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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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JANUARY 15, 2020

Start: 1:13 p.m.

Recess: 5:00 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Alicka Ampry-Samuel,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Diana Ayala
- Laurie A. Cumbo
- Ruben Diaz, Sr.
- Vanessa L. Gibson
- Mark Gjonaj
- Carlos Menchaca
- Donovan J. Richards
- Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
- Ritchie J. Torres
- Mark Treyger
- James G. Van Bramer

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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A P P E A R A N C E S

Aixa Torres
President of Alfred E. Smith Houses

Nancy Ortiz
Vladeck Houses

Sandra Coleman
Holmes Towers - Isaac Coalition

Crystal Glover
Tenant at Washington Houses

Bart M. Schwartz
Federal Monitor overseeing NYCHA's Compliance

Greg Russ
NYCHA Chair and CEO

Joey Koch
Chief of Staff and Former Director of the heating
group for NYCHA

Brian Honan
Vice President of Intergovernmental Relations for
NYCHA

Lucy Newman
Legal Aid Society

Louis Flores
Fight for NYCHA

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [GAVEL] Good

afternoon everyone and thank you all for being here today. I am Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel and I Chair the Committee on Public Housing and I am joined today by other members of the Committee. Council Member Salamanca, Council Member Ruben Diaz, Sr. and Council Member Van Bramer.

Before we get started, I want to recognize that on today January 15th in 1929, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born. We will celebrate Dr. King and his legacy on Monday as a nation but I wanted to recognize him to date on his birthday. There are so many speeches and quotes that stick out with me today that are relevant to the work that I do and the work that we do. And I wonder, what would Dr. King think about what's happening to our public housing residents because he was such a fighter for fair housing.

I want to share with you a few particular but appropriate quotes that I wanted to pull for this hearing. Dr. King once stated, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that

1
2 matter. And he also said, life's most persistent and
3 urgent question is, what are you doing for others.

4 And before I go into my formal speech, I just
5 want to play this video in song, because it's just so
6 appropriate today.

7 PLAYING VIDEO/SONG [3:20-7:40]

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you and that
9 song was released in 1964 and it's still appropriate
10 to this day. We have families that are fighting for
11 change and today's hearing is just about that. What
12 changes have been made.

13 So, today, we are hear to discuss NYCHA's Winter
14 Preparedness. Two years ago, in February 2018, in
15 the wake of an historic heat outage in NYCHA, this
16 Committee held a hearing with the Committee on
17 Oversight and Investigations to determine the scope
18 and causes of the heat failures. To listen to
19 residents who were going unheard and to hold NYCHA
20 leadership accountable for its actions and sometimes
21 inactions.

22 The following year, after lawsuits and
23 investigations, NYCHA entered into a federal
24 agreement which established a plan to make a plan to
25 improve NYCHA's physical conditions. That new plan

1
2 exists today. NYCHA and the Monitor team released a
3 plan last month December 2019, to clearly establish
4 policies and practices to reduce heat service
5 disruptions and restore heat faster.

6 According to the Federal Agreement, NYCHA is
7 obligated to restore heat within twelve hours of an
8 outage. NYCHA has spoken to us about dramatic
9 improvements and some of these I've gotten to see for
10 myself as I visited NYCHA's new heat desk for
11 monitoring outages earlier this week. Some, I've had
12 to take NYCHA's word for, for example, NYCHA claims
13 that the average time to restore an outage is now
14 down to eight hours from about thirty hours, two
15 years ago but the Federal Monitor has yet to confirm
16 the numbers.

17 What we do know is this. Where there used to be
18 hundreds of thousands of people without heat, there
19 are now tens of thousands. And while this shows
20 great progress, it still leaves too many individual
21 residents in the cold.

22 During one of the coldest days during this
23 heating season, a family at 337 Blake Avenue within
24 the Brownsville Houses went without heat for seven
25 full days. There was a small child in the home that

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2 had to be taken to the emergency room three different
3 times due to her asthma flareups. Her mother wanted
4 to be here today but because she missed so many days
5 of work dealing with her heat issues, she was not
6 able to miss work for today's hearing.

7 Residents have also voiced their concerns to me
8 about when NYCHA claims there isn't an outage but
9 people know and can feel that there is not heat in
10 their homes. As NYCHA has explained to us, both can
11 be true. As there definition of an outage relates to
12 large scale disruptions and may leave out isolated
13 incidents. I find it hard to believe however, that
14 hundreds of people are isolated. I understand and
15 support NYCHA in its efforts to prioritize and
16 address widespread disruptions but there still must
17 be a way to be transparent about the scope of the
18 problem and take individual residents concerns
19 seriously.

20 If there is heat in the living room but no heat
21 in the bedroom, there is still a no heat issue that
22 requires attention because everyone should be able to
23 rest well at night in a safe and warm healthy
24 apartment in all parts of the apartment.
25

1
2 Today, I am interested in hearing from NYCHA and
3 the Monitor about the implementation of the heat
4 action plan which details how to keep residents warm.
5 Since the bomb cyclone in 2018, NYCHA has had two
6 years to learn from their past mistakes. So, what do
7 you know now and what are you doing differently?

8 NYCHA residents have been wronged before and
9 NYCHA must work with all levels of government to make
10 it right because heat and hot water is indeed a
11 right. And as Dr. Martin Luther King stated, the
12 time is always right to do what is right.

13 Thank you and we will now hear from our
14 residents, followed by the Federal Monitor team and
15 then followed by NYCHA's team. Ms. Aixa Torres from
16 Smith Houses, Ms. Nancy Ortiz of Vladeck Houses,
17 Sandra Coleman from Holmes Towers and Isaac Towers
18 Coalition and Ms. Crystal Glover.

19 And for those of you new to public housing
20 committee hearings, we like to hear from residents
21 first to paint the picture. And so, I ask that if
22 you can, can you keep your remarks within three
23 minutes so that we'll be able to hear responses.

24 Thank you so much.

1
2 AIXA TORRES: Good afternoon Chairwoman and
3 Members of the Council, NYCHA and residents who are
4 here present today. My name is Aixa Torres and I am
5 the President of Alfred E. Smith Houses.

6 The issue with heat has a lot to do with the
7 infrastructure of our development. I know Smith was
8 one of those developments that suffered not having
9 any heat. However, we have a roll call committee, so
10 that we know exactly what buildings are down or not
11 down. It has been a vast improvement, there have
12 been changes that have been made that I absolutely
13 agree with. I think that the communication is much
14 better and so, that has improved the quality.

15 However, the issue for Smith is really structural
16 infrastructure. The piping system in Smith is as old
17 as I am and I jokingly say, you know, five years ago
18 I had a valve replacement because Smith and I are the
19 same age and that's what Smith now needs. We need
20 the infrastructure and so, when we have an issue with
21 heat right now, it has to do with an old pipe
22 bursting or something breaking down that needs to be
23 fixed. So, when money is allocated, they need to
24 look at and they need to have a sense of where we're
25 at in terms of what buildings and what lines need to

1
2 be fixed and that requires communication. I think
3 it's essential. I think that we need to begin to
4 work as a team, not a you and us. But if we work as
5 a team the residents with management and we sit down
6 and have a conversation and finally, the conversation
7 has to include management at the local level and the
8 residents because we're the ones who receive the
9 services. We're basically the consumer, right, and
10 we need to be respected. We don't need the opinions
11 of another consultant from Timbuktu to come and tell
12 us what we need done, because we already know what
13 needs to get down.

14 And so, I think that moving forward to improve I
15 think there needs to be serious conversations in each
16 development. Especially the older ones, because it's
17 our structure that needs to be - our infrastructure
18 that needs to be fixed or upgraded more correctly, so
19 that we are in modern times and that the system is up
20 to date to handle. And with this global warming that
21 we don't know from one day to the other what kind of
22 weather we're going to have. Look at today, it's
23 beautiful and tomorrow it's going to be freezing. We
24 need to be really open to having discussions.

25 Thank you.

1
2 NANCY ORTIZ: Good afternoon. I thank you for
3 affording us the opportunity to being able to speak
4 first, so that everyone in the room can hear what we
5 have to say. Vladeck Houses just recently received a
6 brand new heating system inclusive of hot water
7 tanks. The heating system is part of the energy
8 sustainability program by HUD and the Office of the
9 Mayor. I need to say that it's working but like
10 everything else, people have to adapt to thing that
11 are new. It's like the secretary that was stuck with
12 the typewriter but doesn't want to use the computer.

13 Our temperatures have been reading between 68 and
14 71 degrees. Vladeck Houses was known as being Mojave
15 Desert because we used to get excessive heat. So,
16 the residents would turn on the air conditioners or
17 open the doors. Now, the heat is regulated and it is
18 a controlled environment and they want the Mojave
19 Desert and we have tried to explain that this is an
20 energy sustainability program and also, excessive
21 heat is not good, especially for seniors and
22 children.

23 However, residents when they do come to their
24 apartments, they are gauging the heat temperatures
25 between 68 and 71. We have gauged at 68-72. That's

1
2 what it's programmed to do. What residents are doing
3 as if they want more heat, what they are doing is,
4 they are calling in tickets for each room in the
5 apartment.

6 So, if I have a three bedroom apartment, I'm
7 putting in tickets for five. Five tickets for my
8 apartment, which is increasing the ticket load and
9 what we're trying to kind of tweak the system. We're
10 in discussions right now with maybe raising the
11 temperature for longer periods of time during the day
12 or during the night so that the apartment has a
13 little bit more warmth in it. So, instead of
14 stopping it at 72, maybe bringing it up to 75 during
15 the day and in the evenings, so that it sustains a
16 little more heat but we can't have the overall 87
17 degree heat in the apartment any longer because it's
18 just not wise. Especially again, with the global
19 warming and it's not healthy.

20 I have to say that I have to thank **[INAUDIBLE**
21 **24:07]**, they did an amazing job and you know, Vladeck
22 Houses, I was very appreciative that we did get
23 selected and it's been a work in progress. But
24 again, like everything that's new, you know, you have
25 to tweak it and kind of modify it until you get it

1
2 right and I hope that this system does go to all the
3 developments because it is a good system and it is
4 working.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Can you just state
7 your name again?

8 NANCY ORTIZ: Nancy Ortiz.

9 SANDRA COLEMAN: Alright, greetings all and I
10 appreciate the opportunity to testify before the
11 hearing. Thank you. I am Sandra Coleman; a current
12 resident of Isaac Houses and a former municipality
13 employee. I am also the Co-Founder of the Holmes-
14 Isaac Coalition.

15 New York City Housing Authority has abandoned its
16 tenants for decades, probably before some of you
17 considered being elected officials, residents have
18 been suffering with mold, no heat and hot water,
19 amongst other issues.

20 I have lived in three NYCHA developments in my
21 lifetime. I grew up in McKinley Houses in the South
22 Bronx. I moved and lived in Park Chester briefly for
23 two years and when I was called up for a waiting list
24 for being on the list for several years, I moved into
25 Holmes Towers in 1992.

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2 In 2015, I transferred into Isaac Houses after
3 waiting for a two bedroom apartment for 23 years.
4 Living in all three of the listed public housing
5 developments, there was always a problem with lack of
6 heat and hot water. Over the last decade, I had to
7 endure excessive heat and scolding hot water in my
8 apartment.

9 In Holmes Towers and Isaac's Houses, my youngest
10 son suffers countless nose bleeds in his lifetime
11 during his sleep. Sadly, people are afraid to
12 complain about scolding hot water and excessive heat,
13 because they believe that their apartments will be
14 freezing cold and their hot water will be turned off.
15 Where we live in a day and time that residents have
16 been conditions to accept what they are given, that
17 is inadequate out of fear, the answer is yes for
18 some.

19 I know that there are residents that do not have
20 heat nor hot water throughout NYCHA. My case is
21 different. I'm a legally disabled individual with
22 numbness in my hands and legs at times. I suffer
23 with carpal tunnel syndrome as well and possible
24 nerve damage due to a work related incident. I do
25 not realize that the water is scolding hot right

1
2 away, because I cannot feel it. The steam rising up
3 from the sink is the indicator for me.

4 As for the excessive heat I have to endure, it
5 does not matter if it is 20 degrees or 55 degrees, my
6 apartment is extremely hot on most days. There are
7 some solutions; I can turn on my air conditioner but
8 if it is freezing cold, it is frozen, so I will not
9 turn it on. I can open my apartment door, as I have
10 a terrace apartment or a window in my house, if I
11 wanted to but then I will have to risk the mice and
12 rats running in my door and/or climbing through my
13 windows. So, basically, I am trapped in a hot house.

14 My hope is that the city will do right by their
15 tenants because the residents at NYCHA are in a
16 crisis and it seems like no one cares.

17 Thank you.

18 CRYSTAL GLOVER: Good afternoon and Happy New
19 Year to everyone. My name is Crystal Glover; I am
20 tenant at Washington Houses. My development is
21 located in East Harlem.

22 At one time, I was the Resident Association
23 President and I got to learn a lot about conferences.
24 I learned about TPA funds etc., etc. I found out
25 about this meeting by Rosalba who works for Gale

1
2 Brewer, she is her deputy. She sent me the video of
3 the Monitors Advisory meeting. That's how I found
4 out about this meeting and I plan on going back to my
5 Tenants Association. We have a meeting this evening
6 and I'm going to share the packet because I'm finding
7 out that as tenants, the ball is in our court.

8 I believe in maybe 1979, somewhere around that
9 avenue when residents councils were formed, the
10 purpose of it was that we would be - that that
11 Residents Association would be a conduit between
12 management and tenant.

13 The fact that we are not on the payroll enables
14 us to function, to have that communication with our
15 management which I had very good communication with
16 my manager. I could go to my managers office and she
17 would drop everything she was doing to take care.

18 And so, I don't know why NYCHA, HUD found it
19 necessary to hire a monitor when in fact, there is
20 supposed to be people in place to follow behind and
21 keep up with stuff.

22 So, I don't understand how you go from the 70's
23 when you couldn't walk on the grass. You couldn't
24 keep your apartment dirty because they would put you
25 out. The list goes on and on and then crack comes

1 along and there goes our laundry rooms and the list
2 goes on and on and now, it's every man for himself
3 basically is what it is. If you're not part of a
4 click and those kinds of things here, which that's
5 the way it seems.
6

7 So, we're functioning abnormally. For instance,
8 the Legal Aid came up with the statistics about
9 roaches and bed bugs and how 60,000 tickets were put
10 in. Well, news flash, every time I put in a ticket
11 for my roaches, somebody came. Actually, they're at
12 a harassment state, because NYCHA just recently
13 formed some group, some program where they come out
14 on weekends and those people with tickets for
15 roaches, they'll be at your door on the weekend.
16 Well guess what, my apartment was treated in
17 September. I put a ticket in for roaches, it was
18 treated in September, I haven't seen one roach and
19 we're now in what month? Okay, but what's happening
20 is, they claim all those people that have put tickets
21 in, they have to follow up. So, I think what's
22 happening is I think we're being harassed and we're
23 being set up for the kill.

24 Okay, and so, what needs to happen is, the ball
25 is in the residents court because these people get

1
2 paid for what they do. The Monitor gets \$600,000 and
3 those kinds of figures and so forth and the
4 residents, because we're not sticking together,
5 there's power in unity. I don't like you, because
6 you said this about me. Your momma did this and this
7 and there's so much division with the residents. We
8 are being screwed. City Council can't help us.

9 I can go on and on about a meeting that they had
10 with one of the members, didn't even do his homework
11 to find out about TPA funds and the Council of
12 Presidents. He didn't even do his homework, so how
13 could he address our issues? But yet, he's getting a
14 salary. So, me, Crystal Glover, chose to come here
15 today to represent Washington Houses and let you all
16 know, the residents, if every tenant association got
17 100 people. You get 100, what is it 600,000 housing
18 developments, how many developments are there? We
19 come together, you take 100, you get a 100 and we
20 come to 250 Broadway and let them know how we feel.
21 We don't have to be violent; we don't have to be
22 irrational but we're tired now. You're harassing us
23 with these tickets about the roaches. Uhm, one more
24 point I'd like to make. How the Mayor, New Years Eve
25 night, instead of them taking that money to put more

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2 buses on the lines, where people were coming from
3 their jobs. I had seen people coming waiting at bus
4 stops for hours because they couldn't get home
5 because there were no buses around.

6 So, you spend all this money getting police.
7 When I got to 42nd Street, there was about 75
8 officers all pointing this way to lead me to the
9 train. You only needed one or two. That money could
10 have been taken and put on putting buses online, so
11 that people could leave their cars home. Then when
12 people are drunk, they could jump on a bus, but no,
13 they put more cops online and I was in Brooklyn and I
14 saw the mothers and the fathers sitting, waiting for
15 that 46 bus with their heavy bags and couldn't get a
16 bus, for one hour we waited.

