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COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS 1

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND
ELECTIONS

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December 16, 2019
Start: 11:16 a.m.
Recess: 12:28 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: Karen Koslowitz,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Adrienne E. Adams
Margaret S. Chin
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Vanessa L. Gibson
Corey D. Johnson
Rory I. Lancman
Steven Matteo
Deborah L. Rose
Ritchie J. Torres
Mark Treyger

2 A P P E A R A N C E S

3 Kenneth Knuckles

4 Appointed to serve on the City Planning
Commission

5 Francis Henn

6 Appointed as President of the New York City Tax
Commission

7 Thomas Nichols

8 Appointed to serve on New York City Tax
Commission

9 Christopher Bastardi

10 Appointed to serve on New York City Youth Board

11 Melanie Kravelis

12 Appointed to serve on New York City Youth Board

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1 COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS 3

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [GAVEL] Good morning and
3 welcome to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and
4 Elections. My name is Karen Koslowitz [INAUDIBLE
5 00:59-01:16] Steven Matteo, Council Member Deborah
6 Rose and Council Member Adrienne [INAUDIBLE 1:26-
7 1:45] Chuck Davis Chief Compliance Officer and Andre
8 Johnson Brown, Alicia Vassell[SP?] and Julius
9 Coranda, Investigators.

10 Today, the Rules Committee will consider the
11 nominations of Kenneth Knuckles for reappointment to
12 the City Planning Commission, Thomas Nichols and
13 Francis Henn for appointment to the tax commission
14 and Christopher Bastardi and Melanie Kravelis - I
15 hope I'm pronouncing your names okay, for appointment
16 to the Youth Board.

17 If the Council gives its advice and consent, Mr.
18 Knuckles, a Bronx resident will be reappointed to the
19 City Planning Commission and will serve the remainder
20 of a five year term that expires on June 30, 2020.
21 The Chair receives an annual salary of \$214,413. The
22 member who was designated as Vice Chair receives an
23 annual salary of \$65,271. The other members receive
24 an annual salary of \$54,150.

25

2 Pursuant to the New York City Charter, the City
3 Planning Commission must consist of thirteen members
4 with seven appointments which includes the
5 appointment of the Chair made by the Mayor, one
6 appointment each made by the Public Advocate, and
7 each Borough President. All members except the
8 Chair, are subject to the advice and consent of the
9 Council. According to the Charter, the members
10 should be chosen for their independence, integrity,
11 and civic commitment.

12 CPC members serve for staggered five year terms,
13 except for the Chair, who as Director of Department
14 of City Planning, serves at the pleasure of the
15 Mayor.

16 The CPS member, other than the Chair, are not
17 considered regular city employees and there is no
18 limitation on the number of terms a CPC member may
19 serve. However, CPC members are prohibited from
20 holding any other city office while serving on the
21 CPC.

22 Responsibilities of the CPC has several
23 responsibilities, some of their duties include:
24 Engaging in planning focused on the City's orderly
25 growth, improvement and future development, which

2 involve considerations concerning appropriate
3 resources for housing, business, industry,
4 recreation, and culture; assisting the Mayor and
5 other officials in developing the ten year capital
6 strategy, the four year capital program, as well as
7 the annual Statement of Needs; overseeing and
8 coordinating environmental reviews under the City
9 Environmental Quality Review CEQR, mandated by the
10 states Environmental Conservation Law; every four
11 years, the CPC must also prepare and file a zoning
12 and planning report with the Mayor, the Council, the
13 Public Advocate, the Borough Presidents and the
14 Community Boards.

15 The report should contain their planning policy
16 along with a proposal for implementing that policy,
17 including any associated recommended amendments, if
18 any, to the Zoning Resolution. The report must also
19 include the plans and studies CPC undertook or
20 completed in the previous four years; CPC must review
21 and either approve or deny any City Proposal
22 involving the City's request to make acquisitions for
23 office space and requests for existing buildings for
24 office use.

2 Rules and Standards established by the CPC, the
3 CPC also establishes various rules, some of these
4 rules consist of establishing minimum standards for
5 certifying the Uniform Land Use and Review Procedure,
6 also known as ULURP applications, which includes the
7 creation of a specific time period for pre-
8 certification reviews; establishing criteria
9 associated with the selection of sites for capital
10 projects; establishing minimum standards for the form
11 and content of plans for the development of the City
12 and boroughs and adopting rules that either list
13 major concessions or establishes a procedure for
14 determining whether a concession is defined as a
15 major concession, as it relates to the act of City
16 Agencies granting concessions.

17 I want to welcome the candidates and welcome Mr.
18 Knuckles. It's very nice to see you again. Mr.
19 Knuckles was in charge of DCAS in the 90's for a very
20 long time and did a very great job doing that and
21 would you like to raise your right hand please?

22 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Should I stand?

23 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you swear to tell the truth,
24 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

25 KENNETH KNUCKLES: I do.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Do you wish to make an
3 opening statement?

4 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Yes. Thank you very much and
5 good morning Chair Koslowitz and honorable members of
6 the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.

7 My name is Kenneth Julius Knuckles and I would
8 like to thank you for the opportunity to appear
9 before you today to speak about my nomination to
10 serve on the City Planning Commission.

11 Since my graduation from Law school in 1977,
12 public service has been a focal point of my
13 professional career, specifically in the areas of
14 land use and community development.

15 In 1985, after several years as a city government
16 attorney, I was appointed an Assistant Commissioner
17 at HPD during the Koch Administration. During this
18 period, the city was grappling with the issue of more
19 than 60,000 units of abandoned in rim housing, 40
20 percent of which were located in the Bronx.

21 In 1987, I was appointed Deputy Bronx Borough
22 President by then Borough President Fernando Ferrer.
23 And under his leadership, I worked closely with the
24 Koch Administration to steer a significant portion of
25 \$5 billion that the city had allocated to the most

2 critical areas of the Bronx in order to halt the
3 decline and begin the renewal of my beloved borough.

4 As the Chair kindly indicated, in 1990, I joined
5 the Dinkins Administration as Commissioner of the
6 Department of General Services, now known as DCAS,
7 where a major portion of my responsibility was
8 management of the city's real estate portfolio.

