOPHER SCHUYLER: Good afternoon.
23 Good? Good? Good afternoon, Chairs and Council
24 Members. My name is Christopher Schuyler. I'm a
25 Senior Staff Attorney at New York Lawyers for the
Public Interest Disability Justice Program. I'm also

3 a person who stutters and an active member of the
4 National Stuttering Association. For people for who
5 stutter and those with other speech disabilities, the
6 option to text 911 is more than a matter of
7 convenience, it's absolutely essential. Stuttering
8 affects one percent of the general population, and
9 there are many thousands of New York City residents
10 who stutter, not to mention scores of others who work
11 in the City and visit daily. While the root cause of
12 stuttering is believed to be neurological and
13 physiological, rather than psychological, it can be
14 triggered by emotional or situational factors. For
15 instance, some people who stutter experience
16 increased difficulty speaking in situations when time
17 is of the essence. It's also not uncommon for people
18 who stutter to experience heightened difficulties
19 when referring to proper nouns, such as saying names
20 and places. These communication challenges, while
21 inconvenient in everyday life, can be life-
22 threatening in a true emergency. Text-to-911 is
23 imperative for people who stutter because it would
24 remove very real risks of miscommunication. When
25 reporting an emergency, specific details are
important, such as location, specific individuals

3 involved, and what is happening. If a person who
4 stutters is unable to verbalize these details, they
5 may not receive the assistance they need in a timely
6 manner. Additionally, operators who are relatively
7 unexposed to stuttering are liable to misunderstand a
8 person who stutters. Accuracy and clarity in
9 communications is of paramount importance during an
10 emergency. Text-to-911 would alleviate these major
11 and unnecessary barriers to effective communication.
12 Notably, the benefits of Text-to-911, including
13 increased accuracy and clarity in crucial moments,
14 are benefits shared by groups outside of those with
15 speech disabilities. The increased accuracy and
16 clarity provided by Text-to-911 would also benefit
17 the deaf and hard of hearing communities, visitors
18 with limited English proficiency, as well as
19 individuals who need to text subtly, such as those
20 experiencing domestic violence and active shooter
21 situations, as my colleague, Maureen Belluscio
22 testified to in greater detail earlier today. Text-
23 to-911 has been implemented by hundreds of call
24 centers around the country. By failing to implement
25 Text-to-911, New York City is placing countless
people at risk every day. New York City must

2 implement Tex-to-911 without further delay. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you.

5 LUCY JOSEPH SMITH: Greetings

6 Chairpersons and Council Members. My name is Lucy

7 Joseph Smith. I'm a member of the Science and Law

8 Committee of the New York City Bar. I'm a recent

9 graduate from Brooklyn Law School, and I have

10 recently passed the bar. I am waiting admission as

11 an attorney. I was requested to speak here today

12 based upon my unique experiences with 911 as a

13 disabled person. Back in 2000, we were stationed in

14 Roda [sic] Spain [sic]. It was late at night. My

15 husband was deployed. I suddenly couldn't breathe.

16 I had severe pain in my chest, resembled the

17 description that my dad gave me of a heart attack, so

18 that really scared me. I didn't know why this was

19 happening. I tried to get to the phone. I wasn't

20 able to. My dog knocked the phone off the counter.

21 I called the base 911, and the only thing I got out

22 before I lost the ability to speak because I couldn't

23 breathe was the number of the street address, not

24 even the street, but luckily it was a small base in

25 Spain. The number was all they needed. By the time

3 that help arrived I was blue. I did not-- I wasn't
4 conscious. I was blue completely. I'm alive here
5 today because in that instance all they needed was
6 the numbers. 911 services are an important part of
7 city life. When you call, you hope the person on the
8 other end of the line understands you. When seconds
9 count, do you really want your words relayed through
10 a translator? What about people who aren't deaf or
11 don't know sign language. Not everyone who is deaf
12 learns it, but they still cannot speak. Someone with
13 high anxiety who can barely type out 911 to make the
14 call, talking is just too much. What about somebody
15 in anaphylactic shock? Their throat is closed up.
16 They can't breathe. There's no way they can talk to
17 a 911 operator, or someone like me who has arthritis
18 in their rib cage, and when it gets too much, I can't
19 breathe. If you can't breathe, you can't speak.
20 Texting 911 is normal evolution of the service, and
21 it will help people beyond the community people think
22 of when they think of texting 911. Much like
23 elevators and subway stations, texting 911 is not
24 something that can just benefit the people who must
25 have it, those who cannot speak. It will also benefit
others who struggle in medical emergencies for

3 whatever reason. There are other reasons why texting
4 might be preferred beyond medical. School shootings
5 come to mind. My home state is Florida. Quietly
6 texting on a muted phone is a lot less likely to get
7 the attention of a shooter when speaking to 911. The
8 county I was born in, Escambia County, has texting to
9 911. The county my son currently lives in in
10 Florida, Santa Rosa County, has texting to 911.