17 And so, nailing it all down and rounding it all
18 up, we are disgusted, fed up but guess what, the ball
19 is in our court as residents because people will do
20 to you what you allow them to do. You are in a
21 leadership position as the Tenant's Association. You
22 are independent and democratic as a board and NYCHA,
23 the mission statement on the bylaws tell you
24 everything about how independent you are. You got
25 TPA funds you can take and create programs for your

1 residents, so we can come here and complain about
2 what they ain't doing and what this one ain't doing
3 but what are we doing? We got to get together as
4 residents of NYCHA. We are New York City citizens,
5 born and bred citizens, we're citizens of this
6 country and we got to act like - we can't let these
7 people keep -

9 So, I came out today. I know and I love you to
10 pieces. I say, thank you lord. I give God the glory
11 to praise any honor because it's him that's keeping
12 us. We are suffering in public housing. We are
13 suffering and you people, Brian and all of you. Hi
14 Brian, I worked with you. We got a new Monitor, a
15 new Chairperson. You need to come out to Washington
16 Houses. We are one of the few develops. I will give
17 you this much and as far as this, I got to say this.
18 I tell people, I don't use drugs. This is clear,
19 okay. Whats been happening in Washington Houses.
20 Our heat is retarded okay, so, okay, 10:45 for the
21 past three months, you hear banging and tinkling and
22 clicking in the pipes, right. 10:45 at night, okay,
23 you hear banging and clicking but there is no heat.
24 You get heat maybe, maybe you don't. Okay, that's
25 one thing. Then all of a sudden, it's been reduced,

1
2 now it comes on at 12:00 midnight. So, if you're
3 asleep, getting ready to go to work tomorrow, you
4 don't know whether the heat is on or not because it's
5 12 midnight. It's retarded. Get it together,
6 please.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so much Ms.
9 Glover, Ms. Coleman, Ms. Ortiz and Ms. Torres for
10 your testimony today. Does anybody from the
11 Committee have a question for the residents before we
12 close out? Okay, thank you so much.

13 We have been joined by Council Member Gibson,
14 Council Member Ayala, Council Member Gjonaj, Council
15 Member Menchaca and Council Member Richards. Council
16 Member Diaz was here a thousand times before.

17 And as we transition to the next panel, we will
18 be hearing from — so, now, the moment we've all been
19 waiting for, we will be hearing from the Federal
20 Monitor himself, Bart Schwartz. And it's been almost
21 one year and so, this is the first time we're hearing
22 the Federal Monitor testify before the Public Housing
23 Committee.

24 So, thank you so much for being here. And so,
25 before you start, Council will swear you in.

1
2 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you affirm to tell the truth,
3 the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your
4 testimony before this Committee and to respond
5 honestly to Council Member questions?

6 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you. Chair Alicka Ampry-
7 Samuel, members of the Committee on Public Housing,
8 NYCHA residents who are here and those who I've met
9 over this last ten months and other members of the
10 public.

11 My name is Bart M. Schwartz; I am the Federal
12 Monitor overseeing NYCHA's Compliance with the
13 settlement agreement, it's signed with the City, HUD
14 and the United States Attorney's Office on January
15 31, 2019.

16 I started working on March 1st of 2019 and the
17 Monitor ship really hit its stride when the new CEO
18 Mr. Russ joined in August of 2019.

19 This is my first winter with NYCHA and dealing
20 with the NYCHA issues and we've learned a lot about
21 preparedness and I'm going to go into some of that
22 later in the presentation. And I appreciate the
23 opportunity to be here today, so that I can discuss
24 what has been done and what needs to be done and the
25 approaches that we are taking.

1
2 So, I'd like to thank everyone who has worked
3 with us beginning with Mr. Russ, Gregory Russ; the
4 new Chair and CEO, his staff, HUD's DC office and
5 Lynne Patton in New York the United States Attorney's
6 Office and City Hall. But I think most of all, I'd
7 like to thank the residents. Despite the frustration
8 that they understandably express, they've been very
9 direct and communicative and informative about the
10 issues they want us to focus on and to help us
11 understand how to deal with those issues.

12 As you can imagine, while there are many issues
13 and they're individualized, there also are many
14 common elements. Now the primary goal of the
15 settlement agreement which appointed me, is to ensure
16 decent, safe and sanitary housing for all NYCHA
17 residents. To do that, the agreement requires NYCHA
18 to improve its performance in certain problem areas.
19 One of which of course, is heat and hot water
20 systems. More often than not, NYCHA residents have
21 experienced prolonged heat outages and shortfalls in
22 the winter months. And while there are some
23 definitional issues as to what is an outage and what
24 is a shortfall, and we have focused primarily on
25 outages because those impact more residents than any

1
2 others. They are clearly related issues and I don't
3 think anyone is addressing or identifying outages as
4 a way to avoid dealing with them, it's just that
5 there are really probably two different solutions
6 that are involved.

7 So, I'm going to focus primarily on the outages,
8 which because they impact so many of the residents
9 and in a little while with the charts that I've
10 distributed, I'll show you some statistics that we've
11 gathered from past activities.

12 The agreement which appointed me, directs NYCHA
13 to make measurable improvements in heating and for us
14 to create action plans. These action plans are
15 NYCHA's responsibility to prepare but they must be
16 approved by me and it was a process. This was not
17 simple, it's not a matter of NYCHA providing a plan
18 and my team saying yes or no. We look at the plans
19 and we made suggestions. There was a up and back and
20 a discussion to try to refine and improve the plans.
21 And the result is a very extensive plan which deals
22 with heat and heat only.

23 And I think I could add, because there may have
24 been some confusion over this. As you know, when it
25 comes to NYCHA heating systems, there are some

1
2 vendors who manage heating systems and in other
3 cases, NYCHA itself manages them. The heating action
4 plans cover the vendors as well. They may be
5 somewhat different because the vendors are in a
6 different position but this is intended to cover all
7 of the heating plans, whether they are overseen by a
8 vendor or overseen by NYCHA.

9 We've also been working to create action plans in
10 other areas including mold, lead, elevators, pests
11 and waste. I mention that only because the heating
12 plan is way ahead of the others in its detail and
13 will probably be a model for how we deal with some of
14 the future action plans. Some of which are already
15 in place and others which are in the process of being
16 negotiated and agreed to.

17 These action plans should be reviewed and the way
18 I view them, is NYCHA's contract with the residents
19 to deliver services. Because everything we do must
20 be directed at the delivery of services. So, these
21 action plans provide important roadmaps with hope
22 future success. We also have been working with NYCHA
23 since the beginning of the model to make measurable
24 and meaningful improvements now.

1
2 We have subject matters in heating systems and
3 Henry Palancar who is to my right and he may speak.
4 When he does of course, we'll have him sworn in but
5 he is from Turner & Townsend which is one of the
6 expert groups working with us and has been very much
7 involved in creating the charts that I distributed
8 before I testified, and which I will talk about at
9 the end of the written testimony.

10 So, we've been working with these subject matter
11 experts on heating systems and property management
12 industry practices and field examinations. One of
13 the things we've done, as I said, this is our first
14 experience with winter since I started in March 1st
15 really, was my first day.

16 We have a group in our organization which is made
17 up primarily of former law enforcement officers,
18 mainly NYPD but also some from Federal Law
19 Enforcement and we try to track as many of the
20 outages as possible and I don't mean track on a
21 computer, we go to the development and we see what's
22 going on. What was the problem. What is the
23 information we can gather from the residents about
24 the problem and we maintain records of all of that as

1
2 a way to learn what problems are and how they may be
3 addressed going forward.

4 I'm sure there will be some discussion of this
5 when NYCHA panel is here but everyone recognizes and
6 as the residents recognize, the heating systems are
7 made up of different components and fixing a boiler
8 and having a distribution system that doesn't work is
9 not helpful to a resident. They're still going to be
10 cold.

11 So, we have to take an overall look at this,
12 which is where some of the money for example, that is
13 available through the Governor's program or the
14 Mayor's programs, will be helpful in making those
15 repairs.

16 So, in the near term, we really must recognize
17 that while some heating outages may be prevented by
18 better pre-season maintenance, other outages can and
19 will occur for these other reasons and are not such a
20 quick fix. But having an action plan is necessary as
21 a first step to better manage both the outages and
22 all of the equipment related to them.

23 I should add that the heating action plan, which
24 is quite lengthy is available on the website of the
25 Monitor's Office. Included in the overall heat

1
2 action plan are individual action plans for 20
3 different developments that NYCHA and our team
4 identified as having the poorest performance and at
5 the end of last month, NYCHA provided me with heat
6 action plans for 50 additional developments with poor
7 heat performance. These action plans together create
8 a structure and proactive strategy to reduce the
9 number of outages and shorten their length.

10 When we first started, there was a pervasive
11 sense of resignation by many at NYCHA that the
12 heating problems could not be solved. And I believe
13 that part of the reason for that is that the way
14 NYCHA was approaching the problems is by first
15 identifying its resources and its resource
16 limitations and then planning to the limitations.
17 We, I believe have changed that and have been able to
18 persuade NYCHA that if they continue to limit their
19 thinking inside their resource constraints, there
20 will never be progress. And now, the approach is
21 what needs to be done and then let's figure out how
22 to get the resources. I think that is a sea change
23 in how this problem is being approached.

24 We believe the new heat action plan already has
25 begun to make a difference. It appears that outages

1
2 have a shorter duration and I will go into that in a
3 moment. Breakdowns are more quickly and efficiently;
4 staff is mobilized more quickly and efficiently and
5 parts are more available for repair. The
6 communication is better but NYCHA suffers generally
7 from poor communication, whether it's heat or
8 anything else and that still needs work but I think
9 that's improving. And there needs to be more
10 assistance to residents when there are substantial
11 outages.

12 Prolonged heat outages are unacceptable and that
13 needs an all hands on deck approach to resolve them.
14 During such outages, the action plan provides for the
15 rapid assembling of the heating room comprised of all
16 the key departments within NYCHA that will mobilize
17 to both fix the breakdown and better assist
18 residents.

19 Beyond the action plan, I have recommended that
20 utility companies and key city agencies designate a
21 senior person within their organizations as a NYCHA
22 liaison who can facilitate an expedited response to a
23 NYCHA emergency. Every heating outages should be
24 considered an emergency and every agency should
25

1
2 consider it its emergency, not just NYCHA's
3 emergency.

4 When outages cannot be resolved quickly, even
5 with better coordination, the action plan calls for
6 alternative heated community spaces to be open.
7 These heated spaces must be available to residents
8 effected by the outages that are expected to last for
9 a substantial amount of time.

10 NYCHA will be required to provide shuttle
11 services to transport residents to these warming
12 centers. That part of the action plan comes with its
13 own obstacles. As most NYCHA community centers are
14 currently not able to serve as heating centers. So,
15 I will be working with NYCHA on a firsthand basis to
16 work with residents to be looking at the community
17 centers that have been designated as warming centers
18 to make sure they can really serve that purpose.

19 The settlement agreement and the heat action plan
20 also require NYCHA to conduct root cause
21 investigations for heat outages lasting more than 12
22 hours with the purpose of learning how to better
23 prevent or mitigate them in the future.

24 The newly created environmental health and safety
25 unit is currently responsible for these

1 investigations. We are exercising oversight to make
2 sure NYCHA's root cause investigations are thorough
3 and complete and I'm pleased to report to you, from
4 what we have seen so far, those investigations have
5 provided unbiased critics independent of the heating
6 department and they have called for smarter
7 mobilization of heating staff during nighttime hours
8 and better preparation during the summer. Studying
9 our findings with NYCHA and even more a better
10 understanding of what heating systems need
11 replacement and how to better focus on the preseason
12 maintenance program for next winter.

14 While we are hopeful that the protocols and
15 procedures in the heat action plan will improve
16 NYCHA's outage performance, the bottom line is that
17 heating equipment in the worst shape, must be
18 replaced. To that end, in November, I approved
19 NYCHA's action plan for using up to \$450 million in
20 state reimbursement funds to replace 108 aging
21 boilers and heating plants. We work very closely
22 with NYCHA on that action plan and it is my
23 responsibility at the end of the day to report to the
24 legislature and the governor that the work has been
25 done in accordance with the action plan and if that's

1
2 the case, than the reimbursement money will be made
3 available. And I have every confidence that NYCHA
4 will work in accordance with those action plans and
5 we will be working with them to help achieve those
6 goals.

7 My roles as the Monitor going forward is to
8 ensure that NYCHA is following the procedures and we
9 will continue to do that. As part of that process, I
10 will continue to meet with Chairman Russ. We meet
11 with the heat department. We participate in the
12 weekly meetings that the heat department has to
13 discuss failures and we will continue to work closely
14 to try to identify problems.

15 The approval of this heat action plan is, as I
16 said, a contract and really just a beginning. We
17 will continue to measure the results. And I'd like
18 to at this point, turn to the charts that we handed
19 out and I won't take too much of your time because I
20 think this is illustrative what we're doing but this
21 is the first page, is what would be called a
22 dashboard, which has a lot of different information
23 on it which we got from NYCHA. So, I think it's
24 important to note that all of this information is
25

1
2 available and continues to be available and in years
3 past was also available but never utilized.

4 So, if you look at the chart, just to give you
5 some examples, in this bottom left area, you'll see
6 that there are four - there's a bar chart and it
7 measures average outages duration in hours and
8 average response duration in hours. And let's except
9 the numbers as accurate. We still have to get behind
10 this to see that the numbers are, but let's accept
11 for a moment that the numbers are accurate. We look
12 at this and we use these charts to ask questions.
13 Why is it coming out this way?

14 So, if you look at BK, which stands for Brooklyn,
15 it takes 3.7 hours for the average response duration.
16 The average response 3.7 hours in Brooklyn. 4.1
17 hours in Manhattan. In Queens, it's .7 hours and in
18 the Bronx, it's 1.5 hours. Now, you guys have to ask
19 yourself, why such a discrepancy? Well, when you
20 look at things more closely, we're still in the early
21 stage of this but I want to give you this example.
22 The Bronx were at 1.5 and Queens and Staten Island
23 are combined where it's .7, that's where NYCHA has
24 its centers with the trades and the equipment.

1
2 So, when you see a difference of 3.7 for Brooklyn
3 and 1.5 for Bronx, maybe it means that the staffing
4 and the equipment and the organization needs to be
5 less centralized and more decentralized and that's
6 the kind of thing we will look at. And I think very
7 interesting, if you look at Brooklyn, the average
8 time, the duration of the outage is 7.8 hours.
9 Almost 4 hours of that is the response time.

10 So, even if you didn't make a single improvement
11 in the repair, if you could just improve the response
12 time, you could make an improvement for the residents
13 there. And then, I'm going to give you one other
14 example on this chart, which is a little busy I know,
15 but the bottom righthand corner, if you look at the
16 hours at the bottom it's from 0-24, although 24
17 didn't print. It's military time, so if you look at
18 7:00, 1900 hours, interestingly that seems to be a
19 low point for any reporting of outages. But if you
20 look at the blue line, those outages take the longest
21 to repair.

22 So, at the time when they are the fewest, it
23 takes the longest. That tells us we ought to look at
24 how resources are being assigned during that period
25 and could we reduce the outages dramatically if the

1 staffing was different? Now, I'm not saying to you
2 that all of this is proven at this point but we're
3 able to take this information and ask the questions
4 that we have to ask for this winter and for next
5 winter. That I should point out that we don't play
6 gotcha with NYCHA, when we find something, we tell
7 them.
8

9 If there is something that can be done that can
10 be changed, we want them to know it immediately. We
11 don't treat this as something that we spring on them
12 and don't discuss with them. And if you look at the
13 other charts, and maybe I'll turn to this one. I
14 don't want to be flippant about it, but this normally
15 would be called a heat chart, we call it a cold chart
16 because what this shows is where you might likely
17 find the problems where there would be heating
18 outages. So, when you see a red center as you see on
19 this chart, it's almost a predictive device, where
20 are the heat outages going to be and then you can
21 deploy your resources in anticipation of the problem
22 rather than waiting for the problem to occur.

23 So, these are examples of what we're doing with
24 NYCHA. I appreciate the opportunity to address this.
25 We continue to work very hard on this winter but also

1
2 on information that could be used going into the
3 summer preparation and next winter.

4 I'm sorry, this took longer than you might have
5 expected but I wanted to cover as much ground and I'd
6 be happy to answer any questions anyone has.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so much and
8 it was very helpful. It's been you know, like I said
9 earlier, a year since you started and this was very
10 helpful to hear exactly what you've been working on
11 and what you've been doing.

12 Can you first explain to us where you are? Like,
13 is the Federal Monitor team located within 250
14 Broadway. Are you in the borough offices at all?
15 Can you just tell us a little bit about how you work
16 with the NYCHA team.

17 BART SCHWARTZ: The actual answer to that is
18 we're a little bit everywhere because we need to be.
19 To be the practical experience and again, we really
20 are very resident focused. We have our CAT committee
21 which is made up of residents and others. I know the
22 Chair is a member of our CAT committee and we try to
23 stay in touch with residents as much as we can.

24 So, we have our offices where we've had — before
25 NYCHA existed for us. We have offices at 250

1
2 Broadway. We'll be getting offices at 90 Church when
3 NYCHA has fully moved to 90 Church. We have offices
4 at some of the borough offices and then we have this
5 flying squad, which goes wherever we think we need to
6 go and we interview people. We talk to people and we
7 spend time with the residents. I think since the -
8 I've been at this for ten months and in those ten
9 months, through either telephone or personal
10 meetings, I have met over 200 Tenant Association
11 Presidents.

12 We have our team members have visited every
13 single development. We have not missed a single
14 development.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And you say we, so can
16 you now tell us about who the we are?

17 BART SCHWARTZ: Sure.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And also, with that
19 same question, when you mention there are experts
20 that have been working on the heat plan and working
21 directly with NYCHA, can you just explain to us who
22 these experts are? Are they experts in data analysis
23 or are they actual experts in heating and electrical
24 and plumbing?

25

1
2 BART SCHWARTZ: I would be glad to answer that
3 and it's the later, while we do have the added
4 experts, we have experts in all of the skills that
5 are needed to repair and understand the systems. So,
6 Turner & Townsend has been the primary expert on many
7 of the fiscal plant problems such as heating,
8 plumbing and things of that nature. We have
9 individuals who are experts on mold and lead. We're
10 spending an enormous amount on lead. I think this
11 Committee knows that my concerns about lead
12 particularly in apartments with children under six,
13 are a high priority for us.