9 Accordingly, in September of 2000, when nominated
10 by Borough President Ferrer to serve on the City
11 Planning Commission, I relished the opportunity to
12 bring to bear the experience and perspective I had
13 garnered during my very roles in city government. I
14 was appointed Vice Chair of the Planning Commission
15 in March of 2002 by Mayor Bloomberg and with the
16 exception of a four month hiatus in 2011, continued
17 in that position until December 6, 2019.

18 I cite this crinology not so much to make the
19 obvious point and that is, I've seen and done a lot
20 during my time in and around city government, but to
21 hopefully underscore my commitment and devotion to
22 the City of New York. I have served on the City
23 Planning Commission under the present and previous
24 mayor's. Always as an independent voice drawing on
25

2 decades of experience in economic and community
3 development.

4 I believe that public service when done honestly
5 and done well, is the highest of endeavors. That is
6 the standard I have always maintained and will
7 continue to seek if I should be so privileged as to
8 be reappointed.

9 Thank you for your time and consideration this
10 morning and I welcome any questions you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Can you please describe
12 how as a member of the City Planning Commission; you
13 balance the city's needs for more affordable housing
14 with concerns in certain neighborhoods that increased
15 development could lead to gentrification?

16 KENNETH KNUCKLES: That is obviously the most
17 pressing issue I think that the City Planning
18 Commission has at the moment. I balance it Chair
19 based on the knowledge that I have that the demand
20 for affordable housing for the most part is coming
21 out of neighborhoods, many of which that have not
22 undergone a major rezoning since 1961.

23 So, when we look at rezoning, we look at a number
24 of criteria. We want to look at proximity to mass
25 transportation. You want to look at the density

2 levels in those neighborhoods, in particularly those
3 neighborhoods that have not undergone rezoning since
4 1961. There is generally a capacity for more
5 density. You want to look at the opportunity for
6 affordability and now under the mandatory
7 inclusionary housing requirement, any time there is
8 an enhancement in terms of FAR or the amount of units
9 that you can build, mandatory inclusionary housing is
10 required.

11 So, my formulation is to look at the particular
12 parcel in question and to evaluate whether or not it
13 is a parcel or a set of parcels that are appropriate
14 for more density and whether or not that parcel, or
15 those parcels are in need of public transportation.
16 Where citizens, particularly citizens of moderate
17 income can travel and I balance those equities and if
18 I think that it's appropriate for a rezoning, I vote
19 accordingly.

20 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, **INUAUDIBLE 17:30-**
21 **17:56]** but at the same time, I'm very concerned about
22 you know, what is going on, I mean, they are taking
23 away businesses and building buildings and it's very
24 concerning to me.

2 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Well, I know that the
3 Department is currently reevaluating the SEQRA
4 document at the moment and particularly looking at
5 impacts around demographics and infrastructure and I
6 think it's appropriate. Obviously, where your going
7 to add large numbers of new residents, there's going
8 to be a proceed impact on schools as well as
9 transportation, as well as businesses.

10 I believe that most of the development that's
11 happening now is mixed use and that there is ground
12 floor retail as well as residential above. So, there
13 also has to be a concern about the ability for local
14 businesses to in many cases, relocate where they
15 might have been displaced into these new properties.

16 So, it's an ongoing balancing test, but I think
17 in order to address what we all know is a pressing
18 issues of affordability, we have to look at
19 opportunities where there is an option to build but
20 build appropriately and not out of scale.

21 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you
22 very, very much and I look forward to working with
23 you.

24 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Thank you.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Any questions? Council
3 Member Rose.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Good morning.

5 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Good morning Councilwoman.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And I'm impressed with your
7 very extensive service to New York City and the fact
8 that you're not a novice at City Planning.

9 Having gone through several major ULURP, I find
10 that the process is quite convoluted. It takes an
11 awful long time. The Council Member winds up engaged
12 in sort of a song and dance with the Administration
13 and the SEQRA addresses like the minimal level. The
14 lowest level at which a standard is excepted and I
15 know I'm not saying this very articulately but in my
16 rezoning, it was found that the negative impact on
17 traffic say, was found at the lower level instead of
18 the realistic level which was highly you know,
19 impactful of the community that was going to receive
20 this new housing.

21 Is there some conversations that process SEQRA
22 and looking at numbers more realistically in terms of
23 the impact that it's going to have on communities?

24 Is there any conversation about the process in which
25 a Council Member has to actually fight with the

2 Administration to put the infrastructure in place
3 that should truly be in place and not minimized?

4 I hope I'm making sense to you.

5 KENNETH KNUCKLES: No, I think the issues that
6 you are raising underscore the need for a
7 reevaluation of SEQRA in a possible and updating of
8 it. I can't go into great detail because the
9 Department is actually doing the analysis, but I
10 would assume that a part of that is certainly
11 outreach to the Land Use unit of the City Council
12 and ultimately there should be an opportunity for
13 Council Members and the City Council to have its
14 input into the formulation of criteria and the data
15 sets around it.

16 So, I think there's a recognition that it's time
17 to revisit the metrics that are currently in SEQRA.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I would appreciate that.
19 Not that I'm looking to go through another ULURP
20 before I leave, but I would appreciate that.

21 And, is there any plans to revisit the affordable
22 housing formula? Is there any plans to revisit the
23 MIH.

24 KENNETH KNUCKLES: MIH, well, that is
25 legislation, which means you know, it emanates from

2 the City Council. So, you will probably know before
3 I do.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: I would just, before I
6 call on Margaret Chin, I would like to recognize
7 Council Member Espinal and Council Member Gibson.
8 Council Member Chin.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you Chair. Good
10 morning.

11 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Good morning.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And thank you for your
13 public service. And you know, in my district, we go
14 before City Council, I mean City Planning quite a
15 bit.