11 Someone thrown in the trunk of a car texting for help
12 is less likely to get the attention of kidnappers.

13 The lady whose husband is threatening her, or vis
14 versa, who is trying not to anger them any further
15 until help can arrive, can covertly text 911. Just
16 like elevators benefit not only wheelchair users and
17 people who cannot take the stairs, elevators also
18 benefit the wider society by allowing safe travel for
19 bikes, strollers, and people who have just had a long
20 day. Text will aid more people than we can imagine
21 in this little meeting on the subject. City 911

22 needs an upgrade beyond just texting, though. I have
23 required medical emergency services on more than one
24 occasion. Every time I inform the operator that I am
25 in a power wheelchair, and once police and medical
person will arrive, I get told every time that they

3 will take my chair to the police precinct where I can
4 pick it up. It is only after refusing transport
5 until they can get the wheelchair to the hospital as
6 well, do they finally relent and take my wheelchair
7 to the hospital. I will as what am I supposed to do,
8 crawl to the precinct? That's my legs. I get shamed
9 for it, which is unacceptable. "Don't you have
10 anyone who can pick it up for you?" I want to say,
11 "No, dumbass, I am the only person from my family who
12 lives here." I don't, but I want to. No other New
13 Yorker would be shamed for coming to New York alone
14 to create a new life for themselves, and I shouldn't
15 have to be subjected to that either. Just because I
16 am disabled doesn't mean I have any less right to
17 make my life where I see fit, and I love this city.
18 My wheelchair is my legs legally and emotionally.
19 So, 911 definitely can use some improvements. I
20 believe text 911 is a necessary and logical evolution
21 of 911. I also believe 911 needs improvements on
22 handling solo wheelchair users. It is not our
23 friend's jobs to go get our legs from the precinct
24 when there has been an emergency. You would not
25 expect any other person's legs to go anywhere but

3 where they are going. Wheelchair users are no
4 different.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: wow, thank you so
6 much for the compelling testimony. It's amazing
7 panel right here. I just wish the Administration
8 stayed for it, but shame on them, and thank you all.
9 You're really helping the movement, and we should
10 have-- we should have had Text 911 years ago, you're
11 right, and the fact that we don't is an embarrassment
12 to this Administration, but you actually will help.
13 Hopefully, we'll get this by the summer, but you're
14 right. You're all right that we should have it
15 tomorrow. We should have had it yesterday, and it is
16 life-threatening as you testified that it could have
17 been your life, but thankfully they had it in Spain.
18 But I want to thank you all, and if you have anything
19 else to add to this tremendous testimony, we really
20 appreciate it. Thank you. Our final panel, Greg, I
21 think it's Witman, Waltman, Bruce Jacobs, Kelly Grace
22 Price, Albert Fox Conn [sp?], and Dennis Martinez.
23 Are they here? Anybody else here to testify? Okay,
24 so we had-- Okay, Dennis. Okay. Thank you. Who
25 wants to start? Okay.

3 KELLY GRACE PRICE: Thank you. I'll
4 start. I'm Kelly Grace Price from Close Rosie's, and
5 I've addressed many members of the City Council at
6 many different hearings about the failures of the New
7 York City NYPD's 911 system to address the needs of
8 sexual violence and domestic violence survivors like
9 myself. I have run the data and I've presented it in
10 various different testimonies to you, to all of you,
11 and to your colleagues showing you that 72 percent of
12 all women, girls, trans, intersex, and gender-
13 nonconforming persons that end up at the Rose M.
14 Singer Center, the all-female jail on Rikers Island,
15 walked free over the last five years. Seventy-six
16 percent of us, sorry, have walked free without
17 conviction or taking a plea. What this means is that
18 we're being over-policed, and part of that over-
19 policing is the way that we're handled by the 911
20 system. now, I heard testimony from NYPD brass less
21 than an hour ago I feel like, that they had not had
22 any kind of outreach or communication with domestic
23 violence and sexual violence associations, like the
24 Downstate Coalition to Prevent Sexual Violence, which
25 as you know is a very important body, but I think
that they weren't telling the truth. And of course,