14 So, we have those experts who are not full time.
15 They work when we need them to guide us as to what is
16 realistic, what is going wrong, what is the current
17 best practice in the private sector and we use their
18 experience to work with NYCHA and provide as much
19 help as we can.

20 I really do want to emphasize that this is not a
21 question of keeping information from NYCHA. We share
22 everything we can.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I'll open up
24 questions now to my colleagues. We also have been
25

1
2 joined by Council Member Helen Rosenthal. Council
3 Member Richards followed by Council Member Gjonaj.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Just a quick question
5 on staffing related to the outages and I was looking
6 at Queens and sort of, you know, you go through the
7 boroughs and Bronx has about 116 staff members.
8 Manhattan has about 137 people committed. Brooklyn
9 has 175 and it seems Queens and Staten Island numbers
10 are sort of combined. We have 69 and I'm talking
11 about you know, you have your central office staff
12 members, administrators, plumbers, plumber helpers,
13 oilers, oiler burner specialists, super, assistant
14 supers, heat plant technicians and maintenance
15 workers.

16 So, when you look at these numbers, it's very
17 apparent that staffing continues to be a big issue as
18 well and I know as a community that was hit very hard
19 by Hurricane Sandy, obviously we were impacted and I
20 want to give credit where credit is due. I think
21 last winter was a lot better and this winter
22 obviously, I was happy not to be out on Christmas day
23 dealing with these issues.

24 So, I just wanted to know are you looking at
25 staffing levels here? What are you seeing?

1
2 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, most definitely we're
3 looking at them. I don't really have conclusions for
4 you because we want to get a better idea of how
5 pervasive the problems are and what kind of problems
6 because it's not just the numbers as you recognize,
7 it's what are the skills and how are those skills
8 being used and how are they being deployed and are
9 they prepared and how much can you do in advance.

10 NYCHA started work on preparing for this winter
11 long before I got on the scene. They were doing it
12 last summer and I think it shows. So, yes, we are
13 looking at staffing. We're going to have to look at
14 a lot of issues when it comes to some of the other
15 problems; mold and lead. There are staffing issues
16 there as well. There are union issues, there are
17 trades issues, all of which need to be looked at.

18 Everybody's going to have to contribute to these
19 solutions. There's no one group that's responsible
20 for improving this.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And you mentioned the
22 placement of equipment, right? So, the equipment is
23 located in specific boroughs, specific areas. Have
24 you give thought to ensuring that perhaps every
25 borough has its own committed and Queens is a very

1
2 big borough, so to get somebody from far Rockaway to
3 Long Island City, it's going to take me an hour.
4 It's probably easier for me to get to City Hall than
5 to Long Island City on some days.

6 So -

7 BART SCHWARTZ: I think it -

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So -

9 BART SCHWARTZ: Oh, I'm sorry.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Are you looking
11 strategically at that and is that something you're
12 going to have a conversation with NYCHA on?

13 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, both, we're looking at it
14 strategically. These numbers seem to support the
15 view that there ought to be more centers of
16 excellence in the communities but we will definitely
17 be talking to NYCHA about that and how to accomplish
18 that. One of the complaints frankly I hear from
19 residents all the time is that the trades experts are
20 spending more time in their cars than at the
21 developments. They're traveling from place to place.
22 If that's the case, we ought to figure that out and
23 make it a more efficient system.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you Madam Chair.
25

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2 BART SCHWARTZ: And by the way, that may mean we
3 don't need more people. You can get the same – you
4 can get more work done with fewer people.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Well, I don't know
6 about that. Let's keep these stats and levels going
7 up. We don't need to do more with less. Let's keep
8 the levels. Alrighty, thank you.

9 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Council Member Gjonaj.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you Chair. So good
12 to see you again Mr. Schwartz.

13 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I recall our last meeting
15 and how productive it was as we strategized on how to
16 get ahead of this. I do have a few questions for
17 you. The \$450 million for the 108 boilers and
18 heating plants that are going to be replaced, the
19 action plan. What's the time period for those 108
20 boilers and heating plants to be replaced?

21 BART SCHWARTZ: Yeah, let me first say what that
22 is. Now, that's the governor's, it's called the
23 governor's money. It's the governor and the state
24 legislature. NYCHA did a study and identified what
25 it thought were the boilers or elevators which needed

1
2 the most immediate attention. To give you a sense of
3 our role, we did our own study of the same issue to
4 see if NYCHA had – if we had any problems with the
5 NYCHA list and I'm happy to say that the list pretty
6 much coincided. The ones that we thought were
7 problems were the same ones that NYCHA thought they
8 were problems.

9 So, the next step is to design build, which has
10 been the big story in the last few weeks where the
11 governor signed the bill. Design build already
12 applied to sections of the governor's money and now
13 applies to all of it. And this is why somebody with
14 more expertise is sitting next to me, but I don't
15 remember the last date for the completion of the 108.
16 Does anybody remember? Five years for all 108.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: That's five long winters.
18 Thank you for that answer. And what about the
19 replacement or prioritizing the boilers that
20 currently have temporary boilers which are coming
21 with a tremendous cost? Have we prioritized those
22 units as the first ones to be replaced?

23 BART SCHWARTZ: Not necessarily, although we're
24 going to apply the same data mining. I want to
25 compare the performance of the temporary boilers to

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2 the performance of the permanent boilers. I want to
3 compare the performance of the boilers that are
4 handled by the vendors to the boilers that are
5 managed by NYCHA. I want to do all those comparisons
6 and then have a basis for making the recommendations.

7 Now, I know with temporary boilers, there's an
8 additional issue and that is they're noisy, they
9 smell, it's ugly. So, you know, that alone they put
10 them higher up on the list, but we want to gather all
11 that information. I will be glad to do that and
12 provide it to the Committee.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: But Mr. Schwartz, part of
14 that equation that's very insignificant is the cost
15 factor. Those temporary boilers are leased and that
16 means monthly payments that we could be utilizing
17 those scarce dollars to effective change.

18 BART SCHWARTZ: Absolutely, I should have
19 included that but absolutely, you're correct.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Interesting enough on
21 your chart, you brought up Brooklyn as taking 3.7
22 hours to respond to and then, you indicate that it
23 took an outage of 7.8 hours. How are we measuring
24 outage? When does the time clock start?
25

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2 BART SCHWARTZ: This information comes out of
3 Maximo.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, as you know it to be.
5 So, as you know it to be, how do we measure duration?
6 The moment a phone call comes in.

7 BART SCHWARTZ: That's the start.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, a moment a phone call
9 comes in.

10 BART SCHWARTZ: This is from a phone call to the
11 time it's verified.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Great, so now that we
13 clarified that. It's just interesting that although
14 the outage was 7.8 hours and it took 3.7 hours to
15 respond to and that's four hours, I'd imagine for the
16 repairs to be done. For the borough of Bronx,
17 although it took 1.5 hours to respond to, it still
18 was down for 7.4 hours. So, although less than half
19 the response time but same duration of outage. How
20 is that possible?

21 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, we have to dig into this to
22 see what were the causes of the outages. Sometimes
23 there are, I hate to call them outliers but that's
24 the common phrase. There could be one or two that
25

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2 really skews the numbers. So, we have to dig further
3 into this to see but that is a very good question.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Okay, in addition, we've
5 spoken about this in person. Rather than the first
6 phone call beginning the time clock, technology
7 exists that we can be notified that a boiler is down
8 based on the hot water temperature within that
9 boiler. Therefore, essentially, we would be advised
10 or you could be advised that there was an outage
11 before a tenant even knew there was a single degree
12 drop in temperature of the heat or hot water. It
13 adheres to be proactive using technology to give us
14 as far advance notice and, in many cases, and it's
15 not difficult to understand that although the heat
16 and hot water could be down, tenants are not calling
17 in. There's always an assumption that somebody must
18 have already called in and the lag time can be hours.
19 Therefore, the lack of services and the response time
20 and the restoration that needed, can be prolonged.

21 Why aren't we using technology that exists
22 readily available? The industrywide, the private
23 industry uses this as a means to be informed quickly
24 so they can respond quickly.

1
2 BART SCHWARTZ: We must look at technology and
3 we're looking at one action plan here, which is the
4 heat plan but when it comes to elevators, where water
5 is often a problem because there are leaks in the
6 roof and on the sides. And NYCHA has moved to have
7 more technology with sensors to alert when there is a
8 water problem before the elevators go out and I think
9 the same thing could be looked at here on one of the
10 early on, I started talking about using drones to
11 examine buildings as a budgeting process. For a
12 budgeting process and to understand the damage that
13 had to be repaired in buildings.

14 So, I'm willing to look at technology and I
15 believe NYCHA is as well.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Mr. Schwartz, I encourage
17 it. It is so inexpensive nowadays to have these heat
18 systems which call you and notify you immediately;
19 that we can then send a response team. And my last
20 question Chair, thank you for the duration.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just with that
22 particular question, I would love to hear and if you
23 can remember Councilman Gjonaj's question to NYCHA, I
24 would love for you to answer that because I'm
25 thinking about CHAS and just different things and so,

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2 please make sure that when you come up, you answer
3 that question as well. Thank you.

4 BART SCHWARTZ: And I think they are installing
5 already electronic heat monitoring systems but this
6 is part of trying to predict where the problem is.
7 If you gather enough information, as you said, if the
8 temperature is down and that tells you that there is
9 going to be a problem before the problem, that's the
10 kind of information you do want to communicate as
11 quickly as possible.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: My other question we had
13 spoken about this in person, you know, I come from
14 this world and the best indicator for me besides the
15 technology, which we used and I was informed on as a
16 boiler problem, was the Superintendent. In most
17 cases, all the superintendent had to do was get up
18 out of bed, go hit that little reset button and the
19 boiler was back in operation. There was no need for
20 the one or the three hours response time. It was
21 taken care of, why aren't our complexes equipped with
22 full time superintendents, 24 hours a day, 7 days a
23 week to answer these emergency calls whether they be
24 boiler related or tenant related? Why can't we
25 fulfill this need? This regulation by the way that

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2 is imposed on the private industry. New York City
3 requires every building to have a 24 hour 7 days a
4 week responsible person that's present. Why can't we
5 do this for our NYCHA complexes?

6 BART SCHWARTZ: I don't have an answer to that.
7 It's something to be looked at and something I want
8 to avoid doing on this panel, but I'd like to defer
9 that question to the next panel.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Then that leads into my
11 next question. We talked about -

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Are these specific to
13 the Federal Monitor, so that we can make sure -

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Yeah, because these are
15 things that he's supposed to be aware of and we
16 discussed this in person. It has to do with pests
17 and the garbage collection methods.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, this hearing is
19 titled Winter Preparedness and I just want to make
20 sure that we are sticking to the topic at hand, so
21 that we can get all the questions asked and we can
22 actually get NYCHA to the table, so that they can
23 testify.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Fair enough, I'll leave
25 it at the questions that were asked.

1 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you so much.

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: We've also been joined
4 by Majority Leader Laurie Cumbo and next, we will be
5 hearing from okay, Council Member Gibson and then
6 Majority Leader Cumbo.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you Chair and good
8 afternoon to you and your team. Thank you for being
9 here and I'm grateful that during today's hearing,
10 our Chair had the residents of NYCHA testify first.
11 It's really important that in your role as the
12 Monitor, you hear directly from the tenants on the
13 ground.

14 These are the same tenant leaders that call us
15 day in day out, all day every day, just to make sure
16 that there issues are being addressed.

17 BART SCHWARTZ: Me too. I get the calls too.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: So, I just had a few
19 questions and I wanted to find out in terms of what
20 your role as the Monitor is as it relates to working
21 with our Chair, Mr. Russ and his team. We were
22 informed last year that some of our NYCHA
23 developments that have brand new boilers are now
24 under the operation in terms of management of third
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2 party vendors. Is that the long term plan as we
3 replace many of our existing boilers that we will now
4 use third party vendors or is this temporary and
5 NYCHA will eventually manage all of our boilers or is
6 this going to be a long term plan that we are phasing
7 in?

8 I don't think many of us knew that but now we're
9 realizing that developments that have brand new
10 boilers are not necessarily handled through NYCHA but
11 a third party vendor.

12 BART SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I don't know what NYCHA's
13 long term plans for that are. That is why I want to
14 gather the information comparing the outages at a
15 vendor managed boiler to a NYCHA managed boiler and
16 give NYCHA the information it needs to make an
17 informed decision about that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and also in your
19 work is you analyze outages throughout the various
20 developments. I wonder if we're also paying
21 attention to our existing infrastructure as it
22 relates to many of our older, agent windows. Many
23 developments, even if the heat is operating at the
24 highest level, if the windows are poor, you don't
25 feel any of that heat. And so, we're essentially

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2 putting band aides on something where we really need
3 to look at window replacement. So, is that a part of
4 the conversation and if it's not, I would like for it
5 to be.

6 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, frankly, it has not been a
7 significant part of the conversation. The focus has
8 been on the heating systems and the hot water systems
9 but certainly, we should add that to the discussion.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and I will tell you
11 not just from experience on the ground in my
12 district, but that is a very, very important
13 conversation. When the physical needs assessment was
14 done, it was determined that most of the interior
15 issues were equally as important as exterior and that
16 means windows. We can't keep addressing the heating
17 system without looking at developments particularly
18 the low rises. Like the consolidated standalone
19 buildings; those windows are old and if we don't
20 replace those windows, then we're just essentially
21 running in a circle.

22 So, I would like for you to consider that.

23 BART SCHWARTZ: You know a lot of the money that
24 has been dedicated to capital needs is earmarked for
25

1 things such as boilers, whatever it may be. So,
2 that's why its been our focus.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: But I would argue, you
5 don't hear many talking about windows.

6 BART SCHWARTZ: I'm not arguing with you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I think in the capital
8 conversation, when we talk about boilers and new
9 roofs, not many are talking about windows. I'm
10 talking about windows.

11 BART SCHWARTZ: You're right.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and the other
13 question I wanted to ask -

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Sure, on that point.
15 I just want NYCHA to remember that question.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, windows.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And respond to that
18 because we did have a conversation about the senior
19 buildings and the weatherization in the windows and
20 everything else. So, please remember that one.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Yes, yes, thank you
22 Chair. Yeah, a lot of them are senior building to.
23 The last question I had and this is probably a NYCHA
24 question but I'll bring it up as well. But there has
25 been a lot of conversation with Mr. Russ and the team

1
2 as it relates to the service ticket system in terms
3 of ensuring that if a ticket is actually closed, it
4 means the work is actually done and that also
5 includes heating outages as well.

6 So, I wondered what your role is in that. Are
7 you a part of conversation because any plan that is
8 derived, you ultimately have the approval.

9 BART SCHWARTZ: Most definitely. The Maximo
10 system and the ticket system is a part of everything
11 that we are doing.

12 It's a system that the way it is used, it's a
13 very frustrating system. I'm not even sure it's a
14 system because of the problems with it. So, the
15 simple answer to your question is absolutely yes.
16 Maximo and the whole use of the ticket system and how
17 that is done, that is a big part of what we're doing.
18 It's as important in mold and lead and the other
19 things we're looking at as it is in heat. In fact,
20 in some of the others, it's even more important and
21 more frustrating because of the fact that so many
22 times we hear from residents, tickets are closed
23 where no one showed up and all of those things.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right, okay, and I'm
25 sorry, my final question. It's been on my mind, I

1
2 can't explain it but in some parts of our portfolio,
3 there are developments who are provided with heat
4 from other developments. So, they don't provide
5 their own heat and I'm going through that right now,
6 where I have two buildings that are consistently
7 always out and not having heat but they're supplied
8 by another development that is actually on the queue,
9 in queue to receive new boilers.

10 So, I guess my question is, with those particular
11 developments where you have that scenario, when we
12 replace the boiler are, we going to take those
13 buildings off of that line or will it remain the same
14 where a development is feeding its development plus
15 another development as well.

16 BART SCHWARTZ: I'd have to look at the
17 specifics.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, strange.

19 BART SCHWARTZ: To see what the plans are but in
20 terms of delivering reliable heat that shouldn't make
21 a difference whether it's coming from another
22 development or it's located in that same development.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Agreed, okay. Thank you
24 so much Chair and thank you Mr. Schwartz and don't
25 forget windows.

1 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you. I won't.

2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you. Majority
3 Leader.
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you so much Chair.
6 I just wanted to follow up on Council Member Gibson's
7 question that brought up the issue in terms of
8 tickets.

9 So, when a resident files a complaint as I'm sure
10 you're well aware of this but wanting to know how do
11 we remedy this. That residents take off from work,
12 they take time off from their day, they get
13 childcare, they do all of these different things and
14 then, the issue is not addressed. The person doesn't
15 come that day and then the person has to take off a
16 whole other day. Has there been discussion about how
17 to remedy this, which seems to be an administrative
18 breakdown in terms of simply a response because the
19 response could be, that person not going to be able
20 to come today or could be reschedule? But right now,
21 it seems that there is currently no system in place
22 to let a resident know how to receive the services
23 that they need.

24 BART SCHWARTZ: Right, well, I know that NYCHA
25 has spent a lot of time looking at this and we have

1
2 with NYCHA, so it's not - because it's all about
3 productivity and accountability to get the work done.
4 That's really what is the foundation here. So, it's
5 important that the resident is suffering because the
6 problem continues in this work, whatever it may be
7 but also it means somebody is not getting the job
8 done and a lot of other issues surrounding those
9 tickets.