16 So, I wanted to ask you a question about the two
17 bridges area. I know that the City Planning you
18 know, told us that it was minor modification. That
19 the project, the three humongous project that was
20 going to come into that area did not have to go
21 through ULURP and then we ended up filing a lawsuit
22 against the City and City Planning. And so far, we
23 have kind of halted the project but I guess my
24 question to you in that scenario where a site you
25 know, was an urban renewal site and when you look at

2 that number of units being inundated into an area
3 that's already oversaturated and don't have all these
4 essential services like public transportation. You
5 know, one subway station and with limited entrance
6 and no accessibility. But then like, all of a
7 sudden, you're talking about three huge projects
8 that's going to ask a humungous number of units and
9 what they're offering in terms of affordable housing
10 is voluntary, it wasn't even mandatory and is
11 minimal.

12 So, with City Planning, when you look at a
13 project like that, even though technically I don't
14 think that the staff and Commission say, oh, it's
15 technically there's a minor modification, so we don't
16 have to go through a full ULURP. So, how do you sort
17 of rectify that looking at you know, the impact, the
18 negative impact on the community?

19 KENNETH KNUCKLES: That was a tough case and we
20 know it's currently in litigation and obviously the
21 Commission will be bound by the findings of the
22 court. I think that underscores as I said to Council
23 Member Rose, a revisiting of SEQRA and you know, the
24 Commission was bound by the precedent that this was
25 not a rezoning. The bulk, which we understood was a

2 lot more than what was existing in that neighborhood
3 was permissible under the zoning but I understand
4 from your vantage point and the vantage point of many
5 of the community, much of the community that it was
6 nonetheless the introduction of a lot more density
7 than was there.

8 So, I think in hindsight you know, we'll have to
9 look at SEQRA and we'll have to look at situations.
10 Hopefully, there won't be many, but situations in
11 which you know, dramatic density is introduced into a
12 community and if a rezoning is appropriate or a ULURP
13 is appropriate, then it perhaps should be required.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Because relating to that
15 is, I guess, I mean, Department of City Planning.
16 So, my question is around the planning part.

17 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Right.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Because this area was
19 originally an urban renewal site.

20 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Right, and the renewal
22 expired and the community weren't aware that it was
23 you know, expired.

24 So, we had to, the City Council, we had to pass
25 legislation. Now, you know, when an urban renewal

2 site is about to expire, they have to inform
3 Community Board Council. So, at least the community
4 can prepare to see whether how we can still you know,
5 protect the area, rezoning or whatever, but in that
6 case, we were not prepared. But with the City
7 Planning, I guess my question is that looking ahead,
8 is that one of City Planning's responsibility should
9 be really looking at some of the area where there's
10 an urban renewal site or some area that the zoning
11 should be changed.

12 So, more of that planning perspective to see how
13 we can meet the need for affordable housing. Maybe
14 some area could rezone to allow more density. So, a
15 more broader picture of the whole city, because the
16 other concern I have is all these as of right
17 developments. Because in that area, at the two
18 bridges area, we have this humungous 80 story Extell
19 building and it was built on the former Pathmark Site
20 because the urban renewal expire and they were able
21 to do something as of right, and then they got a tax
22 abatement to build a poor building next door and they
23 have this humungous tower and they took away an
24 affordable supermarket in the area. And there was

2 nothing we could do because they could do it as of
3 right.

4 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Right, right. I understand
5 your concern. I think the Department will and I'm
6 not speaking for the Department but personally I will
7 be looking to the ultimate outcome of the litigation
8 to see what lessons can be derived from the decision,
9 I'm sure there will be many but moreover, I think the
10 Department will obviously be looking at the
11 experience around the two bridges site and look to
12 ameliorate if you will, the concerns that I think
13 justifiably and appropriately were expressed by the
14 community.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, I mean, I look
16 forward to working with you continuously and I think
17 we really, the City Planning, should really, really
18 look at it comprehensively because we desperately
19 need affordable housing.

20 So, like, we you know, expect the Department to
21 really help us in that effort.

22 KENNETH KNUCKLES: I believe the Department is
23 willing, ready and able to do that.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Great, thank you. Thank
25 you Chair.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you and thank you
3 Mr. Knuckles. We're not voting today, we'll be
4 voting on December 19th, this coming Thursday.

5 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you very much.

7 KENNETH KNUCKLES: Any other questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Alright, the second
9 topic. If the Council gives its advice and consent,
10 Ms. Henn; a Queens resident will be appointed as the
11 President of the New York City Tax Commission for a
12 six year term that begins on January 7, 2020 and
13 expires on January 6, 2026. And Mr. Nichols; a
14 Staten Island resident will be appointed to the Tax
15 Commission and will serve a six year term that begins
16 on January 7, 2020 and expires on January 6, 2026.

17 The Tax Commission is charged with the duty of
18 reviewing and correcting all assessments of real
19 property within the city of New York that are set by
20 the New York City Department of Finance. Any
21 Commissioner shall exercise such other powers and
22 duties as the President of the Commission may from
23 time to time assign.

24 The Commission has the President and six
25 Commissioners all of whom have at least three years

2 of experience in the field of real estate or real
3 estate law. The President receives an annual salary
4 of \$221,151. Commissioners receive an annual salary
5 of \$25,677.

6 I want to welcome the candidates and if you can
7 please raise your right hand to be sworn in.

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you swear to tell the truth,
9 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

10 PANEL: I do.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Ms. Henn, would you like
13 to make an opening statement?

14 FRANCIS HENN: Thank you. Good morning Chair
15 Koslowitz and members of the New York City Council
16 Rules Committee. Thank you for considering me for an
17 appointment as President of the New York City Tax
18 Commission.

19 It's a privilege and an honor to be considered.
20 I've been a New York City resident my entire life and
21 was born and raised in Queens. I'm a homeowner and
22 my family has lived in our home in Queens for the
23 past 24 years.

24 My two children are proud graduates of the New
25 York City Public School system. I have had the

2 pleasure of working in city government and serving
3 the people of the city for over 37 years as a Tax
4 Attorney. During that time, I was recognized by the
5 New York City Law Department and the New York City
6 County Lawyers Association for my public service. I
7 hope to continue that service as President of the Tax
8 Commission and I believe my experience qualifies me
9 to do so.

10 As the Council is fully aware, annual property
11 tax assessments are the basis for the real property
12 tax levy. The city's largest single source of
13 revenue. There are over one million parcels of real
14 property in the city and under New York State and
15 city law, each property owner has the right to an
16 independent administrative review of the assessed
17 value of its property before the Tax Commission.