3 I will submit my testimony that I already prepared,
4 but I want to addend it a little bit. I want to show
5 you a photograph right here of Jessica Tisch's
6 mother, Meryl Tisch [sp?], standing next to Linda
7 Kroll. We all know that Kroll owns K2
8 Investigations. These two families, the Tisch family
9 and the Kroll family have been tight for decades.
10 This is a well-known fact. Remember that everyone's
11 favorite nemesis prosecutor next to Cy Vance, Linda
12 Fairstien [sp?], has been a senior advisor at Kroll
13 Technologies since 2013 when she left the District
14 Attorney's Office in her full capacity as head of the
15 Special Victim's Unit, and her specific mandate has
16 been to tailor the NYPD 911 system for the needs of
17 domestic violence and sexual violence survivors.
18 She's been there working diligently behind the scenes
19 to spread her black magic, and the off-shoot of it is
20 that a lot of domestic violence and sexual violence
21 survivors like myself, trafficking survivors as well,
22 have been over-criminalized because of whatever kind
23 of information is being fed into that 911 system
24 about us, has no kind of vetting from experts in
25 sexual violence or domestic violence aside from Linda
Fairstien. So, these are things that I would really

3 like the Council to address closely. I do agree that
4 we need Text-to-911, but before we go full-throttle
5 into the Next Gen-- into embracing it, and I have no
6 idea how they think that they're going to do this
7 before August. I mean, they need to do test
8 environments and do bug modifications. We all know
9 this is never going to happen, but there are a lot of
10 things that still haven't happened. We need all of
11 these systems to have oversight. And as you know, I
12 have been involved in litigation up until March of
13 this year. It was pro-se litigation in the Southern
14 District against the NYPD and Cyrus Vance and the
15 City of New York to find out exactly what is in my
16 911 record, because still to this day whenever I call
17 911 as a survivor of sexual violence and trafficking
18 who was thrown egregiously on Rikers Island as an
19 innocent survivor, I want to know what's in my file.
20 I now have the most esteemed law firm the world,
21 Cravath, Swaine, and Moore, representing me, and I
22 passed my 12B6, which means I now get discovery from
23 the City, and the City has refused to turn over all
24 of the records about me that they have hidden away in
25 Palentir [sp?] or Cobalt, or the 911 system. So,
even with an order from the Federal Court and a

3 seated Federal Court Judge in the Southern District,
4 the NYPD isn't giving us any of this information, and
5 I keep begging you. We need oversight. We need to
6 know what kind of McCarthy-istic practices are
7 forming the way that the NYPD reacts to us as
8 survivors of sexual violence. And please be careful
9 when the NYPD tells you, when they come back to you
10 and they say we have reached out to domestic violence
11 organizations. Make sure that they're not people
12 paid by Cy Vance's criminal justice initiative grant
13 solely, because those people, as you know, are
14 mouthpieces for the NYPD. They cannot speak out
15 against the people that feed them. Thank you.
16 Again, I will email my testimony. Probably you'll
17 get it by midnight. I'm sure no one will read it by
18 tomorrow, but I of course will include this cute
19 little photograph of Jessica Tisch's mommy with Mr.
20 Kröll, and I want you to think about how these two--
21 I don't want to call them notoriously criminal, but
22 you know, these people have been running the
23 technology infrastructure and lying to us left and
24 right with no oversight, and I'm really tired of no
25 one listening to me about this. The City still
hasn't responded to the Me Too movement. There's

3 been no official response at any level in any
4 capacity and survivors like myself are still being
5 crushed in the grist mill. Thank you for listening
6 to me. I'm a little tired of the sound of my voice.
7 Thank you for the extra minute.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you. We've
9 been joined by Gray Schleck [sp?]. Okay.