10 So, that's why we are looking at Maximo so
11 carefully and I'm sure in the next panel, there will
12 be some discussion about that. As I said, it's not a
13 single issue when it comes to these things. Part of
14 it is the lack of a service mentality.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Let me just cut you off
16 because I remember a colleague of mine when I first
17 got elected, I said if you don't know the answer to
18 the question talk a lot about the issue, right.

19 So, if you can show that you are eloquent about
20 acknowledging and recognizing the issue, sometimes
21 that will suffice. What's the solution to actually
22 addressing that issue? There's one thing to look at
23 something but you can look at something only but for
24 so long. How do you take the look and transfer it
25 into results on both parties because we're really, in

1
2 my imaginary mind, we're really looking at the role
3 that you're playing to be more of an enforcer or one
4 to hold NYCHA accountable to a practice that has left
5 many residents frustrated, vulnerable, depressed. I
6 mean I've walked into some homes and I've cried. And
7 not being able to do anything because they're just
8 sitting at home waiting for the service and they are
9 not getting the service for something that some of
10 these apartments look like post Hurricane Katrina in
11 New Orleans the next day. Like, they look that bad.

12 So, what's the issue? How do we fix this? How
13 do you hold NYCHA accountable for this?

14 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, it's more than one issue
15 and I think I've mentioned a couple of the potential
16 solutions but one of the problems is that it takes so
17 many trades and so many visits to get a single repair
18 done. That's something that has to be addressed.
19 Can it be new titles within the trades, so that one
20 person can not only verify that there's a leak but
21 maybe break the plaster, do a simple fix, re-plaster
22 and paint rather than creating -

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But it sounds like that
24 meeting hasn't happened yet. At a certain point,
25 someone has to say, alright all the trades, come on.

1
2 Let's get in the room, we got to fix this. How are
3 we going to do this? We're going to do this better
4 and we're going to come out at the end of this
5 meeting and it's going to be like this now.

6 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, yes, that will happen. I
7 assure you that will happen.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I mean, it's been for me
9 six years.

10 BART SCHWARTZ: For me it's been ten months and
11 I've learned a lot and this is one of the major,
12 major problems. Civil service is a problem in terms
13 of being able to fill jobs at NYCHA. I hope you'll
14 hear more about that. If not now, at another session
15 but it's very difficult to fill vacancies at NYCHA
16 and to get qualified people in.

17 So, time has been spent dealing with this but a
18 lot of it is not in NYCHA's control. Although, NYCHA
19 and I with them have to challenge those that are
20 responsible.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I've heard your response.
22 It's alarming that we haven't made more progress in
23 this way, which it simply to me means that we have to
24 bring people together and we have to — we know that
25 there are problems but our ability to recognize the

1
2 problem and to eloquently understand the problem, we
3 have to move past that. Here's the problem, we got
4 to fix it today and we got to move forward with
5 something else.

6 So, in my district, just speaking more clearly.
7 Some of the 20 worst performing developments with
8 heat outages, two out of the five developments are
9 listed. Whitman is third with 38 outages and
10 Ingersoll is eighth with 23 outages and heat outage
11 response plans are reportedly being created for each
12 development.

13 What I want to know is, how is NYCHA currently
14 dealing with those that are on the worst performing
15 developments with heat outages. How are they being
16 prioritized and dealt with because Ingersoll was
17 amongst the 15 developments that were seen as needing
18 additional support and resources.

19 So, it's curious to me that Ingersoll would be on
20 this list at this time.

21 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, I think NYCHA needs to
22 answer some of that but the way we have prioritized
23 that, is through the heating plans. The heating
24 action plans, going after the worst developments and
25 demanding that we have those plans and those have

1
2 been approved as I said in the testimony. The first
3 20 and then the next tranche was 50 and again, it's
4 this kind of analysis using this information which
5 tells you where - helps you get ahead of the problem
6 and that will be obviously applied to the worst
7 places.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: You also mention in terms
9 of response time that where we talked about the Bronx
10 because that's where the, I guess the head quarters -

11 BART SCHWARTZ: That's possibly the reason. It
12 seems like a logical reason.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Is it possible to build
14 another head quarters in another borough? Is it
15 possible to build - to have an additional because
16 obviously there's a demonstration that there needs to
17 be an additional site to cut down on response times,
18 so that resources could be felt in the borough of
19 Brooklyn quicker than is currently the case.

20 BART SCHWARTZ: I believe it's possible to have
21 centers of excellence wherever you need them.
22 There's no reason that there in one place.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Have sites been identified
24 and a budget put together to say, this is what this
25 would mean in order to address and remedy this issue?

1
2 BART SCHWARTZ: Not at this stage. First,
3 demonstrating that we have the problem. That's the
4 value of some of this analysis is that it gets us to
5 ask the right questions and then to come up with the
6 plans.

7 So, I can't tell you that we've jumped from the
8 information here to a decision or a recommendation to
9 NYCHA to build in other boroughs, but I can tell you
10 we're headed in that direction.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And then I guess the final
12 question, so, you mentioned in terms of a timeline,
13 that much of this work would be done. You spoke
14 about a five year time plan.

15 BART SCHWARTZ: That's for the 108, yeah.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So, with those timelines,
17 are those timelines that NYCHA created or are those
18 timelines that you imposed upon NYCHA?

19 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, it's really a combination.
20 Those are timelines that are based on the time it
21 takes to build all those capital projects.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Is there any mechanism in
23 place if those timelines and milestones are not met?
24 Those goals aren't met in the timeframe that you and
25 NYCHA have agreed to together?

1
2 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, we added for example, with
3 the governor with the state money, we added
4 milestones in the early stages. If I could use an
5 analogy really like the canary and the mine, we
6 wanted to have certain milestones identified in the
7 early stages of the development. That would tell us
8 whether NYCHA was falling behind and then we would
9 take action if NYCHA is falling behind.

10 So, we'll be - part of our job is to keep them on
11 schedule.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So, you'll take action?

13 BART SCHWARTZ: Yes, yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Curious woman wants to
15 know what that looks like?

16 BART SCHWARTZ: Well, the agreement has different
17 actions that are available to the Monitor and it
18 really depends upon what the problem is as to which
19 is the appropriate action. But you know, remember
20 part of my job is to leave. My work should have a
21 beginning, a middle and an end. And at the end,
22 NYCHA should be able to do this for itself.

23 So, part of this is a teaching process and not to
24 be someone from NYCHA to lean on all the time or to
25 think there is a remedy out there. We've all seen

1
2 this, I don't think I'm saying that would surprise
3 you. My experience even in the short time is that in
4 the past years, NYCHA has managed by crisis and I
5 think they have been rewarded by having crisis. They
6 get money, they get help, something gets done.
7 That's why they stop planning in advance and planning
8 for problems. You can't manage that way, that's why
9 a lot of the problems exist.

10 So, I've got to work to make sure that they don't
11 need me.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That's all the questions I
13 have. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you Majority
15 Leader. I just have a couple more questions. You
16 mentioned on page three in your statement that you
17 have a team of field examiners who some are retired
18 law enforcement professionals, who review firsthand
19 the work NYCHA is doing on heat among other areas of
20 agreement and then conduct interviews of staff and
21 residents.

22 And so, can you just talk to us a little about
23 how are these individuals perceived in the field by
24 the residents and the staff? And if it's something
25 that's positive and also, can you talk a little bit

1
2 about your resident engagement. I know you have
3 spoken to 200 plus and the team has met with all
4 developments but can you just talk more about how
5 residents are part of the engagement process, not the
6 CAC but the residents themselves and if you could
7 provide us with your opinion as to how are they
8 feeling about the agreement and the plan, well, the
9 heat action plan?

10 BART SCHWARTZ: Yeah, so let me see the best way
11 to address that. First of all, with the field,
12 people are doing the field, going out in the field.
13 The residents appreciate that they are out there
14 talking to them and listening to them and asking them
15 questions and it's something that I think is a very
16 important part of what we do. You know, last night I
17 actually you know, a supervisor was shot by an
18 employee last week. Last night, I went and I visited
19 that employee who seems to be recuperating nicely,
20 I'm happy to report. And I did that because I think
21 that the personnel at NYCHA, they too want to be
22 proud of where they work, just as residents want to
23 be proud of where they live.

24 So, I think it's working having these people go
25 out, having our people go out and talk. I think my

1
2 time was well spent at family days. A lot of hot
3 dogs, but I think that was a good thing for us to be
4 doing to be meeting everyone and to be open to calls
5 and to respond quickly to calls when they come in.

6 Much of what hear is individual complaints and
7 the fact is, I'm really not there to solve individual
8 complaints but you can't listen to some of these
9 stories without your heart breaking. You can't turn
10 away from it. So, we've developed a system where if
11 we see something that we think needs some individual
12 attention we let NYCHA know and NYCHA usually
13 responds pretty quickly to anything that we send
14 over.

15 So, we're spending a lot of time with the
16 residents. Some of those who spoke at the earlier
17 panels as well. I hold community meetings which is
18 really separate from the [inaudible 2:06:28]. I go
19 out and hold the community meetings. So, I'm not
20 sure if that answers your question but it's been a
21 valuable part and rather than being a problem, I
22 think it's been appreciated by the residents. And
23 frankly, I think it's why the residents have given us
24 time and a chance to understand what's needed.

1
2 The way to measure success for us is not to have
3 great action plans and great systems and everything
4 else unless the results get delivered to the
5 residents. That is the test for us.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Do you have an opinion
7 at all as to how NYCHA can incorporate in the more
8 formal way while you are here as the Monitor, the
9 residents information, voice and feedback and not
10 just through the process of a work order and tickets
11 and you know, like what's happening on that level but
12 more of a like, feedback to know that what's actually
13 happening is happening?

14 BART SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I think just generally
15 NYCHA needs to do more in terms of communication and
16 with the residents and the opportunities to
17 communicate. As I said earlier, that is a big
18 frustration that I hear from residents. They don't
19 get notice. No one is talking to them about changes
20 that may take place. It is a big frustration. If
21 you are asking, are there ways and I think I've heard
22 this - I've watched some of the earlier hearings. I
23 haven't been here but I've watched. Is there a way
24 to rate an employees performance and if that's the
25 kind of thing your talking about, I think that's a

1
2 healthy part of analyzing your workforce and knowing
3 who is being productive and who isn't being
4 productive and part of a service environment. That
5 how are the residents perceiving you?

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so, are we good?
7 Hearts and minds are clear? Okay, thank you so much
8 for your testimony today.

9 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I look forward to
11 continuing to work with you, with the other action
12 plans.

13 BART SCHWARTZ: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And with that being
15 said, we are ready for our next panel.

16 BART SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you. We have
18 testifying today, Chair of NYCHA, Mr. Gregory Russ,
19 Joey Koch and Brian Honan.

20 You can tell that the Federal Monitor is familiar
21 with testimony on a federal level because he
22 immediately stood up and raised his right hand. Did
23 you all notice that?

24 Council will swear you in.
25

1
2 COUNCIL CLERK: Do you affirm to tell the truth,
3 the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your
4 testimony before this Committee and to respond
5 honestly to Council Member questions?

6 PANEL: I do.

7 GREGORY RUSS: Good afternoon Chair, Members of
8 the Committee on Public Housing, distinguished
9 members of City Council, NYCHA residents, members of
10 the public. My name is Greg Russ; I am the NYCHA
11 Chair and CEO and I'm joined by Joey Koch on my left,
12 who is Chief of Staff and former Director of the
13 heating group and on my right, Brian Honan who is
14 Vice President of Intergovernmental Relations and
15 other members of the NYCHA team.

16 First off, thank you for inviting me here today.
17 I am really grateful for the opportunity to testify
18 before this esteemed body for the first time and its
19 been an honor to meet you and have discussions and
20 here what you're hearing. It's been incredibly
21 helpful. So, I just wanted to say that and I do look
22 forward to continuing these discussions and having a
23 productive relationship in the future. And it's not
24 in the written testimony but I just wanted to say
25 again, I, actually said it yesterday in an event.

1
2 Coming here has been a great opportunity and folks
3 have been so welcoming, both genuinely welcoming but
4 also, sharing with me directly issues and problems
5 that they face and doing that in a way that's just
6 been incredibly helpful and I appreciate it very
7 much.

8 I also want to acknowledge our collaboration with
9 the Federal Monitor, Bart and his team. The Regional
10 Administrator Lynne Patton and her team at HUD, state
11 and city partners, all very important. And I would
12 emphasize to Bart's point that what we're forming
13 here is a partnership. This is unique in public
14 housing history and it will be unique for us but we
15 are working collaboratively and very closely as a
16 team and beginning to build on each other's ideas and
17 I just wanted to re-emphasize that his approach and
18 our approach are in alignment.

19 I've spent my entire career in public housing.
20 It's almost hard to believe half a century and I've
21 worked in city's Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia.
22 I've also worked in Minneapolis and Cambridge
23 Massachusetts. In Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia,
24 we helped turn around struggling public housing
25

1
2 authorities and delivered a residents improved
3 quality of life that they deserve.

4 I joined NYCHA because I do want to make a
5 difference here for New Yorkers and the residents.
6 This is the largest public housing program in the
7 country obviously and it's also something that we
8 really need to touch in a good way, so that the
9 residents living conditions improve.

10 In the past five months, I've appreciated getting
11 feedback from residents, employees, elected officials
12 and other community stakeholders in how NYCHA can
13 transform for today's residents and for the future
14 and I look forward to speaking with you more about a
15 comprehensive vision for what the Housing Authority
16 can be and what that might take.

17 For now, though, delivering basic services such
18 as heat and hot water is at the core of our
19 responsibilities as a landlord and we know how
20 harmful the heating outages can be for residents. As
21 part of our long term plan, we are embarking on a
22 significant transformation to improve operations and
23 serve residents again in partnership with the
24 Monitor.

1
2 So, we will discuss some of this work in heating
3 services and just as a note, as a result of our
4 efforts over the past several heating seasons, we've
5 reduced the time it takes to restore heat outage by
6 73 percent. In the 2017-2018 heating season, we were
7 sitting around 30 hours. In the 2018-2019 heating
8 season, that dropped to eight. And also, the number
9 of outages have been reduced.

10 The foundation for NYCHA's transformation is the
11 HUD agreement, signed last January. It's our
12 partnership with the Monitors and others and that
13 agreement exists also in part because of the Mayor's
14 support both in terms of signing the document but
15 also financially.

16 On December 5th, the Monitor Bart Schwartz
17 approved the heating action plan which we developed
18 with this team in accordance with the requirements of
19 the agreement. The action plan outlines procedures
20 and protocols that we will be following to prevent
21 and respond outages in our aging heating plans. It
22 details how we're supposed to communicate with
23 residents about outages and repairs and provide
24 warming centers in certain scenarios and as Bart
25 testified earlier, how we investigate the outages

1
2 that do occur and especially when they last more than
3 12 hours.

4 The action plan is posted and we will keep
5 residents informed at the plan and discuss it as we
6 implement. We're also creating individual heat
7 action plans and we have 20 developments with the
8 most heating issues have been, their action plans
9 have been posted online and provided to residents.
10 We just recently posted another batch and are closing
11 in on completing individual heat action plans by the
12 end of this month.

13 These documents are very useful because they are
14 very concise and give anybody, resident, leadership,
15 any resident who wants to look at it or members of
16 Council and other elected a quick look at what's
17 going on at that property.

18 One example is each development has its own
19 challenges and one example is Baruch Houses which is
20 in a flood zone, It's susceptible to constant
21 flooding. Its boilers also were beyond their life
22 expectancy requiring frequent welding and other
23 repairs. This development is getting a new steam
24 heat plan elevated 15 feet above the water level and
25 will be getting other improvements as well.

1
2 It should be noted that many of Baruch's outages
3 last year, had to be planned for construction related
4 work and at the rate of outages this year, has
5 actually declined.

6 As another example of the action plan for Whitman
7 House, details how it's currently a mobile boiler
8 site because it will be getting a new boiler plan and
9 instantaneous hot water heaters and vacuum tanks.
10 Per the agreement, we are required to restore outages
11 within an average of 12 hours with 85 percent of the
12 outages having to be resolved within 24. In the last
13 heating season, we met this requirement; 96 percent
14 of the total heat outages were closed within 24 hours
15 about 1,169 outages, fewer than one percent last year
16 were longer than 24 hours.

17 As of January 12th, this year, we are resolving 95
18 percent of the outages within that 24 hour goal. No
19 heating outages have lasted more than 48 hours this
20 season and in 2017-2018 we had 352 outages that
21 lasted longer than that.

22 Heating improvements; this is one of the largest
23 mechanical, electrical and plumbing operations in the
24 country. We have 2,300 buildings across the city,
25 1,700 boilers, 1,500 vacuum tanks and over 800

1
2 instantaneous water heaters. Approximately 550 full
3 time heating staff including the technicians,
4 maintenance workers, plumbers, oil burner
5 specialists, supervisors and support staff maintain
6 this system. And this is a system that's very
7 important to remember that not only is it a boiler
8 plan itself but we have to distribute that heat and
9 the distribution system, the system inside the
10 apartments, the tank rooms, the risers, are all of
11 their age and when we talk about outages, any one of
12 those areas can be a source of a problem for us.

13 NYCHA's buildings and infrastructure are old and
14 it's an unfortunate reality that there will be
15 breakdowns in heating equipment and systems. But we
16 are focusing on preventive maintenance and repairs
17 and implementing operational improvements and we have
18 been able to reduce the number of outages as I noted
19 earlier right through this year as well.