18 The Tax Commission's mission and my mission if
19 appointed as President, is to ensure that
20 determinations of real property assessment appeals
21 are made fairly, efficiently and in a transparent
22 manner.

23 I know how daunting the Tax Assessment challenge
24 can be, particularly for unrepresented taxpayers. I
25 have attended many outreach sessions as a

2 representative of the Tax Commission where I
3 explained how the assessment and tax were calculated,
4 walked taxpayers step by step through the calculation
5 and further explained what needs to be established in
6 order to challenge that assessment.

7 I found that experience extremely gratifying. In
8 addition to outreach sessions, as President of the
9 Tax Commission, I hope to continue the considerable
10 efforts expended by the current President, Ellen
11 Hoffman toward annually reviewing the Tax
12 Commission's forms, instructions and procedures, as
13 well as information provided on the Tax Commissions
14 website with a view towards providing even greater
15 clarity and transparency.

16 In addition to helping property owners better
17 understand their assessment, when a property owner
18 challenges their assessment, I hope to make their
19 experience at the Tax Commission as satisfying as
20 possible. By that, I mean while I might in all cases
21 get the reduction they want, they will be informed as
22 to how best to present their position and will have
23 an opportunity to be heard before impartial and
24 respectful forum.

2 Since 2016, I've been a Commissioner of the New
3 York City Tax Appeals Tribunal, which hears appeals
4 involving city administered taxes other than the
5 property tax. During that same time, under a
6 delegation from President Hoffman, I have conducted
7 thousands of Tax Commission hearings on applications
8 for review involving evaluation, classification, and
9 exemptions.

10 As you know, the Tax Commission and Tax Appeals
11 Tribunal are combined under umbrella of the Office of
12 Administrative Tax Appeals, which jointly administers
13 the two agencies. Together the Tax Commission and
14 the Tribunal provide independent administrative
15 review of all city tax assessments.

16 Prior to joining the Tribunal, I worked at the
17 New York City Law Department, Office of the
18 Corporation Counsel, Tax and bankruptcy division for
19 over 34 years. Serving initially as a staff attorney
20 and later supervising staff attorney's and support
21 staff, as well as handling significant tax
22 litigation.

23 I also helped develop tax policy reviews,
24 proposed tax legislation and advised various city
25 agencies regarding their tax issues. In addition, I

2 worked closely with the divisions Chief on issues
3 connected with our divisions administration including
4 budget and personal.

5 The real property litigation I supervised at the
6 Law Department necessarily involved an in depth
7 analysis of complex real estate appraisals, as well
8 as an examination of how real property is held and
9 used.

10 I'm a voracious reader of anything related to
11 real property terms and issues. The tax issues I
12 addressed while at the Law Department also included
13 those arising in cases involving other city taxes
14 that require a comprehensive understanding of real
15 estate ownership and related transactions including
16 leasing, transfer and financing.

17 In conclusion, I believe my experience well
18 qualifies me to administer the tax appeals process in
19 a way that is as fair, transparent and efficient as
20 possible. I again thank you for your attention this
21 morning and am happy to answer any questions you may
22 have.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Before we continue, I
24 want to recognize Council Member Ritchie Torres has
25 joined us. Mr. Nichols, opening statement please.

2 THOMAS NICHOLS: Yes, thank you. Good morning
3 Chair Koslowitz and Members of the New York City
4 Rules Committee. My name is Thomas Nickols and I am
5 pleased to be here today and have the opportunity to
6 discuss with you the position of Staten Island part-
7 time Commissioner for the New York City Tax
8 Commission.

9 I started my career in Civil Service with the New
10 York City Department of Finance in 1987, where I
11 worked for almost three years as an Assistant City
12 Assessor assigned to various districts in the borough
13 of Queens, Queens, I'm sorry, I had to do that. I'm
14 getting to you; I will get to you in a minute.

15 This entry level position allowed me to acquire
16 the fundamentals in evaluating real estate for tax
17 purposes in the City of New York. It also allowed me
18 to interact with the tax the taxpaying public,
19 clarify for them the complex property tax system and
20 assist them in obtaining senior citizen and veterans
21 exemptions.

22 I joined the New York City Tax Commission in 1989
23 as a Level One City Assessor and have been fortunate
24 enough to have a successful 28½ year tenure with the
25 commission. During my career with the Tax

2 Commission, I was promoted to a level two and later a
3 level three City Assessor. Before retiring in 2018
4 as the Deputy Director of the Appraisal and Hearings
5 Group, level four Assessor. And with the designation
6 of certified City Assessor. Coincidentally, part of my
7 duties as Deputy Director was to train newly hired
8 part time Commissioners, Administrative Law Judges
9 and Assessors regarding policy, procedures and
10 valuation methodology for the New York City Tax
11 Commission.

12 I've also worked with other city agencies during
13 my time at the Tax Commission. Most frequently with
14 the Department of Finance and the New York City Law
15 Departments and condemnation division on specific
16 issues or cases.

17 I've also been a part of the Tax Commissions
18 efforts over the years to reach out to the property
19 owners through individual borough briefings, to
20 better help them understand the assessment and appeal
21 process.

22 During my years of service, I have personally
23 conducted, decided and reviewed between 75,000 and
24 100,000 property tax cases. As Deputy Director, I
25 was one of only four people entrusted with conducting

2 hearings on the highest valued parcels in New York
3 City.

4 I believe my experience and my continued desire
5 to help property owners better understand the city's
6 assessment and review process qualifies me for the
7 responsibilities of part time Commissioner for Staten
8 Island.

9 Finally, being a lifelong New Yorker born in
10 Brooklyn and currently a homeowner in Staten Island,
11 I feel that I have a better understanding of the
12 challenges Staten Islanders face, such as the longer
13 commute into Manhattan with no direct train service,
14 infrastructure problems, storm sewage for drainage in
15 Staten Island Expressway and the newer housing stock
16 resulting in a lower benefit from assessment caps
17 compared to the Class one properties in the outer
18 boroughs.