10 GRACE: Hello, thank you for having me
11 today. Oh, sure. Thanks. Hello, thank you for
12 having me today. I first would like to acknowledge
13 the panelists who spoke before. My name is Grace,
14 and I am hearing and I identify as an ally for those
15 who are differently abled. I'm 18 years old, and I'm
16 a first-year student at Barnard College of Columbia
17 University. I'm an MJ [sic] Certified Volunteer
18 Emergency Medical Technician, and I've been
19 responding to 911 calls for over two years. And from
20 someone who's been on the other side of the 911 call,
21 I must say that a service like Text-to-911 is so
22 pertinent, and as an 18-year-old and a young person,
23 I would also like to say that Administrations have
24 failed young people who cannot necessarily advocate
25 as a council person, per say, until they qualify for
a certain age to run. So I would like to say that

3 thank you for those who advocate for services like
4 these, because-- and thank you to those panelists who
5 are advocating for services like Text-to-911, because
6 these are pertinent services that need to be brought
7 to areas across the United States and across the
8 world, but especially New York City. And as someone
9 who has been responding to 911 calls as a volunteer
10 EMT, I have to say that these services are extremely
11 important. Thank you for listening.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Thank you, Grace.

13 GREG WALTMAN: Good afternoon. Greg
14 Waltman, I'm representing clean energy company G1
15 Quantum. Along the lines of my colleagues speaking
16 on disability, and she mentioned big data value, big
17 data Ponzi schemes. It's always a tit for tat
18 between the people collecting the data trying to game
19 the system against people that are more
20 disadvantaged, right? Because in their eyes you're
21 just a statistic. And you know, kind of bringing
22 that all together-- sent you guys an email today
23 regarding Jamie Diamond, J.P. Morgan Chase and
24 ongoing issues, Ukraine and this Green New Deal,
25 Ukrainian narratives that seem to perpetuate and
plague the media, and representative like yourselves

3 from getting anything done. I just wanted to bring
4 that to your attention, again, you know, the
5 criminality that, you know, I've outlined in the
6 proper judicial context. I've brought it before you
7 guys. I, you know, explained superior courses of
8 action with respect to energy projects, energy
9 solutions. You know, I've gone from one end of the
10 spectrum from breaking down the criminality to the
11 next, and you know, just trying to be in-step with my
12 colleagues here. It's one thing to be disabled and
13 then need these services, Text-to-911, but it's
14 another thing for value to force you onto disability
15 through improperly formed monopoly and improperly
16 formed bench trial monopolies and different types of
17 legal recourse that just aren't really appropriate
18 against someone like myself or someone here that's
19 able to articulate these types of criminality before
20 you, before a panel, before my colleagues here. So,
21 you know, in parallel with my last testimony
22 regarding Attorney General James, bringing to the
23 attention of her these matters in a criminal context
24 with respect to Andrew Cuomo and making sure that the
25 public gets a fair share, because you know, one of
the issues like I said is these people becoming a

3 statistic. You know, when you have other people that
4 are more advantaged that want to game the system that
5 don't really want to have to deal with anything
6 becomes a trillion dollar value big data Ponzi scheme
7 out of California where maybe it's a little more left
8 than New York, but you know, these legal issues need
9 to be addressed. And you know, when someone puts a
10 good faith effort before you, explains, breaks down
11 the criminality in a very clear, concise way, and
12 time and time again the issue is neglected, you know,
13 are we going to finally address some of the issues
14 that I brought to your attention? I mean, you have
15 fiscal and budgetary gaps, right? You need these
16 solutions to fill these gaps and execute these
17 solutions, but you know, here we're getting to the
18 holidays and we have politicians gambling on the
19 world's series different types of issues at Goldman
20 Sach's. Like, we can't get anything done. You know,
21 where's the finance? You know, I put together
22 superior, you know, bid on solar application the
23 border wall to get that squared away, and then
24 contractually tether that to your type of financial
25 issues here, and we're not getting any progress on
that. I know, I don't-- I don't want to put you on

2 the spot. You're probably not going to say anything
3 like usual, but you know, there's no accountability,
4 and you know, I'm recording each and every one of
5 these testimonies. So, you know, I don't know
6 whether to thank you for your time if it's going to
7 be put to any use.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Again, you have
9 anything to say? Okay, we want to thank the panelist
10 for, again, excellent testimony. And anybody else
11 have anything to add? We want to close the hearing.
12 Thank you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: I just have to
14 thank my committee staff.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON RICHARDS: Casey Addison,
17 Daniel Eddies [sic], thank you for a great job.
18 Thank you.

19 [gavel]

20 CHAIRPERSON HOLDEN: Okay, hearing
21 adjourned. Thank you.

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COMMITTEE ON FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 15, 2019