20 We've also introduced planned outages; those are
21 scheduled for warmer days in the heat season and this
22 allows us to do necessary repairs to improve the
23 heating system performance and prevent unplanned
24 outages when the weather gets colder.

1
2 As of January 12th, we've had 106 planned outages
3 to make those kinds of repairs and they have all been
4 restored within the average of eight hours. Our
5 intense focus on responding to outages has reduced
6 the length significantly. In 2017 and 2018, we
7 brought the average time down from 30 hours to 8
8 hours and then we're maintaining that average this
9 season and it's well below the 12 hour restoration
10 target and we'd like to bring that down even more in
11 terms of learning each season about how to improve.

12 You have access to the heating action plan, but I
13 think it's important to kind of give a laundry list
14 of what that plan embodies because it does mark a
15 difference. It marks a focus and a change in the way
16 NYCHA is doing business. We've implemented a 24/7
17 staffing model for the repair teams. We've
18 established a 24/7 heat desk that monitors service
19 disruptions from various data points and dispatches
20 staff accordingly. We've hired 70 more heating plan
21 technicians, 12 full time plumbing teams, 8 temporary
22 plumbing teams, to support our staffing efforts.

23 We have a situation room that is activated when
24 necessary to help coordinate these responses,

1
2 especially if there's a problem in the building or we
3 have a cold weather issue.

4 We conduct a daily call to strategize on service
5 issues. We're performing annual summer inspections
6 of heating equipment and making necessary repairs.
7 This past off season, we invested \$20 million in city
8 operating funds to replace over 500 heating equipment
9 components such as hot water boilers, heat control
10 panels, tanks, valves, lighting, all the essentials
11 to keep the boiler room and the distribution systems
12 operating.

13 We have third party management of the heating
14 plants at over 40 developments and used contractors
15 for specialized repairs across our portfolio. We
16 have staging at high demand heating parts in
17 satellite storerooms in all five boroughs. We have
18 62 mobile boilers staged across the city and we're
19 improving the tracking of outages and assets helping
20 with the monitors teams. Bart's chart is something
21 we aspire to have on a regular basis and make part of
22 our protocol.

23 We're also looking at the root cause of outages
24 to prevent future occurrence. And the plan also
25 shows how we would open warming centers for residents

1 when those are necessary. As part of the
2 transformation effort, we're also stepping up on
3 communications. We're ensuring that residents are
4 notified of outages or in advance if they're
5 scheduled repairs. This is done both with flyers in
6 the buildings but also with the robocall system.
7 We're enabling residents to automatically let us know
8 if they're still experiencing a service disruption
9 when they receive a robocall alerting them of a
10 service restoration. They have the ability to
11 respond and this data helps us better address
12 lingering issues. Improving the process for
13 collecting resident data for outages in other ways,
14 such as updating the questions that residents are
15 asked when they submit a complaint, whether that's
16 through the Customer Contact Center or the My NYCHA
17 app. This helps us diagnose and helps us with the
18 staff deployment. Posting information about outages
19 on our website as well as apartment temperatures for
20 the development where we are installing the indoor
21 temperature sensors. Our website provides more
22 transparency than ever enhanced by our discussions
23 with advocates and residents. We're also posting
24 more information about outages on social media.
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2 We are updating the My NYCHA app and that will
3 allow residents to receive push notifications on
4 their smart phones and we continue to ask that the
5 residents report issues through the CCC or the My
6 NYCHA system as this is the best way to get our
7 response. My NYCHA is also available in Spanish and
8 our CCC representatives can connect callers to an
9 interpreter so that we can get the information we
10 need.

11 Going forward, of course replacing the aging and
12 faulty infrastructure is critical to improving heat
13 service for our residents. Over the next four years,
14 we're replacing 310 boilers across 76 developments.
15 This is a \$930 million investment in city, state and
16 federal funding.

17 Since 2018, we've installed 77 boilers as part of
18 this pipeline. Through our PACT and RAD
19 preservation, we will also repair or replace
20 approximately another 600 boilers. However, outages
21 are not always due to boiler failures. They are
22 often due to the infrastructure and I believe the
23 residents alluded to this in their testimony, that
24 some of the things we are dealing with simply have to
25 do with the infrastructure in the building and the

1
2 age of those systems. An example of this is a recent
3 outage at Independence Towers, which was caused by a
4 break in the underground steam lines and those kinds
5 of breaks are particularly difficult to repair
6 because they involve trenching, shoring the trench,
7 getting the repair folks down into that trench and
8 making that repair stick; if I could use that term.
9 Not very technical but those kinds of outages in
10 distribution systems are really difficult for us to
11 work on.

12 We're taking a comprehensive approach to
13 improving heating service, planning investments in
14 heating systems as a whole, underground systems, the
15 pipes in the walls and the components. And we're not
16 going to replace these just in kind, but we're going
17 to try to put in more effective and efficient
18 systems. For instance, to improve hot water service
19 or incorporating more modern designs in heating
20 plants and we're decoupling the hot water boilers
21 from the other boilers. Often one boiler serves both
22 hot water and heat and we'd like to have a dedicated
23 boiler just for the hot water so that the performance
24 of one does not somehow effect the other.

1
2 We're using HUD's energy performance contract to
3 replace boilers and modernize heating systems with
4 assistance from the energy service companies, which I
5 believe one of the residents mentioned in her
6 testimony.

7 Four energy performance contracts are currently
8 investing over \$271 million at 72 developments. We
9 are on track to exceed our total investment of \$300
10 million by next year, actually ahead of schedule.
11 This work improves the distribution of heat to the
12 buildings, reduces overheating and underheating and
13 makes the system greener and more efficient.

14 We have hired temporary staff to speed the
15 resolution of heating complaints at these
16 developments with new indoor temperature based
17 heating controls and we'll hire two more staff to
18 investigate potential heating issues there.

19 These new controls provide temperatures of 72 to
20 74 degrees, which may be lower than some residents
21 are accustomed to and we heard a little bit about
22 that when the residents testified.

23 Through the states Weatherization Assistance
24 program, we're bringing \$30 million in energy and
25 water efficiency upgrades that would impact 8,000

1
2 apartments and 65 developments. To date, nearly \$12
3 million of work is underway or completed at 30
4 developments.

5 Last month, we released the Design Build RFP.
6 The Design Build is a design and construction
7 technique that really gives us a faster way of
8 completing these complicated projects. So, we're
9 going to transition the heating system at eight of
10 the developments to high efficiency electric heat
11 pumps, enhancing the systems performance and
12 residents comfort.

13 This month, we released an RFP seeking a team to
14 retrofit a select building to attempt to achieve a
15 near net zero energy performance. Together with our
16 other energy efficiency work, this demonstration, one
17 of the first of its kind, would potentially help us
18 plan future capital and also assist the city in
19 meeting its climate change goals.

20 Other ways we will improve service to residents
21 includes more user friendly handhelds for staff
22 developing a plan to assist vulnerable residents in
23 event of heat outages, creating a work order quality
24 assurance program which we're very interested in
25 doing and doing soon. And evaluating this heating

1
2 season once it concludes and evaluation our resident
3 communication system.

4 We're also going to continue to install apartment
5 temperature centers at a total of 58 developments.
6 This technology better enables us to deploy staff and
7 look at the data.

8 We know that the outages are difficult and
9 impactful to residents and providing reliable and
10 comfortable heat is a top priority. We're committed
11 to continuing progress in this area by making
12 substantial improvements to our operations as well as
13 our strategic investments from new heating plants and
14 systems to improved staffing.

15 These efforts are being driven by a fundamental
16 premise. The residents must be at the center of
17 everything we do. While we have reduced the time, it
18 takes to restore heating outages and have
19 significantly reduced the number of outages, we must
20 recognize there is much more work to be done.

21 Thank you for your partnership. We cannot
22 transform NYCHA without you and the other
23 stakeholders that we work with and we look forward to
24 a continuing collaboration. Thank you.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you Chair. How
3 many developments are experiencing an outage right
4 now, today?

5 GREGORY RUSS: That would be posted on our
6 website and I could that for you in a couple minutes.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I think they have it.

8 GREGORY RUSS: Oh, well.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: That's usually the
10 first question.

11 GREGORY RUSS: So, at St Nicks we have water
12 that's out. There are two unplanned water outages at
13 2:25 West 129th Street, lines A and B, 28 residents
14 are impacted.

15 There's abatement work going on which is
16 effecting these lines, typically this could be
17 asbestos. This is in progress and plumbers will go
18 to the site next.

19 Two other posted outages or planned water outages
20 starting this morning at Marlboro and Reese too, both
21 in one building.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, right now, that's
23 it?

24 GREGORY RUSS: Yes.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And those are the
3 outages, right?

4 GREGORY RUSS: That's correct.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so, can you now
6 define what an outage is?

7 GREGORY RUSS: A heat outage?

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yes.

9 GREGORY RUSS: So, a heat outages begins with
10 the call in or the contact we receive from the
11 resident. So, if you call into the Customer Contact
12 Center, the Heat Desk will pick that call up
13 eventually and we're tracking both the type of call
14 we receive from the resident and also the number of
15 tickets. Depending on ticket numbers, we would
16 dispatch someone to that location to see exactly what
17 the issue is. We also get input from existing alarms
18 and technology that we have in some of the boiler
19 rooms, so that's another way that something could
20 signal to us that there's a problem.

21 Once we've made an assessment, we can declare an
22 outage and then we would move to a quick fix it as
23 quickly as we can. What's important to remember is
24 we ask the residents questions at the beginning of
25 this process to try and isolate it, but there is a

1
2 protocol in the heat action plan for what happens
3 post call that basically is trying to trace the
4 problem. Is the problem in the boiler room? Is the
5 problem in distribution or a tank room or is it a
6 riser problem or is the problem specific to the
7 residents apartment? Such as a radiator or radiator
8 valve or something like that.

9 So, that protocol is in place once an outage is
10 established and I don't know Joey, if you want to -

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, what I'm looking
12 for is just to get a clear understanding of what is
13 an actual outage and if you can explain the different
14 categories of an outage.

15 GREGORY RUSS: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And then go through
17 the piece about the work orders and the tickets
18 itself, so that we can get an understanding of what
19 the difference is.

20 JOEY KOCH: Yeah, so an outage is either no heat
21 in either a line. So, the A line for instance, a
22 stair hall, a building or a development. It is a
23 declared outage when we know that there is a heat
24 problem effecting either a stair hall, a line, a
25 building or a development. The way that our team

1 functions, we have staff that's 24 hours a day. We
2 have a heat desk that is monitoring work order
3 tickets that come in as the Chair alluded to and
4 sensors. I know you were interested in whether we
5 had sensors in our boilers and we do. So, we have a
6 team of people who are dedicated 24 hours a day and
7 are responding to the influx of workorder tickets or
8 what we call CHAS alarms, which is a computerized
9 Heating Alarm System, CHAS alarms. So, they'll see
10 an alarm go off that indicates A, there might be an
11 issue with a boiler. It might be offline, whatever
12 it might be and we will have someone dispatch staff
13 to where that alarm is going off. We also have as I
14 noted we watched the influx of workorder tickets.

16 So, if there is a building that's experiencing a
17 lot of high volume, either tickets from calls to the
18 CCC or to the My NYCHA app, they come into a
19 centralized place and we dispatch accordingly.

20 The heating staff is organized into clusters
21 throughout the city. So, a cluster could be
22 responding to more than one development within their
23 cluster. So, the cluster team if you are at Lindon,
24 you might say, okay, go across the street to
25 Boulevard, there's a CHAS alarm going out of

1
2 Boulevard even if they are essentially situated in
3 Lindon. It is also important to note that we have
4 roving teams that come on at 4:00 p.m. and stay on
5 until 8:00 p.m. at night.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, when I asked how
7 many outages are – how many developments have an
8 outage right now, I only heard like a small number.

9 JOEY KOCH: Yes, right now, we only have the
10 water outages at which are alluded to.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And so, that means
12 that overall, like, systematically there are no huge
13 outages happening right now but that does not mean
14 that there are residents – like, it does not mean
15 that all residents have heat, right.

16 JOEY KOCH: Right, so it does not mean that there
17 are not residents that have not put in work orders
18 for heat and given that we currently do not have
19 systemwide outages at this current moment, we should
20 be responding to those particular tickets as they
21 arise.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And so, how many
23 tickets, open tickets do you have right now that are
24 related to no heat and no hot water? Well, not
25 and/or. So, how many?

1
2 JOEY KOCH: I don't know that off the top of my
3 head, we could get that information for you.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and you can get
5 that information while we're sitting here, right.

6 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, I think so, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, Brian.

8 BRIAN HONAN: I just can tell you though for the
9 season that we do take individual you know, heat and
10 hot water complaints and the CCC has taken over
11 130,000.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: 130,000 work orders?

13 BRIAN HONAN: Just complaints called in.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Complaints called in
15 but the complaints, okay, so 130,000 just for the
16 season?

17 BRIAN HONAN: For the season, correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and out of those
19 numbers, can you tell us which developments are more
20 prevalent than others?

21 BRIAN HONAN: We can, yes, and in the
22 developments that were included in the action plan,
23 the top 20, it wasn't an accident that they were in
24 there. The developments historically had the biggest
25 issues as well but Joey can elaborate more on that.

1
2 JOEY KOCH: So, the top 20 that are in the action
3 plan are based on last winters performance. So, the
4 one that was alluded to in the testimony, Baruch was
5 our number one most outage development and that's why
6 they were included in the top, the "top 20"
7 developments. Baruch may not have the same problems
8 at the [Inaudible 2:49:43] but when analyzing what we
9 were concerned about for this year, we looked at the
10 data from last year and that's how we came to the top
11 20.

12 This year though, I'm just trying to see, we have
13 a lot of information in front of us. I'm trying to
14 see which ones appear to have the most outages based
15 on what I have in front of me.

16 So, right now, it looks like, I don't want to
17 waste everybody's time going through the chart, but
18 it looks like sorry. So, for instance, it looks
19 like, sorry, it's not organized in a way that it's
20 helpful to me right now. We will get back to you.

21 GREGORY RUSS: We will get it.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so, clearly
23 there's a difference between the outages and what's
24 happening in the individual apartments and in my
25 opening statement, I mentioned the fact that you can

1
2 have heat in your living room and not have heat in
3 your bedroom and we hear that story over and over and
4 over and so, we're just trying to get an
5 understanding of, is that a work order situation and
6 is that something that you are seeing as an issue
7 that cannot be resolved easily and like, what are you
8 doing about those particular issues?

9 GREGORY RUSS: Well, I think if a resident calls
10 in and we have a cold room or partially -

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I hear that a lot.

12 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, we would try to get there
13 and see what is going on and, in that circumstance,
14 we're going to take a temperature. We're going to
15 take a temperature in the room that the resident says
16 is uncomfortable and at least in two other locations.
17 And it is possible while we're there, we could spot a
18 problem with the radiator. We could spot a problem
19 with a radiator valve. Perhaps this is an early
20 indicator of a riser problem but we do have a
21 protocol for assessing that once we're in the unit.

22 So, I wouldn't represent to you that they're just
23 kind of languishing. We do try to respond to those
24 and do try to see if there's something that we need
25 to address based on that.

1
2 JOEY KOCH: And our goal is to get to that
3 resident who has an isolated heat issue in their
4 apartment within 24 hours.

5 BRIAN HONAN: I also want to add to, I think this
6 is an area where we're changing the way we do
7 business. So, a few years ago, we heard form
8 residents and we also heard in Council hearings to
9 that residents complain that and HPT would come in.
10 They would take it the thermometer out of their
11 pocket. They would measure the temperature and it
12 was always 72 degrees. You know, no matter what,
13 they always said and now, we heard that HPT's are
14 going and measuring in more than one room, in fact
15 several rooms, that they would measure. The
16 thermometer is supposed to be out automatically when
17 they enter into the apartment and they're supposed to
18 ask and they do ask the resident, which is the
19 coldest room in your apartment? Because that's what
20 we want to know because you're exactly right.
21 Residents can be very warm in their living room, very
22 comfortable but in the bedroom that's where they have
23 an issue and that is an issue to be taken seriously,
24 just as serious as if there is an outage throughout
25 the entire apartment.

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2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, my question more
3 or less is, is there a plan for those individual type
4 if issues that are not isolated? They are actually
5 happening across different developments across the
6 city because again, it's not just I'm hearing the
7 complaints, but I've literally went into apartments.
8 You all know I go into apartments, we all go into
9 apartments here and I remember sitting at a tenant
10 association, a resident association meeting with a
11 group of residents that complained about this issue
12 and it was the same issue over the past five years.
13 And the superintendent and the property manager both
14 said, yes, we know. Ms. Smith, yes, we know and
15 we're working on it and then started to talk about
16 the new sensors and the new process and the plan and
17 you know, they're doing things different now, but
18 this has been a problem for years and they have never
19 had heat in the bedroom for years and so, it will be
20 helpful to get an understanding as to what you're
21 doing for those issues while you're also looking at
22 the overall systems and distribution lines and
23 everything else.

24 GREGORY RUSS: Just a couple comments on that
25 because I think there's reasons why this is happening

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2 but, in the position, we are now, and I would not
3 represent that we've been in this position in the
4 past, we are doing a lot more assessment of what's
5 happening in situations like you described. If
6 there's a pattern, we're going to come back out and
7 take a look at that to see, have we missed something?
8 Is there a fault somewhere that we did not see
9 because what you described; we just can't live with
10 that anymore. That's not how we're going to have to
11 do business.

12 And inside the unit, it becomes I think a little
13 different kind of work in the sense that we're
14 dealing with - we are dealing with the kind of the
15 heating bones of the system. The old lines and the
16 old radiators and as you go through some of the steps
17 and the plan, we do take care to see if there's some
18 defect in the radiator valve, some defect in one of
19 the risers.