19 I look forward to using my 30 plus years of
20 experience and my understanding of the property tax
21 system to continue serving my fellow New Yorkers.
22 Thank you again for considering me for this position.
23 I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

24 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Ms. Henn, based on your
25 experience with the Tax Commission, what changes

2 would you make if you are confirmed as President of
3 the Tax Commission?

4 FRANCIS HENN: I would look towards migrating
5 away from paper to a greater use of technology.
6 Right now, this current year, we had 57,000
7 applications. That's all on paper, all of our files
8 are on paper and I believe that migrating to a
9 greater use of technology would certainly make the
10 process at the Tax Commission of managing those files
11 and reviewing those files more efficient but could
12 also translate to a more efficient and user friendly
13 mechanism for taxpayers to challenge their tax
14 assessments.

15 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: So, you're for
16 digitizing?

17 FRANCIS HENN: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, Mr. Nichols, many
19 property owners file a tax appeal as a matter of
20 course every year. Seemingly, without regard for
21 whether they have good cause hoping they will receive
22 some relief. What do you think about the practice in
23 any potential overburdening it does to the
24 Commission? Do you think steps should be taken to
25

2 discourage the practice and if so, what would you do
3 to address this issue?

4 THOMAS NICHOLS: That's a very good question. I
5 know there are firms that do handle rather large real
6 estate clientele and actually they protest on their
7 entire portfolio, whether they are over assessed or
8 not. And with the intention being, I can always file
9 a writ against the city and maybe it's more of a
10 protective route where in case the assessment ratio
11 drops, they have an argument in court but we do give
12 the representatives an opportunity to not ask for a
13 personal hearing for those cases. And hopefully we
14 can persuade them to do that as Ms. Henn said, we get
15 57,000 protests a year. We don't actually have a
16 personal hearing on everyone of those cases, we allow
17 the representatives to pass on certain cases that
18 they don't feel that they can reach the burden of
19 proof.

20 So, if we can encourage them to that more and
21 pass on cases that really, according to valuation
22 methodology, there's really nothing there in the
23 case. I think we can streamline a little bit better
24 and hopefully not have as many hearings each year.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you and thank you
3 very much and like I said, we will have a hearing on
4 December 19th for the vote. Thank you.

5 Anybody else have any questions? Thank you.

6 THOMAS NICHOLS: I had a feeling.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I gave you a hard time.

8 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: You are excused and now
9 we're going to call on — oh, you have question? Oh,
10 okay.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Or a comment or I want to
12 say I'm really glad to see you here.

13 THOMAS NICHOLS: Thank you, it's a pleasure to be
14 here.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And you know, the tax issue
16 is a huge issue for Staten Islanders and we're very
17 concerned about the disparities. And I see where you
18 have actually conducted borough briefings.

19 THOMAS NICHOLS: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I want to first applaud you
21 for doing that. I think that much more is necessary
22 because the structure is pretty convoluted and it's
23 very difficult for folks to understand, even with the
24 briefing it's difficult to understand and on Staten
25 Island especially with the disparities. Are you

2 planning to do more outreach to homeowners, not just
3 in Staten Island but do you see any value in reaching
4 out to homeowners to explain the process?

5 THOMAS NICHOLS: Well, each year in January when
6 property owners receive their notice of value, that's
7 usually probably when your phone starts ringing off
8 the hook, all of your phones start ringing off the
9 hook. And the Department of Finance sets up these
10 briefings and we go along with them to each borough.
11 I think I was at one at the business center in Staten
12 Island at Saint Marks Place with you and we usually
13 have them upstairs on the fourth floor in that
14 building but we have a morning session and a night
15 session. So, anybody that's working can come to the
16 night session. We can actually help them personally
17 and I think that's the key because I've helped
18 hundreds, maybe thousands of people explaining that
19 especially one, two, and three family homeowners, the
20 assessment process, what they have to do. What forms
21 they have to file. Where to get the evidence and the
22 information to prove their case and the actual number
23 that they have to disprove because I know there's
24 always some, you know, the Department of Finance
25 gives a market value, an effective market value and

2 assessment and we have to explain what each number
3 means and what they need to do to reduce their taxes.

4 As far as briefings go, you know, given that
5 direct customer service to people, I mean, sometimes
6 it's like you see a light switch go on where they
7 finally get it and they're only going to get that
8 with somebody taking the time and explaining things
9 to them.

10 You know, we could put things online and we could
11 put it in our instructions but I think it helps when
12 we're actually making that contact with the public.
13 I actually enjoy doing that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So, you wouldn't be adverse
15 to more outreach?

16 THOMAS NICHOLS: Not at all, not at all, I think
17 it would help tremendously.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah, I do to and we did
19 appoint a commission right, and they did a study and
20 we haven't heard from them yet. And so, I don't know
21 who should be pushing whom but it would be
22 interesting - I would like to see the Tax Commission
23 sort of encourage the Commission that was set up to
24 study the property tax issue. If we could kind of
25

2 make that happen so we can see some movement on the
3 tax structure.

4 THOMAS NICHOLS: I'm actually anxious to see what
5 they come up with also.

6 FRANCIS HENN: As well.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, and you're willing to
8 work with them?

9 THOMAS NICHOLS: Definitely.

10 FRANCIS HENN: Definitely.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you very much. And
13 now, our third topic. If the Council gives it's
14 advice and consent, Mr. Bastardi a Manhattan
15 resident, yeah for Manhattan and Ms. Kravelis, a
16 Brooklyn resident will be appointed to the Youth
17 Board and will serve an undefined term and the
18 position does not include any compensation.

19 The Youth Board serves as an advisory body to the
20 Commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community
21 Development with respect to the development of
22 programs and policies relating to youth in the City.

23 The Board consists of 28 members appointed by the
24 Mayor, 14 whom are appointed upon recommendation of
25 the Council. The Board must be representative of the

2 community and include persons representing the areas
3 of Social Services, healthcare, education business,
4 industry and labor. The Board meets quarterly and
5 members serve without compensation.

6 Welcome Mr. Bastardi and Ms. Kruevelis, would you
7 both raise your right hand to be sworn in?

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you swear to tell the truth,
9 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

10 PANEL: I do.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, Mr. Bastardi, do
13 you wish to have an opening statement?

14 CHRISTOPHER BASTARDI: Yes. Members of the
15 Committee, I would like to thank you for taking the
16 time today to consider my nomination to the Youth
17 Board. As someone who has been active in New York
18 Public Affairs matters for their entire career, I
19 look forward with your approval, to serving on the
20 Youth Board and bringing my perspective ideas and
21 passion forward to work to make New York City a
22 better place for our young people.

23 Society has too often, even with the best of
24 intentions neglected our youth. The Department of
25 Youth and Community Development has been working

2 tirelessly to help some of the most vulnerable
3 members of New York's population. I hope that my
4 past experience would be a value as we work together
5 to do even more.

6 I've worked with LGBTQ Youth and the
7 conversations I had with teenagers at the Hetrick
8 Martin Institute mattered so much more in shaping my
9 perspective than the slew of studies I've come across
10 about their wellbeing.

11 According to the Center for American Progress,
12 upwards of half of the youth homeless population
13 identified as LGBT. We know many come from
14 emotionally and physically abusive homes and feel
15 that they have nowhere to turn.

16 We know that young immigrants, especially in the
17 current political climate feel so threatened that
18 many are not accessing services in our city and
19 state, despite not having to fear their data being
20 used against them here. And our young people still
21 are not making enough money to afford to live in our
22 city whether due to lack of opportunity, crippling
23 student debt post-graduation or because they don't
24 have the foundational support at home.

2 I hope that my years of activism in New York
3 Public Affairs of understanding how government works,
4 believing we can work with the private sector to make
5 necessary improvements when the government cannot
6 handle the burden and I truly believe the young
7 people know when they are being listened to and when
8 they are not and that we must listen, make me a
9 worthy candidate for your consideration.

10 I do not think that I have all of the answers but
11 do think I can use my seat on the Board to make this
12 city a little bit better for New York young people.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. Ms. Kravelis.

15 MELANIE KRUELIS: Great.

16 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Am I pronouncing your
17 names right?

18 MELANIE KRUELIS: You did, yeah, so thank you
19 for that and good morning. My name is Melanie
20 Kravelis and I'm Senior Manager of Policy and
21 Advocacy at Young Invincibles.

22 I would like thank the Members of the New York
23 City present today, as well as the members and staff
24 of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections
25 for allowing me to speak before you today.

2 It is a great privilege and an honor to sit in
3 consideration of membership to the New York City
4 Youth Board and for the opportunity to join the
5 conversation on how New York can affirm its
6 commitment to our city's younger generations.

7 To give you a little background on the work that
8 I do here in New York City. I work again with Young
9 Invincibles; we are a policy and advocacy
10 organization that's dedicated to elevating young
11 adults in the political process.

12 As a part of my work with Young Invincibles as
13 well as my history working in local government, both
14 here and in Washington DC, I've spoken with young
15 adults across the City of New York. So, in all five
16 boroughs including Staten Island. I know we've been
17 talking about that a little bit today and I work with
18 young folks on a variety of issue areas including
19 their access to higher education.

20 So, considering how things like access to housing
21 and counseling and the conditions of our college
22 climate encourage folks to persist in college. We
23 also focus on thinking about how young adults are
24 able to access healthcare, as well as workforce
25

2 development and the nature of work and civic
3 engagement.

4 So, I've held focus groups across the City of New
5 York, focusing on the intersection of homelessness
6 and higher education. I've worked in collaborations
7 with young people across CUNY, the student
8 governments out of school and out of work, homeless
9 youth and really a large cross section of young
10 people across the City here.

11 And from these conversations and as well as the
12 research that I do, I can tell you with certainty
13 that young people like myself face a world of
14 instability and uncertainty in both the long term.
15 So, thinking about the catastrophic reality of
16 climate change. To the more immediate, so having a
17 safe and stable place to stay at night.

18 The Department of Youth and Community Development
19 along with its nonprofit and cross agency partners as
20 well as the folks here in the City Council play a
21 pivotal role in connecting the next generations with
22 the programs that both research and young people will
23 tell you work.

24 If selected to join the New York City Youth
25 Board, I will bring my experience collaborating with

2 young people across the five boroughs to reimagine
3 the programs and supports that serve them. I will
4 bring insights collected from our partners, our
5 research and our network of young people to shape
6 these programs and make sure they're reaching folks
7 appropriately. And I will bring a commitment to
8 equity and an eye towards the redistribution of
9 resources and power for those who have long been shut
10 out of policy making, including New Yorkers who are
11 Black and Brown, LGBTQI, young folks, immigrants
12 and/or those young folks who are housing insecure.

13 Thank you again for the opportunity to speak
14 before you today and I look forward to answering your
15 questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Council Member Adrienne
17 Adams.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you Madam Chair.
19 Thank you both for being here this morning. This is
20 a very, very critical part of the work that we do
21 surrounding youth.

22 So, I just have a general question for the both
23 of you and you can answer. Can you give us the top
24 two in your estimation, the top two critical issues
25

2 facing youth today and how you would tackle those top
3 two issues?

4 MELANIE KRUEVELIS: Alright, I'll go first. So,
5 thinking about the top two issues that are facing
6 young people in the city today. My head space is
7 thinking about affordable housing and more
8 specifically thinking about how young folks are able
9 to ensure that they have stable housing.

10 So, again, as part of my work with Young
11 Invincibles, I spent the last year holding focus
12 groups with more than 70 young people who have had
13 some experience of housing insecurity or homelessness
14 over the last year. And as part of those focus
15 groups really highlighted for me, you know, as I was
16 sitting here and thinking about other folks who were
17 testifying for some of the other boards including
18 some that were more directly focused on issues of
19 affordable housing. I believe my experience also
20 shows the way that you know, even though we tend to
21 think about you know, stable housing is purely an
22 issue for folks looking at housing.

23 My work really highlights and what I heard from
24 young people, also highlights the way that housing
25 sets folks up for future success. And so, for again,

2 part of my work, I talked with folks about the
3 intersection of housing and security and how that
4 impacts college access.

5 And to me, that intersection is really critical
6 in thinking about the future stability of young
7 folks, particularly when we know that for young
8 people who are you know, working to increase their
9 education attainment, not having a high school GED or
10 the TASC here in New York, that makes you four in a
11 half times more likely to experience homelessness.