20 Those repairs can be tricky at times. We might
21 have a blockage. We might have a reason why the
22 steam or hot water is not flowing and it's hard in
23 some cases to isolate. But our commitment is to
24 figure out when we have a pattern response like that,
25

1
2 if there's something else that we could do in those
3 properties and we are committed to doing that.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and just one
5 quick follow up Brian, the number that you mentioned
6 for this heat season with the work orders, the work
7 complaints related to no heat. What's that number
8 compared to last year's heating season for the same
9 timeframe?

10 BRIAN HONAN: Once again, we'll get that but we
11 do have the number on the question from before.

12 GREGORY RUSS: The ten developments with outages
13 this season, the top ten, Independence East River
14 Astoria, Cooper Park, Robinson, Williamsburg, Graves
15 Inn, Fulton, Soundview and Pelham. Oh, and the
16 current workorders that are open right now, we have
17 394 work orders on heat and 150 on hot water.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright, that
19 just seems like a low number.

20 GREGORY RUSS: I will knock wood when you say
21 that.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, okay, I have a
23 thousand other questions but right now, Council
24 Member Ayala. Wait, wait, wait, sorry.

1
2 Oh, Council Member Rosenthal and then Council
3 Member Ayala.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much
5 Chair and my questions are not going to differ from
6 yours. You've asked all the questions; I'm actually
7 just going to ask them again with my developments in
8 mind. So, I want to acknowledge that you've already
9 addressed all of this and I really appreciate your
10 work with all of our NYCHA tenants.

11 So, specifically in my district and I raise it
12 only - hi, nice to see you. I raise it only because
13 I wonder if you are watching for patterns citywide.
14 I've got two buildings that just have it apparently,
15 you know, year after year it's the same problem in
16 the same place. And I appreciated the Chair asking
17 you to define outage and this big definition between
18 what's happening in an individual unit versus an
19 entire line. And so, in one building I've got an
20 entire line that seems every year after year after
21 year, it's always going to be that line that's a
22 problem. In another building where it's always, the
23 bottom floors have plenty of heat but the top floors,
24 forget it.

1
2 And I'm wondering for persistent problems like
3 that, what your plan is, number one. And number two,
4 if you track things in that way, if you track you
5 know, these are one offs, but we have ten buildings
6 that have persistent problems and we have a larger
7 answer that we're working on.

8 GREGORY RUSS: No, thank you Council Member
9 because that is what we are starting to do. I think
10 you heard the Monitor say, there's a lot of
11 information in our workorder system and he and his
12 team have been helpful in extracting that and
13 beginning to set up the kind of pattern map, if I
14 could use that term that you just referred to. And
15 we do track these in a way that does begin to focus
16 on the building conditions. That is not only for
17 this season but we have some historical data that we
18 can use as well.

19 In the situations you're describing, I don't want
20 to project onto what a repair might be, but I think
21 that we've seen, at least when I'm monitoring the
22 outages myself, we have a lot of repeats. And then
23 you begin to wonder, is that a component failure,
24 like one thing is wrong? Is that because the lines
25 themselves have aged out? Or is that an issue in the

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2 apartment and I'd represent that one of the things
3 that's starting to happen for us through the heat
4 action plan and I think really more of a focus on
5 using the information we have is, we would like to
6 attack these issues much more aggressively.

7 And I fear in some cases we have the disadvantage
8 of an aged building that one of the solutions might
9 be that we actually need to do the entire system and
10 that would require an investment of capital and we
11 would have to route that through the capital process.
12 But, it's not one we would be unwilling to commit to
13 if we felt we could resolve the problem.

14 So, I think one of the things I can say is there
15 will be more information on this and a stronger
16 ability to get to the kind of issue. Did you want to
17 add something?

18 JOEY KOCH: Yeah, if I could just add to that.
19 So, after the 2017-2018 heating season, improvements
20 were made to our Maximo system, so that we can
21 identify what specifically happened during that
22 heating outage and in our heat dashboard, which we
23 are actually changing to more mirror what the monitor
24 has provided to you. I'm totally impressed with what
25 they put together. I think it's great, so we are

1
2 going to try and mirror that a little bit but what we
3 are currently doing, is we are tracking trends in
4 outage failures.

5 Last year the Mayor's Office gave us \$20 million
6 in expense dollars, not capital but expense dollars
7 and we were able to invest in smaller components. We
8 made a reference to it in the testimony. It's also
9 outlined in the action plan. And so, we were able to
10 isolate what could be a valve issue. If it is a hall
11 situation, it might be a valve that needs to get
12 replaced. It might not need the entire replacement
13 of the system right his very minute, but we could
14 invest in a smaller component and we're doing a
15 similar exercise and we've started doing Havier[SP?]
16 and his team have started identifying patterns like
17 that. So, that in the off season, we can make
18 additional investments that might be a smaller
19 component but not larger. And just one other, I
20 wanted to just make a note, that if you look at the
21 individual action plans, and we will have all action
22 plans finished by the end of the month, we outline
23 what capital and expense dollar investments have been
24 made, so that you get a sense of where we are in your
25 individual developments as well.

1
2 BRIAN HONAN: And if I could add to, the Monitor
3 mentioned, when we got the opportunity to get state
4 dollars for boilers, we looked not only at the age,
5 we also looked at the performance. And so, in your
6 district, Amsterdam Houses was included in that and
7 they're going to get a replacement of their entire
8 system, so that's really good news there.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: For all 24 buildings?

10 BRIAN HONAN: For all 24 buildings, that's
11 correct.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That's great, that's
13 definitely an area where - please.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just a quick question
15 on that. If they're going to get the replacements
16 and you also mentioned the efficiency and you know
17 like, division that you actually have, like how long,
18 is there a plan to do more efficient developments and
19 we'll spend money on the new boilers within certain
20 developments but then ten years from now, we're
21 trying to make sure that all the developments are
22 more efficient because we have more money in a
23 perfect world.

24 So, is there a way to like stage it out? Are you
25 working on that?

1
2 GREGORY RUSS: Yes, I mean, let me, just a couple
3 options.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just using Amsterdam
5 as an example.

6 GREGORY RUSS: So, in that case, I think we'd go
7 in looking to design first of all, what are our
8 options there? Can we design and replace a much more
9 efficient system in the building and what would that
10 look like?

11 A lot of the boiler systems we have now are
12 really ancient technology. It's admirable that we
13 actually, our staff is able to keep them working but
14 we would look at that because one of the things and
15 the Monitor mentioned in his testimony was the state
16 funding. And one of the things we're doing with that
17 design build, is we're not intending to replace every
18 system in kind. In fact, we'd like to move to
19 systems that relieve us of the distribution systems.
20 Depending on the style of building, that might
21 include looking at options that are building based.
22 So, you actually have your heating plant in the
23 building. We're not opposed to thinking about unit
24 based systems if those make sense and are affordable
25 as well. But we would approach the design and

1
2 investment so that we would be buying the best
3 technology.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, what's going to
5 happen at Amsterdam?

6 GREGORY RUSS: I think we would go in and scope
7 the work and figure out what that means in terms of
8 what system could we put in there. Are we able to
9 put a building based system in there? Are we able to
10 decouple things in some way to gain efficiencies and
11 what kind of boiler and how much more efficiency can
12 we gain. That would be all part of the capital
13 planning process. That process would also engage the
14 residents to some extent because we want to share
15 ideas on the types of repair with them but if you
16 think about it, we know we have an issue. We are
17 going to target it through an investment and we would
18 do a plan to get not only to the problem but also to
19 see if we can actually improve and better the system.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Please, can I just,
21 I'm texting back and forth with my staff that works
22 directly with the NYCHA tenant leaders and she's
23 referring to one building in particular that has heat
24 outages on and off and according to the tenant
25 leader, tickets, the tenants have stopped putting in

1 tickets. I know that's an exaggeration but they're
2 no longer receptive to the ticket system because
3 they're closed with no one actually showing up to
4 assess the situation.
5

6 It's a pretty strong statement, so let's take it
7 with a little bit of a grain of salt, but it
8 certainly is the case that like in every district,
9 you know, the tenants feel promises made year after
10 year after year.

11 JOEY KOCH: So, can I respond to that really
12 quickly. First of all, we ask everybody to put in
13 tickets because it is how we track where we are
14 sending our resources. So, if a CHAS alarm is not
15 going off in boiler in a development that has a
16 boiler system but residents are feeling cold, we
17 really do want people to put in tickets, because that
18 is how we respond.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, just to be clear,
20 I'm not the one you need to -

21 JOEY KOCH: I understand that, I'm just
22 reinforcing. But that being said, when we go to a
23 development that has a high ticket count and there is
24 an outage, we do whatever work we need to do to
25 restore. We go to three different apartments to

1
2 check temperatures in those apartments before we
3 close the outage. We close the outage and then we
4 issue a robocall and the robocall will ask residents,
5 do you feel heat? Or are you getting the heat? We
6 wait an hour before we do that and then they have the
7 option of putting in another ticket if it's apartment
8 specific.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right, you're
10 describing a beautiful system. I'm just relaying to
11 you -

12 GREGORY RUSS: So, if we have a resident that's
13 kind of abandoned the process, let's get someone
14 there to talk to them.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That's exactly where I
16 was going with this.

17 GREGORY RUSS: No, we can do that because I
18 really feel all the things that are about NYCHA
19 happened at the properties and you learn and we can
20 get there, engage the resident leader and the other
21 residents who are experiencing this.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That's great, thank
23 you. Thank you, that's exactly where I was going is,
24 I think it's time to do that again in my district.

25 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, we should talk, right.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And then lastly, would
3 you say on these problems that are annual or more
4 long term, is there any issue, is it that particular
5 staff members know the magic of a unit and how to fix
6 that unit or you know, is there a parts problem?

7 GREGORY RUSS: No, those are – you're asking the
8 same questions we're asking. So, I appreciate that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And similarly, if
10 you're tracking the findings from that.

11 GREGORY RUSS: Yes, yes, I think a number of the
12 buildings that are in your district are steam. Steam
13 is tough. We actually are looking for additional
14 folks with expertise in steam because they're harder
15 and harder to find. But I would say that we would
16 like to break the problem down in the manner that you
17 described.

18 When capital or even if we're doing targeted
19 investments, we would use that analysis to try and
20 figure out what that would like in that building, so
21 that we're designing a system with the intent of
22 coming out of there with a more efficient system and
23 eliminating the heat issue.

24 So, those would factor in, but I want to add one
25 other thing that's really important. I think when we

1 do this work, we are committed to hearing from the
2 resident whose experiencing what they're experiencing
3 because it's kind of like when you take your car in
4 and you tell the mechanic, it's making a noise and
5 you kind of describe it to them and it takes a little
6 while but eventually maybe the two of you can get to
7 what the issue is and it's kind of the same thing I
8 think on the heat side and we're committed to trying
9 to figure that part as well.
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

12 GREGORY RUSS: Sure.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Council Member Ayala.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you for your
15 patience. So, last year, we have these quarterly
16 meetings at my district with resident leaders and
17 staff obviously from NYCHA and at every meeting you
18 know people want to revisit their frustrations
19 regarding the lack of heat and the outages and some
20 years are better than others. This heating season
21 has proven to be a little bit difficult. Last year
22 it was a little bit better than the year before which
23 was atrocious. And so, the way that I kind of try to
24 resolve that and get the group to kind of start
25 looking ahead and planning in a productive way was to

1
2 kind of to get them to admit that we acknowledge that
3 these outages are going to happen. The boiler
4 systems are really you know, old. Infrastructure is
5 you know, is aging and the outages are going to
6 happen.

7 So, I think we need to come to some sort of
8 peace, make peace with that. However, there has to
9 be contingency plans so that when an outage occurs,
10 and an outage will occur, we know what's happening,
11 when it's happening and when it will be remediated or
12 at least an estimation.

13 I think that that has proven very difficult to
14 do. Even for me, it has proven difficult to access
15 information. I think that a couple of weeks ago, we
16 had multiple outages at my district. It was a very
17 cold weekend and you know; I was getting bombarded
18 with calls from all of my resident leaders and I have
19 the most public housing of any other member on this
20 body.

21 So, I was very busy to say the least. I email
22 and I always get a response. You know, we'll look
23 into it, we'll get back to you. The getting back to
24 me could take literally two days sometimes and it
25 becomes frustrating for me because I don't have the

1
2 answers to give but then, I'm also now becoming
3 frustrated with NYCHA because I feel that there has
4 to be a better way of communicating.

5 Here at the Council we have you know, the CED
6 Department. Whenever there's an emergency in one of
7 our districts, CED which is really comprised of like
8 one person that sits there and takes these inquiries,
9 these calls, will email the rest of us and all the
10 pertinent parties and say, hey, there was a fire in
11 your district. This is what's happening, this is who
12 is on site. You know, we will get back to you as
13 soon as we know more. Within a matter of 45 minutes,
14 an hour, as soon as the information is readily
15 available, we're getting constant feedback. So, we
16 know what's happening and that really does help
17 alleviate the frustration that one will feel when you
18 just don't know and I have not been able to
19 successfully get to a place where even I am getting
20 enough information in real time, that I can then
21 communicate to my residents.

22 So, when they tell me that the robocalls are not
23 consistent and when they tell me that their buildings
24 are not being posted or they're not being posted in a
25 timely manner, than I have no other choice than to

1 believe them because it is also my experience. And
2 I'll tell you that I grew up in public housing. I
3 love public housing. I think that you have wonderful
4 staff, I work with them quite frequently but this is
5 a bone of contention for me because you know, I feel
6 like it's frustrating enough that they can't access
7 the information from anyone because nobody's calling
8 them but then they contact their elected official and
9 we're just in the dark as anyone else.
10

11 And so, I wonder you know, what attempt if any is
12 part of this process because you know, we could sit
13 here and celebrate that we have money now to buy new
14 boilers but in reality, we know. We all in this room
15 know that this is going to take years. So, what are
16 we doing today to ensure that people know what's
17 happening?

18 GREGORY RUSS: So, first of all, I really
19 appreciate hearing about this and how this is not
20 working for you. That parts not comfortable but
21 let's talk about that.

22 I think that one of the things is and I focus on
23 the action plan because that's the written statement
24 of what NYCHA intends to do. And what I'd like to
25 discuss with staff is figuring out based on your

1
2 feedback today what modifications could we make to
3 the communication strategy that's already in there?

4 If there are things that we could do, all the
5 things you described. Posting the building, getting
6 the calls, those are things that should be happening.
7 Is there a way that we can work to one, confirm that
8 and then two, to your other point, figure out if
9 there's a way to get you information more effectively
10 and more efficiently.

11 I don't know exactly what that combination of
12 things would be but we will look at it and then I'd
13 like to maybe schedule an opportunity to report back
14 on some ideas.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I mean, you might want to
16 talk to our community engagement division because
17 again, it's made up of one person and I think it's
18 the fastest way of communicating information to all
19 of the stakeholders.

20 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, sure.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Is to have you know, an
22 assigned designated person that's saying, okay, we
23 have an outage.

24 Now, my second question is really related to the
25 outages and the information page. So, how are

1
2 buildings that are experiencing and outage uploaded
3 to that page? Is that an individual that decides
4 this merits an outage, we're going to put that in.
5 Is that an electronic system? How does that work?

6 JOEY KOCH: So, once an outage is declared on
7 your handheld, on Maximo, it's a work order ticket,
8 you declare an outage on Maximo. It automatically
9 will send out the robocall and it automatically
10 creates the outage that is then put on the website.
11 So, it's automatic, it's not a person typing it in.

12 GREGORY RUSS: And is that happening at the site
13 or?

14 JOEY KOCH: Yeah, it happens at the site. So,
15 the HPT, the maintenance worker, usually an HPT when
16 they're at the site, they see the boiler is down or
17 whatever the problem might be. They declare an
18 outages and it's an automatic on the website. They
19 fill out the ticket and it automatically goes on the
20 website.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Is it possible that not
22 enough people are calling to report that they don't
23 have any in their apartment. That the appropriate
24 staff is not dispatched in time and that an outage
25 may not be reported. Because I get, like you know,

1
2 social media is the way that constituents you know,
3 communicate with us nowadays and I get a lot of
4 inquiries like Metro North for instance, has been
5 down a lot this year. They have audible boiler and
6 every time that they call and I will verify with the
7 resident association leader and usually they will
8 confirm that they in fact, you know, that they have
9 no heat but when I look on the system, very rarely do
10 I see those developments listed and then I will
11 follow up with NYCHA and then I'll hear well, there
12 are only a few tickets you know for that building.

13 JOEY KOCH: So, we don't just wait for incoming
14 tickets. Staff is constantly going to the boiler
15 rooms, inspecting boiler rooms and it's possible that
16 they will get to a boiler room, they may not - there
17 could be tickets that are coming in but there could
18 also be, they could get there and find that there is
19 an issue. Fix the issue immediately upon arrival and
20 may not declare an outage because they could just fix
21 it and an outage may not be declared per say. That
22 is possible.

23 There could also be instances where in your
24 district in particular I believe and I could be
25 getting my districts confused. Where we install new

1
2 energy efficiency systems. What happens as part of
3 the energy efficiency is that when the temperature
4 gets to a certain temperature, it shuts down.