12 So, as part of my work, I want to make sure that
13 you know while there is a lot of important work
14 happening with housing, housing is also a tool - or
15 education is also a tool to stopping the cycle of
16 homeless in New York City and I think some of the
17 conversations I had with young folks really highlight
18 that issue as well.

19 In terms of other major issues that are impacting
20 young people, I'm struggling to think of an exact
21 category for this, but I'm thinking about some of the
22 substantial structural issues that I know many young
23 folks are really grappling with, right and how to
24 access you know, institutions such as the one that
25

2 we're in today and make sure that their voices are
3 heard.

4 And so, navigating complex systems and knowing
5 that you know, we have young folks today who take
6 time to go out of school to make sure their voices
7 are heard on issues on climate change and I think
8 that's been incredibly moving and powerful to hear.

9 But I know that from my work again, across the
10 five boroughs here that knowing how to access these
11 spaces and how to make a change is really
12 intimidating, especially when you consider the
13 history of young people really being shut out of
14 decision making power and again, particularly
15 different groups of young people.

16 So, in my work, I think you know, I can think of
17 particular issue areas that have of course you know,
18 have a lot of impact for young people, but also
19 thinking about how they are able to access and
20 influence you know, some of these decisions that are
21 truly impacting not just their day to day but their
22 long term.

23 And so, again, if I were nominated for this
24 Board, I would take my experience in elevating those
25 voices and teaching folks how and really teaching

2 together. There's so much that we learn when we talk
3 with one another. So, I think if I were nominated to
4 this Board, I would enjoy the opportunity to take
5 some of that insight and make sure that folks are
6 more connected with the decisions that are impacting
7 their lives.

8 CHRISTOPHER BASTARDI: Homelessness I think is
9 number one and I don't think it's just about getting
10 people in shelter. Obviously, that is the number one
11 issue, is to make sure that somebody is safe and not
12 on the streets and get them out of a dangerous
13 circumstance but you know, beyond that, we have to
14 take homeless youth and better set them up for
15 success in life because if we don't, we're going to
16 have a homeless young person that turns into a
17 homeless person in their 20's and 30's. And that's
18 only going to perpetuate a long terms cycle of you
19 know, bad decisions, some that they're forced into.

20 So, I think that we need to set young people up
21 from a structural educational standpoint and then
22 access to actually good paying jobs. It's not enough
23 as a city that we just give people shelter. We have
24 to make sure that we are giving them education and
25 access to college, so that when they leave shelter,

2 they can get their own apartment and that they can
3 get a job you know, that they can pay for it.

4 For the first time in American history, we're
5 seeing a decline in people going to college because
6 it's so expensive. Because people are making a
7 decision of, I am not going to take on this massive
8 debt because our jobs aren't paying enough.

9 And that brings me to you know, point two, which
10 we need to address and put pressure on companies to
11 pay young people more. We cannot expect young people
12 to graduate college with debt anywhere from \$80,000
13 to \$300,000 and pay them \$35,000. It's just not fair
14 and we are going to lose people in this city. We
15 have the best companies and you know; best talents
16 and we're going to lose them elsewhere.

17 So, I think those are the two biggest issues for
18 me.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you both and I
20 especially thank you both for connecting the dots.
21 We know that the exponential number of children who
22 are homeless, who right now are sitting in elementary
23 schools and high schools is devastating for the City of
24 New York and connecting the dots, homelessness, the

2 path through education to creating those that are in
3 homes safely and more importantly profitably.

4 So, thank you both for your testimony. Thank you
5 very much.

6 CHRISTOPHER BASTARDI: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Council Member Rose.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Hi, how are you both? I
9 was impressed with both of your resumes and I think
10 it's really important that the people we have on the
11 Advisory Board are people who have actually had
12 experience working with young people.

13 It's interesting to know in theory and from a
14 distance. So, I was pleased to see that you have
15 actually worked with young people and give an ear to
16 some of their issues.

17 My colleague Adrienne Adams addressed you know,
18 one of my questions and you said that homelessness
19 was something that is really important and you know
20 that DYCD has youth runaway and homeless youth
21 programs and that I feel like we're not able to meet
22 the need that we have. What would your
23 recommendation be to DYCD in regards to addressing
24 the homeless youth issue?

2 CHRISTOPHER BASTARDI: I think an idea, so when I
3 worked with the Hetrick Martin Institute, what I was
4 able to see firsthand were kids who a lot who were
5 previously homeless and were able to find people like
6 them and were given support. And I think giving it
7 is a stigma to be homeless, whether you're an LGBT
8 kid or a straight kid. No one wants to go to school
9 and be you know the homeless kid and we've all read
10 the articles that there are so many kids that are
11 leaving school and going to shelters. And in the
12 other hearing, I was listening to you know, how we
13 can't even rely on this hotel system anymore.

14 That it's just this burden of you know, you leave
15 school or work and you go into a hotel and your in a
16 hotel room with like four people and to live there
17 for more than year, it's just cramming and it's
18 demoralizing. I think that we and I alluded to some
19 of this in my responses. You know, we offer
20 companies in this city a slew of incentives. They
21 get tax breaks for you know various things. They get
22 incentives to create jobs here. There are big
23 debates about whether or not that should be continued
24 or not and I think it's time that you know, we turn
25 to them and say, how are you going to put up and give

2 support to you know people. Like, give them
3 internships that you know, lead to actual jobs and
4 give them actual support.

5 I think that's a way that the private sector can
6 come to the table in a very meaningful way and you
7 know, mentioning them in you know a press release.
8 You know that will help their you know CSR efforts
9 and everything. So, that's one idea that you know, I
10 would have is you know, go to them and I know that
11 companies are looking for ways left and right to get
12 involved and many don't know how to and they have
13 internal committees that come up with ideas. We can
14 go to them and say, we have this problem. What can
15 you do? Do you have five internships?

16 If we can get every bank and every top company to
17 offer five internships to a homeless kid in high
18 school, that's an amazing thing for their resume.

19 MELANIE KRUVELIS: Thank you, I'm glad that my
20 colleague here pointed out those issues and I feel
21 like we should talk after this. I think we have lot
22 to cross over in our work as well, hopefully on the
23 Youth port as well.

24 So, in addition to some of those job elements
25 which I think are so critical for thinking about

2 youth who are experiencing homelessness. I also
3 again want to sort of double down on some of the ways
4 that I believe the education system can play a
5 pivotal role in supporting these youths and the way
6 that DYCD can sort of bridge connections both between
7 DOE as well as CUNY.

8 So, you know, I think a lot of us in this room
9 are very deeply disturbed by the numbers of students
10 in temporary housing that we see and deal. We know
11 the one and ten number and that is far too high and a
12 much higher number than anyone in here would like to
13 see.

14 But one thing that I think is also important to
15 note, that as young people complete high school or
16 age out of high school, we also still see that issue
17 in our college systems here as well. So, in CUNY,
18 it's about 14 percent of young people experience
19 homelessness while enrolled in CUNY. So, actually a
20 higher statistic than we see in DOE. And of course,
21 in college, that is actually when you are expected to
22 pay for education and you're paying for your
23 textbooks, you're paying for your housing. You are
24 paying for all of these other pieces.

2 We also know that that CUNY students are
3 experiencing food insecurity at very high rates.
4 Well above 50 percent according to the studies that
5 have come out in March 2019.

6 So, I think there is a lot that can be done here.
7 Again, as part of my work, I went to seven different
8 runaway and homeless youth drop-in centers in
9 temporary with DYCD over the last year and again,
10 spoke with a lot of young people there and these were
11 really, really tough conversations. There's you
12 know, as my colleague here mentioned, there's a lot
13 of different issues that come up when you talk to
14 folks about housing and security. It can be related
15 to someone's financial situation. It can also be
16 related to a history of trauma and family instability
17 and I think there's a lot ways in which our systems
18 could be strengthened to better address some of those
19 issues that are coming up.

20 So, again, I keep thinking about that connection
21 between education, knowing that role that education
22 can play in terms of putting someone on a path
23 towards economic stability and some of those jobs
24 that my colleague here recommended.

2 And so, in terms of thinking about the work that
3 DYCD can do, I think there's a lot that can be done
4 to strengthen the connection between some of the
5 services that are provided to young folks through
6 DYCD and then some of the great educational
7 opportunities that are provided through the city and
8 through the college system. That's known for
9 propelling more students than any other university
10 system to the middle class.

11 And so, we heard from young folks that you know,
12 when they're in some of these shelters that you know,
13 they're getting support around finding housing and
14 getting sort of the next step, but there's often that
15 space to think about okay, what beyond the next step?
16 And I think that young folks who are experiencing
17 homelessness absolutely deserve the opportunity to
18 think ahead and think about what their futures are.

19 And so, I think there are ways that our systems
20 can align better with one another. We actually just
21 released a report that's talking about the ways in
22 which the DOE, DYCD, CUNY, DHS, and HRA could all
23 sort of work together and align some of these efforts
24 to make sure young folks have access to a higher
25

2 education and a college pathway that leads them to
3 economic stability.

4 But one thing that comes to mind for me is
5 thinking about the flexibility that folks have or
6 don't have in some of these programs.

7 So, you know, one thing that comes to mind is you
8 know, we spoke to a young person who after six years
9 finally graduated from Hunter College this last year
10 after experiencing homelessness for again, over six
11 years and she was able to stay in a dormitory with
12 CUNY, which is not necessarily the norm for our
13 system. Which is a particular challenge when
14 thinking about these issues.

15 But the day after she graduated, she was not able
16 to really celebrate her degree because she was out of
17 the dorms and didn't have anywhere to stay. And
18 that's not acceptable, right, like, that's not what
19 our systems are here for. And so, I think again, if
20 there are ways to facilitate conversations to ensure
21 that it's not just you know, one particular system
22 that's thinking about you in crisis mode, but systems
23 that allow you to think about you know, your pathway,
24 your career, your dreams.

2 I think that is really critical and so, I think
3 there is some strong opportunities there. You know
4 whether it's making sure that in DYCD shelters we're
5 advertising CUNY ASAP and some of these great
6 programs that really do help students succeed. I
7 think there are some great opportunities for linkages
8 there that will long serve these students.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. I'm really kind
10 of excited because both of you have a grasp of you
11 know, some of the issue that our young people are
12 facing and I'm happy to hear this because I feel like
13 there will be real advocates on the Commission.

14 DYCD however, is primarily a contracting agency
15 and so, often times their not able to impact
16 directly. And so, sometimes it sets up situations
17 that are not the most advantageous.

18 Every year during budget time, I find myself
19 trying to encourage DYCD to request adequate funding
20 to meet the needs and you've expounded on some of the
21 needs but there are others. You know, we talk about
22 workforce, there are young people who are vulnerable
23 who are living in housing projects that - there just
24 aren't opportunities and DYCD usually tries to
25

2 provide a pipeline so that opportunities are
3 available.

4 I can't quite seem to get them however, to fight
5 for the amount of money that they need to try to fill
6 the needs that exists. So, would you be willing to
7 be a voice on the Commission to actually try to pair
8 up the monies that are requested with what the actual
9 need is, so that every year Council Member Chin and I
10 aren't fighting with the Commissioner to increase the
11 amount of funds that are needed to meet this. You
12 know, every year SYEP you know, Work, Learn and Grow,
13 SONYC, COMPASS, you know there's a whole plethora of
14 programs that are working to fill the need but we're
15 not getting enough monies to the programs.

16 I'm just asking you to be really vocal advocates,
17 especially around budget and need. So, thank you,
18 I'm excited that we'll be able to work with you, I
19 hope.

20 CHRISTOPHER BASTARDI: Thank you.

21 MELANIE KRUVELIS: And to answer your question,
22 yes, happy to play that role.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, anybody else?
24 Thank you very, very much.

25 MELANIE KRUVELIS: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: And, I don't believe we
3 have any comments from the public. Correct me if I'm
4 wrong; it doesn't look like we do.

5 With that, I want to thank everybody. This
6 hearing of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and
7 Elections now stands in recess to be continued on the
8 morning of Thursday, December 19, 2019.

9 With that, this meeting is recessed. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date April 1, 2018