5 So, it's possible that, I know it seems somewhat
6 counter intuitive that the radiator maybe cold but
7 the ambient temperature may actually be what we're
8 setting it to be. And then, when the temperature
9 goes down, the valves in the system goes back up.
10 So, it's on and off, on and off and that's an energy
11 efficiency.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: So, what happens when a
13 person feels the heat is not sufficient and now, they
14 turn on their stove to supplement the heat and now or
15 they put on an electrical heater and does that then
16 skew the temperature that's reported for that unit
17 and how does that impact heat into the entire
18 development?

19 JOEY KOCH: So, if we are in the apartment and
20 we'll talk about the apartment first. So, if we are
21 in the apartment, we take temperatures where we know
22 - we never go to the kitchen, we'll go to the coldest
23 room in the apartment. We don't go near the space
24 heaters is someone has a space heater. So, when we
25 have staff that take temperatures, it is purposely

1 not in those areas, so that we want to go to the
2 coldest place in the apartment to take those
3 temperatures and as I noted earlier, outages cannot
4 be closed unless there are three apartments checked.
5 And those photographs of the thermometers are
6 uploaded onto the work order tickets, so we have a
7 way of verifying.
8

9 The centers, centers are never in kitchens.
10 They're supposed to be placed strategically so that
11 it's getting an accurate read. If someone has a
12 space heater, I don't know, potentially, I suppose it
13 could affect the temperature because it is taking the
14 ambient temperature but I don't have any specific
15 information of specific instances where that
16 happened.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Because we've been
18 getting, I mean, hit with complaint after complaint
19 from Jefferson Houses and they actually are new to
20 the energy efficiency system and they hate it. They
21 hate it, hate it, hate it and I had that when I lived
22 in the Highbridge part of the Bronx and it does feel
23 cold. You know, once that the boiler, you know the
24 apartment hit a certain temperature the boiler would
25 shut down and it would get cold. I would imagine

1
2 that in public housing considering the walls are made
3 out of brick, it feels even colder but if somebody
4 could look into you know, the number of complaints
5 that are coming from Jefferson Houses, because you
6 know, I speak to Abigail Hobby, who is the tenant
7 association leader there. She will share a gazillion
8 reasons why this system is not working for the
9 development and their theories on why it's not
10 working but it's a big development. It's you know,
11 populated by a lot of older adults and that always
12 concerns me because we're not talking weatherization.
13 A lot of the windows are you know, really what's the
14 word I'm looking for? Not well ventilated and so the
15 air is coming in, the drafting.

16 GREGORY RUSS: They're leaking.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Yeah, they're drafty and
18 so, you know, the fact that we have so many older
19 adults at the development and we're trying this new
20 system, could you know, really explain the uptake in
21 the number of complaints. And I say that only
22 because when I also brought up the issues of the
23 windows and one of my seniors at Corsi Houses was
24 complaining for years about how cold her apartment
25 was and they finally changed her windows and I was

1
2 talking - she is actually the resident association
3 leader there and she said, it was like night and day.
4 My apartment is so warm and cozy, could they do
5 everybody else's windows because it really does make
6 a difference. And so, if somebody could please look
7 into Jefferson for me.

8 GREGORY RUSS: Certainly.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: You know, I'm concerned
10 with the new system and I look forward to hearing
11 about you know, the plan for getting information out
12 to the rest of us but I think you know, if you could
13 dedicate staff to just -

14 GREGORY RUSS: Well, your conversation has
15 triggered a lot of different ideas that I'd like to
16 run by staff.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: They're free by the way.

18 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, no, thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Free consulting.

20 GREGORY RUSS: Thank you but it is really helpful
21 to hear and then think about how we could modify this
22 because the heating plan that we developed is not
23 meant to be stopped. It's meant to evolve, so the
24 communications and the rest of the work as we figure
25 out new ways of doing things will add them.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you, I appreciate
3 it.

4 BRIAN HONAN: Council Member, I think there is
5 three large developments in your district that are
6 getting new heating systems, Patterson Houses, Taft
7 and Johnson Houses and I think we probably should
8 start to engage folks early because they're going to
9 have that system, so they're going to know it you
10 know, right away from day one and maybe you know, so
11 folks won't be as surprised.

12 I don't think we did a very good job at Jefferson
13 Houses or Washington for that matter and those are
14 two developments that we hear folks you know
15 complaining because you know, again it drops down to
16 72, it goes off and then folks think that the boilers
17 are off and there is an outage.

18 We are planning to do a road show to talk to
19 tenants in developments that have this system to
20 explain it. To listen to people's frustrations and
21 maybe to you know, definitely to do some
22 modifications to make it better for tenants.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I appreciate it, thank you
24 so much.

25 GREGORY RUSS: Sure, thank you.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Which developments
3 have the new system?

4 BRIAN HONAN: We will, we will get it listed out.
5 We have it and we will get that.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and just real
7 quick, do you know how many residents downloaded the
8 My NYCHA app?

9 GREGORY RUSS: We can have it for you.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and Ms. Ortiz
11 explained the new system or process in Vladeck
12 Houses, can you just kind of walk us through what's
13 different at Vladeck Houses?

14 JOEY KOCH: So, literally, the efficiency works
15 with opening and closing the valves and it's based on
16 sensors that are in a third of the apartments. So,
17 an apartment could read 75 degrees, the valve that's
18 attached to that apartment will close and then, the
19 temperature will go down and then once it goes down
20 to a certain temperature, the valve opens and the
21 heat goes back up.

22 It's constantly fluctuating, so that there's an
23 energy efficiency associated with. If we just kept
24 it open all the time, we lose efficiency. So, it
25 closes and opens so that it maintains a static

1
2 temperature and if it gets above that, it closes. If
3 it gets below that, it opens.

4 So, that's how they are maintained between 68 and
5 72 and it monitors itself.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, there were no
7 changes in the individual apartments accept for the
8 fact that some have -

9 JOEY KOCH: I don't - off the top of my head I do
10 not know what individual apartment work was done.
11 Vladeck, they did do the boilers and I believe some
12 of the ancillary work associated with the
13 distribution but I can't speak to the individual
14 apartments that they changed traps or did one, I just
15 don't know the scope off the top of my head, but we
16 can get back to you.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so Vladeck
18 Houses, they have a new boiler system and they have
19 these sensors that are not in every apartment but a
20 third of the apartments and could there be a
21 situation at Vladeck Houses where there may have been
22 historically a problem with an individual line or a
23 kitchen has heat and the bedroom does not. And
24 because the sensor is not in that apartment, it's
25

1
2 reading you know, that everything is okay but the
3 individual apartment is.

4 JOEY KOCH: I mean, I think conceivably anything
5 is possible. I don't know.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, let's not talk
7 about Vladeck Houses, let's talk about Brownsville
8 Houses. Let's go to Brownsville Houses real quick.

9 JOEY KOCH: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, I just wanted to
11 know if it was like something different with Vladeck.
12 So, Brownsville Houses, do they have a new system?

13 GREGORY RUSS: Yes, so at Brownsville Houses,
14 they do have the BMS system that gets apartment
15 temperatures, that's correct.

16 So, I know we wanted to get off of Vladeck, but
17 this is something that we are hearing consistently
18 from developments that have this. So, we were not
19 controlling temperature before, so often we would
20 hear complaints of too much heat and in Vladeck that
21 was a complaint that we were hearing because we were
22 basically just pumping up heaters you know, and so,
23 as often as we get complaints of no heat, sometimes
24 they get complaints of a lot of heat and folks even
25 have, if you go by some developments you will see

1 windows open and things like that. And that's not
2 healthy either.

3
4 And so, when you bring the temperature down and
5 people are used to it, like you know, maybe in the
6 mid 80's and you bring it down to 72, it is, it's a
7 big jump. It's also just something, and also when
8 people are used to hearing the heat or feeling the
9 heat on something and then they don't feel anything,
10 they automatically think there's either an outage or
11 I'm going to be cold you know, eventually.

12 So, that is what we are hearing at Vladeck. Ms.
13 Ortiz has taken to going door to door where people
14 are complaining and going to peoples apartments and
15 those are things that she's found you know, in those
16 apartments. But individually, I don't think the
17 system itself did anything to individual apartments.
18 Those problems probably preexisted. The issues and
19 you know, exist today as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, that didn't
21 really get at, so that's why I said well, let's just
22 talk about Brownsville Houses and I asked a question,
23 like, what's happening there and I asked that because
24 when I went to a Tenant Association meeting, the
25 property manager Ms. Turner and the superintendent

1
2 Mr. Barley, tried really hard to explain the sensors
3 and they even had the conversation around old people
4 are used to having hot apartments and now that it's
5 regulated and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
6 blah, and with that presentation, came a lot of upset
7 residents and they gave specific examples.

8 One was you know, of course, I mentioned this
9 earlier, 337 Blake Avenue where they had no heat for
10 seven days straight and again, Mr. Barley and Ms.
11 Turner knew that this was an issue and its been an
12 issue for years and the sensors are in place and the
13 conversation is now, years ago, residents were used
14 to project heat and we're hearing that but again, I'm
15 just trying to make sure that we are tackling the
16 issues of residents like really experiencing no heat
17 in some of these apartments or too much heat.

18 And how do we know the sensors were placed, it
19 could have been strategic. Let's place the sensors
20 in the apartment where we know we have never had a
21 complaint from them for years.

22 GREGORY RUSS: We got to go.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Like, how do we know
24 that that's not the case?

1
2 GREGORY RUSS: We have to come see. We have to
3 respond to that and as you're describing this -

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And in that
5 development, I sat and we heard testimony after
6 testimony and there were 11 buildings that had heat
7 problems during like, that day. And the Property
8 Manager and the Superintendent were well aware of the
9 issues and said that it was difficult and this is a
10 question that we'll get into as well. Because
11 there's national grid there now and you know, it's
12 difficult for them to you know, get an understanding
13 as to what's happening. They couldn't really report
14 back and it was just kind of like a mess.

15 GREGORY RUSS: So, let's think about what you are
16 saying to us and we can kind of break it down to some
17 things we could do. One is we could make sure that
18 the sensors themselves are working. We have the
19 history of the readouts from those centers, so we
20 could create a set of information and overlay with
21 the complaints and see if that lines up. I mean, if
22 we see the sensor is saying oh, it's 70 degrees and
23 the resident is saying it's not and we could think
24 about well, how do we figure out how to reconcile
25 that.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: No, I'm not
3 questioning the sensors working or not. What I'm
4 questioning is, the sensors can be placed totally in
5 a location within the apartment that it is working
6 but that does not give an accurate picture or
7 description as to what's happening in that building
8 or that development because we know that historically
9 there are problems in certain apartments in lines and
10 places within.

11 GREGORY RUSS: So, I guess, what I'm trying to
12 think about here as you describe this is, do we have
13 residents in apartments that said, either they're
14 sort heat or no heat and does that apartment align
15 with a place where we put a sensor. Because that
16 would be one thing to think about. The second thing
17 is, if the apartments your describing do not have
18 sensors, is there some issue with the line? Is there
19 some issue with the distribution system that we in
20 doing this work did not address, or we did address
21 and maybe the valve is not responding.

22 But these are all things we could test for and
23 these are all things that we could follow up on and I
24 think one of the things about some of the systems
25 that we're installing, and this goes back to Joey's

1
2 point a little earlier, is that it's kind of like the
3 new car that shuts off when you're at the stop light.

4 So, it stops running and a lot of these boiler
5 systems are designed to do the same thing. They are
6 set at different temperatures and the last thing I
7 would say, because I think this is a problem analysis
8 we have to do is that in the buildings where we're
9 replacing any of our heating components, we're
10 dealing with a building that was never insulated
11 correctly in the first place and the window story is
12 a true story in my view because one of the things
13 that we would have to do on a window replacement,
14 that's an enormous amount of capital and we're
15 dealing with a set of situations now that are going
16 to require us to come up with a comprehensive capital
17 investment. And I don't say that because I mean to
18 defer anything we might do at this site, but we have
19 to treat this entire building.

20 So, it's nice that we have money for boilers.
21 It's great that we have money for hot water tanks and
22 we can fix a particular component or even replace a
23 boiler but eventually, because of the age of the
24 stock, we have to come to a place. We're raising
25

1
2 enough capital money to invest in the entire building
3 and that would include windows.

4 So, they are to me, as I think about it, we go
5 from these unit issues right up to this larger set of
6 investment requirements. But let's see if we can
7 figure out what's going on in this particular issue
8 and get someone to look at the problem the residents
9 are experiencing.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, we sent, I went
11 to that particular development with the Federal
12 Monitor's team and we sent those over to NYCHA and
13 so, I would love to be able to follow up because that
14 was a serious issue and I was hoping that we would be
15 able to use that experience and kind of flush that
16 out.

17 GREGORY RUSS: No, it's an excellent and
18 unfortunate example, but I think it's one, let's see
19 if we can figure out how to solve for this and what
20 we could do is take a look at what you've provided or
21 what has been provided by the Monitor, strategize
22 with our heat team and then be back to you with a
23 chance to go to the property and see what we see.

24 BRIAN HONAN: So, Council Member, you had asked
25 earlier, how many developments have sensors. We have

1
2 52 developments and we could give the Council this
3 list of developments that have sensors. 44 of them
4 are under the agreement and 8 developments were
5 predated the agreement as well.

6 Earlier too, you asked, how this season compares
7 to last season. Last season, we had 173,247
8 complaints for heat and hot water at this time. So,
9 we are doing better in that way and I just want to
10 verify to, these are workorders and complaints, not
11 verified outages.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And the sensors, I
13 know you mentioned a third, right.

14 GREGORY RUSS: A third of the units.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: A third of the units.
16 Are the developments that's supposed to have the
17 sensors, are they already completed? Like the
18 process of rolling out the sensors in all of those
19 units, have they completed that? And I ask that
20 question because I was told no already. Just so you
21 know, I was told no and I'm trying to figure out what
22 the timeframe is because I was told it was a
23 significant number of units that were still supposed
24 to have the sensors.

1
2 JOEY KOCH: I believe that by the end of the year
3 is when it will be completed, the 44.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, right now, what's
5 the percentage of those that are completed?

6 BRIAN HONAN: The list that I will give to
7 Council will have completion dates. Either the work
8 has been completed or when we expect them to be
9 completed as well.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright. The
11 city's investment to wait, in January of 2018, Mayor
12 de Blasio released a press release that stated that
13 the city plans to invest \$200 million to replace
14 boilers and upgrade heating systems, at the 20 NYCHA
15 developments that we mentioned, right. This funding
16 will go towards replacing outdated boilers,
17 modernizing heating system controls and hot water
18 making technology all to be finished by 2022.

19 Did NCYHA begin the placing of the boilers at
20 Morris 1, Morris 2, Taft, Cypress Hills, Farragut,
21 Sotomayor, Rango, Fiorentino, Long Island Baptist and
22 Robinson and are we on track for these renovations
23 and if the developments change, can you let us know
24 what the change is now?

1
2 BRIAN HONAN: So, the developments have not
3 changed and we are in various stages of, we have
4 begun but for instance at you know, Morris and Taft,
5 we have mobile boilers in place but we are beginning
6 construction, so we'll be happy to list every single
7 development and what stage we are. But design is
8 underway and construction is started in many of the
9 developments.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Do you have a report
11 for Long Island Baptist at all?

12 BRIAN HONAN: Long Island Baptist is on the state
13 list. No, Long Island Baptist, I'm sorry, is on the
14 city list, but we will get that.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and third party
16 vendors. During our 2018 hearing, there was a
17 mention of transferring 69 developments to the third
18 party management system and that would enable NYCHA
19 staff to increase focus on the remaining boilers
20 within its portfolio and at that particular time
21 there was a major issue with Queens Bridge Houses and
22 so, right now today, how many boiler rooms are
23 managed by third party vendors?

24 JOEY KOCH: So, right now, we have 42
25 developments that are managed by third party vendors.

1 This program started last year right before heating
2 season. There were growing pains that we
3 experienced. We actually took back some rooms from
4 some boiler equipment and heating equipment from the
5 third party because we were not happy with their
6 performance. It has improved greatly. We will be
7 turning additional sites over to third parties, but
8 where we have not been happy with performance, we
9 have taken them back.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, what's the goal
12 for transferring for the developments over? Do you
13 have like a list of proposed developments?

14 JOEY KOCH: We have a list of proposed
15 developments, some of them, many of them are Sandy
16 sites where they are putting in very high-tech
17 equipment that our staff does not know how to use
18 properly. We don't have the training, we don't have
19 the staff that knows how to use the equipment, it's
20 very specialized equipment and they are better
21 enabled to provide what we need in order to maintain
22 that equipment.

23 As I said; however, that if we are not happy with
24 how they are functioning and how they are working in
25 our equipment, we will take back the development and

1
2 provide the staff with the training that they need,
3 but we want to make sure that the turnover of the new
4 equipment is done in a way that doesn't harm the
5 equipment and so, we want the specialized technicians
6 that can deal with the equipment that's much newer
7 than what our staff is used to.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, question with
9 that. The number of complaints that you mentioned
10 that we've been discussing overall during this
11 hearing, is there a distinction between the
12 complaints that come in our the workorders that are
13 called in between the rooms that are managed by NYCHA
14 versus the rooms that are managed by third party
15 vendors? And can you just discuss with us the
16 process of a workorder or a ticket when there is a
17 difference.

18 JOEY KOCH: So, there's a little bit of a
19 difference. All workorders do come to the heat desk,
20 the heat desk will either reach out to the third
21 party vendor or the property management staff. They
22 may deal directly with the third party vendor as
23 well.

24 So, there is a little bit of difference.
25 Property management staff will go into apartments at

1
2 the third party sites, if there is a heating issue
3 whereas a non-third party site, heating staff goes
4 into an issue.

5 So, if there's a radiator problem, I'll use
6 Washington as an example, because they are a third
7 party site. At Washington, Property Management staff
8 will go into the apartment to see if the radiator is
9 working or make a repair on the radiator. Whereas,
10 at a non-third party site, an HPT or a heating staff
11 member will go in directly. So, it's a little bit
12 different in that the third parties do not go into
13 the apartment, so the apartment work is done. But
14 the heat desk is constantly in contact with the third
15 parties, especially after hours if there is an issue
16 at the site.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, I'm sitting here
18 thinking about the Monitors testimony and just
19 looking at the average outage duration compared to
20 the average response duration. Do you see a
21 connection between the average response time based on
22 the fact that you have a NYCHA maintenance worker or
23 someone from the property management staff going into
24 an apartment of a third party vendor as opposed to
25

1
2 what's operated by NYCHA because of heating staff
3 whereas going in like an HPT or someone?

4 JOEY KOCH: It's a really good question. I don't
5 have the answer to that but it's definitely something
6 that we should be looking into. I think it's a good
7 point and something that we should be looking into.

8 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, we could provide, we could
9 look at the data and get some analysis and see if
10 there's a difference.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Because I'm thinking
12 if someone calls in a complaint and National Grid is
13 managing that particular facility and then you have a
14 maintenance worker go the apartment to say, oh, yes,
15 it's cold in here and then will go and follow up.
16 I'm sure that will be a -

17 JOEY KOCH: Yeah, it will be very interesting to
18 look at. We have calls every morning between
19 property management and the heat staff and they go
20 through workorder tickets both at third party sites
21 and at non-third party sites to make sure that
22 property management staff is addressing individual
23 complaints that we might get from a heating
24 perspective where we now that it's a National Grid or
25 a GS Hall site.

1
2 So, there is a daily check in with Property
3 Management that do deal with the third parties to
4 make sure that they are following up as they should
5 be.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I want to add to
7 the record that I did hear from the resident leaders
8 at Tilden Houses, that is managed by, National Grid
9 is the third party vendor at the particular
10 development and they have received a considerable
11 number of complaints related to the fact that they
12 didn't have as many heat complaints in the previous
13 years and down that National Grid.

14 GREGORY RUSS: They have more.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: They have more and
16 that's pretty interesting. And also, is there a plan
17 to release all of the developments at some point to a
18 third party?

19 JOEY KOCH: No, there's not. We currently have
20 an RFP out on the street to deal with the steam. The
21 high pressure steam plants, as the Chair noted and
22 many of them are in Councilwoman's Rosenthal's
23 district. We do not have the proper plumbers. We
24 have one team of plumbers who know how to fix the
25

1
2 high pressure steam plants when there is an issue and
3 it's very hard to get that training.

4 So, we are looking for a third party who will
5 have that training but other than that, right now, we
6 do not have any additional plans to turn over sites.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And how do you track
8 performance of the third party vendors?

9 JOEY KOCH: So, Javier[SP?] and his team have
10 weekly if not biweekly meetings and conversations.
11 We track the outages and their performance, same as
12 we do with our own performance. They still have to
13 meet the same exact standards that we do. So, we
14 hold them to a very high level. Javier meets with
15 them on a regular basis and as I noted, where we were
16 unhappy with the performance, because we did not
17 think that they were doing what they were supposed to
18 be doing, we took the heating plants back. And they
19 are back under NYCHA control.

20 GREGORY RUSS: And let us do the comparison that
21 your question suggests and then we can share that
22 with you.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: That would be helpful
24 and Chair, you mentioned a few minutes ago that there
25

1
2 was a need for steam, like staffers to work on the
3 steam issues or steam experts?

4 GREGORY RUSS: Yes, yeah, it's high pressure
5 steam. It's difficult to find plumbers who have that
6 expertise.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so, the
8 agreement requires by March 31, 2019, NYCHA will
9 create a 24/7 heat desk to monitor the heating
10 metrics and dispatch staff to correct efficiencies
11 during the heating season. Can you talk to us about
12 the 24 hour heat desk right now and how many
13 individuals are staffed at the heat desk, and if
14 there are any vacancies?

15 JOEY KOCH: So, the heat desk was actually
16 implemented by January of 2019. Off the top of my
17 head, I don't remember how many are there during the
18 day. I think there are four at night. There are
19 four in staff and two supervisors, is that correct,
20 Havier? I'm looking at Havier. I think that's
21 actually how it's staffed 24 hours a day or four in
22 staff and two supervisors.

23 We were fortunate enough to have you come visit
24 the heat desk that's in Long Island City this past
25 week. I don't believe there are any vacancies for

1
2 the heat desk. We have very few vacancies right now
3 in the heating department. We added an additional 70
4 HPT's to our roster this year, 12 additional plumbing
5 teams and 3 additional electrician teams to the
6 heating staff for this heating season.

7 So, we may have some vacancies but all the
8 vacancies were filled prior to the heating season
9 beginning and we may have some vacancies due to
10 attrition or someone wasn't performing properly and
11 we let them go. But we haven't been carrying
12 vacancies over since the summertime. We started the
13 heating season with a full capacity.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, and what's the
15 role of the maintenance worker that will go to the
16 apartment to check to see if, check on the complaint
17 related to heat and hot water?

18 JOEY KOCH: So, a maintenance worker can do - we
19 have maintenance workers in the heating department as
20 well. We have HPT's and we have maintenance workers.
21 Maintenance workers can perform certain functions
22 that an HPT cannot. So, they might be able to fix a
23 radiator for instance. Whereas another type of
24 worker would not and there are maintenance workers
25

1
2 that are assigned to properties and to the heating
3 staff as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay.

5 BRIAN HONAN: Council Member, before there were
6 two questions that you asked that we didn't have the
7 answers to. The My NYCHA app, so far 92,365 people
8 have downloaded the My NYCHA app.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: How many?

10 BRIAN HONAN: 92,365 residents have downloaded
11 the My NYCHA app.

12 And at Long Island Baptist, capital work has
13 begun in March 2019. So, good news on both fronts.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, Majority Leader.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. We had a great
16 meeting and I just want to say that, just start off
17 by saying, I'm a feelings person and I had a good
18 feeling coming out of the meeting.

19 GREGORY RUSS: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So, I'm certainly looking
21 forward to your leadership and I have a feeling that
22 you're going to do great work.

23 GREGORY RUSS: I appreciate that and I have not
24 forgotten that meeting because in the exchange you
25 had with the Monitor, you touched on some things that

1
2 we talked about. And we are poised once, we have a
3 few more action plans to finish and then we're really
4 poised to sort of deconstruct the workorder process.

5 I think some of the things that Bart said about
6 the process are accurate. It's a combination of what
7 work can be done and by a particular skill and it's
8 also the scheduling and then, to one of the things
9 that I believe we do have to change and I am actually
10 going to look to try and change this year. You don't
11 close the workorder until the work is done and you
12 are able to validate it.

13 And that to me is one of the system changes,
14 whether we do a **[INAUDIBLE 4:17:32]** we're going to
15 work to do that. To get to that place.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I would just say on that
17 particular issue, because now that I'm a mom and I'm
18 juggling a very complex life, something like that
19 situation happening would completely throw my life
20 into a downward spiral.

21 GREGORY RUSS: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: In terms of taking the
23 time off, getting childcare, getting everything set
24 up, asking. You know, in some cases in one of the
25 residents I went to, someone had asked a family

1
2 member to sit in the apartment, so that they could go
3 to work and do that sort of thing.

4 So, to some extent, the policy has to be in
5 place. It's just a matter of enforcement, so in the
6 interim of fixing everything, someone somewhere has
7 to say, until we get this together, we have to
8 communicate better with our residents when we're
9 coming, if we're not coming or if there has to be a
10 rescheduling. Someone has to say, that's my job.

11 GREGORY RUSS: Right and let me because there's a
12 lot in your statement that I think is very accurate.

13 So, one of the things I think we've all
14 experienced is oh, I'm getting a delivery. It's
15 going to be there between one and five.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That's right.

17 GREGORY RUSS: And -

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: They come at eight.

19 GREGORY RUSS: They come at eight. A good
20 company may call you and you'll know, so you can make
21 some adjustment. So, one of the things I've been
22 thinking about is how do we keep notifying folks who
23 have a date and able to give them some indication of
24 our ability to meet that.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because there are systems
3 in place. You know, when you look at Terminix, when
4 you look at Fresh Direct, when you look at all of
5 these places, there's a tracker system and you've got
6 your phone and the app. I feel like we're missing on
7 huge opportunities to take advantage of -

8 GREGORY RUSS: So, the IT questions are certainly
9 there. The other thing I would say is that one of
10 the things that has fundamentally changed and NYCHA
11 had to create three new departments as part of the
12 agreement. And one of them is compliance, one of
13 them is quality assurance and one of them is
14 emergency health and safety. Health and Safety and
15 Quality assurance are able to go to the field to
16 validate what happened or did not happen. And that
17 information is brought back to compliance. And at
18 least in the beginning, it was directed towards some
19 of the poor practices we had for the HUD inspections.
20 But that process of validating things isn't just
21 confined to whether we did a piece of work with the
22 HUD inspection, we're beginning to try and broaden
23 that out.

24 So, that in addition to maybe tracking something
25 electronically or knowing that you know, the

1 maintenance worker is going to be there at 2:00 p.m.
2 or whatever. We're also going to be able to validate
3 I'm hoping that the work is actually getting done and
4 that it was done according to the way we said it was
5 going to get done.
6

7 So, that's a second part of this in addition to
8 kind of figuring out the schedule and how to assign
9 it. It's also making sure that we have a way of
10 getting feedback, that the workorder was completed,
11 that people showed up and that these kinds of
12 cancellations or no shows, we start to limit them.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I hope that that will be a
14 part of your legacy, because we have as crazy that
15 is, we have a year, eleven months, thirteen some odd
16 days, until we're no longer here. Perhaps you will
17 transcend into the next administration but we
18 certainly won't.

19 So, I just want to make sure that this is
20 something that is addressed. I also out of my own
21 ignorance in terms of understanding design build and
22 those sorts of dynamics, we talked in our meeting
23 about the issue in terms of the bidding process. As
24 far as us having to accept what I would call in many
25

1 cases, subpar bidders who are negatively impacting
2 the quality of work that we all want to see done.

3 How does design build and those types of
4 programs, I don't understand how, does it have a
5 positive impact in that way that we can circumvent
6 some of these poor performers or do they not have
7 anything in alignment with each other? How does this
8 work?
9

10 GREGORY RUSS: So, in the design build model, we
11 are actually bringing in the designer and the
12 contractor at the same time.

13 So, in some cases, and I'm going to express my
14 own limitation here. It's my understanding that that
15 team is already working but part of the question I
16 can't answer, is whether the contractor has brought
17 in their subs already and whether doing that earlier
18 makes a difference in the quality of the sub that we
19 get.

20 But I could get back to you and let you know if
21 that's the fact, because the whole idea is to have
22 your design team and instead of design bid build,
23 it's design build, so the contractor -

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Hmm, hmm, that's what I
25 want to understand.

1
2 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, would be working there, and
3 I can talk to our capital folks and get you a quick
4 summary back because that's a great questions. And
5 in the places where I've worked where design build
6 has been used, we tended to get a pretty decent
7 quality of contractor to engage in that and we were
8 very satisfied with results including the
9 subcontractors and if there's a way that it impacts
10 the bid, I would like to let you know.

11 The second thing I would say is we're looking at
12 our bidding practices and looking at what
13 flexibilities we might have for example under federal
14 law. Federal law has a different set of procurement
15 requirements and federal law actually says if you
16 attempted the competition and you wound up rejecting
17 bids or you only got one bidder, it allows a little
18 bit more flexibility on what happens next than NYCHA
19 has been exercising.

20 In other words, we could say, hey, we did try to
21 do this competitively. We didn't get the result we
22 wanted and, in that case, can we do something else.
23 So, we're going to explore that with the federal
24 partners because we think it would give us some room
25

1
2 there to address some of the issues you and I
3 discussed.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: What would you just say in
5 closing, this is more, so we have this limited amount
6 of time left and this will help me in terms of
7 guiding to fit in in the direction that you're going.
8 What would you say in this year and eleven months,
9 two weeks, what do you want your legacy to be in
10 terms of the top three areas where you want to focus
11 on and revolutionize the way NYCHA has been seen in a
12 short period of time and it's relative. It's an
13 Oprah Winfrey style question but I definitely want
14 the answer.

15 GREGORY RUSS: So, we are compelled by the
16 agreement to do a reorganization. In there are the
17 seeds of a different operation. We have to become
18 property based. We have to have staff at the
19 properties who can make a decision. We have to have
20 staff at the properties that can share information
21 with the residents. And you'll hear me use the term
22 property based budgeting.

23 In the current model, it's difficult for the
24 manager and the superintendent to see their
25 resources, let alone share the information with the

1
2 resident leader who is also interested in what
3 resources are at the property.

4 So, building the framework for that to happen and
5 then getting a kickstart to that would be very
6 powerful and, in that scenario, we could train not
7 only our staff but the residents at the same time.
8 So, this reorganization can't just be shuffling
9 paper.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Right.

11 GREGORY RUSS: It can't be a chart on a wall. It
12 actually has to happen in the properties where the
13 people live and that's one thing.

14 The second thing I would say is, we have this
15 beautiful housing stock. We have buildings with
16 great bones. We built the city in a city. We have
17 all variety of units but the missing ingredient is
18 capital. We have gotten great support from the city,
19 the state, lesser extent from the federal government.
20 We need to come to the city, to you as a Council, to
21 this community as a whole with a capital plan for the
22 entire portfolio.

23 We have to show what that would be, what work we
24 would try to do and how we would raise that money.
25 That is one of the most compelling things because

1
2 when you go to these properties, I go in a boiler
3 room, here's a boiler that's functioning because we
4 put the maintenance in it. Maybe we replaced a
5 strategic part, but the boiler is still 50 years or
6 40 years old. We need to revamp that and when the
7 Councilwoman asked the question about the windows.
8 That's a great, can we find the money to replace
9 windows in buildings where we do heating systems and
10 could we do that at the same time? That's not a
11 revolutionary thing but when you start doing windows
12 in some of our high rise buildings, even in some of
13 the low rise buildings, that's a big investment. In
14 some of the other places where I've managed, one of
15 the things that we had to overcome was the cost of
16 the exterior repairs. We could go in a property and
17 maybe refresh a kitchen or bath, but then when we
18 came to the building envelope, the numbers just
19 started to go like this.

20 So, the second thing to answer your question is,
21 we need to present in a relatively short period of
22 time a comprehensive capital plan, a realistic way of
23 raising that money and have the debate around how we
24 would do it.

25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I thank you for that and
3 just closing, I want to say that when we also met -
4 this is related but unrelated, the Council Members
5 again have put forward priority, capital priorities
6 over the last six years that they and some members
7 longer of course, that they have put forward. I
8 would like to again, restate how important it would
9 be for the capital allocations that Council Members
10 have made to their districts to be prioritized and
11 really seen as something that NYCHA delivers upon in
12 terms of our limited time left in the Council and
13 again, I got a feeling about you. You certainly have
14 a likeability factor.

15 GREGORY RUSS: Our small projects division, which
16 I hope to create that would focus specifically on
17 those things and figure out how to get the project
18 done or figure out if it's going to compliment
19 something else and be able to come back to you with a
20 reasonable estimate of when we would get something in
21 the ground. So, thank you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

23 GREGORY RUSS: And thank you for your comments.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you, but I'm not
25 blinded by likability I will let you know that.

1
2 GREGORY RUSS: That's alright, no, no, no, I
3 appreciate it and we have to provide you with
4 results.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Council Member Gjonaj.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you Chair. Those
8 are some great questions and I want to thank you for
9 the time that you've allocated to be responsive to
10 the Council.

11 GREGORY RUSS: Sure.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Of the action plan, of
13 the 108 boilers we heard earlier that will take up to
14 five years to replace, do we have an itemized list of
15 the 108 with priorities?

16 GREGORY RUSS: It's going to be done in two
17 phases and we could get that to you. I don't
18 remember the number in the first phase but the first
19 phase is a little smaller, second phase is a little
20 bigger but we'd be glad to share that.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I would imagine the
22 entire Council would be interested to know that
23 boilers are being replaced in their districts and
24 their complexes that perhaps are having heating
25 problems that are not on the list that we could begin

1
2 having those conversations. To me, it's still
3 disturbing as to why it takes five years. So, even
4 when you ask for capital dollars, and I think the
5 question was asked by a colleague earlier in the
6 year. If I gave you a \$32 billion check today, how
7 long before you can make the repairs and it was over
8 ten years.

9 So, there's a whole other problem here. It's
10 just not capital, it's how quickly you can spend that
11 money and we can't lose focus of that part of the
12 problem.

13 GREGORY RUSS: No, I, first off, I think that's
14 well observed. I think a couple things we could
15 share with you are, the federal government actually
16 establishes pretty strict rules on their capital.
17 Now, we've benefited in the past couple of years.
18 We've had \$350 million as a low point and now we're
19 right around \$500 million in federal capital.

20 The feds will give you two years to obligate that
21 money, which means sign a contract and up to four
22 years to spend. We typically beat those targets but
23 to your point about the larger number, if we come out
24 with a large capital plan, we also have to include a
25 different way of spending it and that will be part of

1
2 it. We're not going to be able to do a conventional
3 bidding process in my view. We're going to have to
4 think about using tools like construction managers.
5 These would be large chunks of units.

6 So, we would have to be able to represent to
7 whoever we're talking to, that if we, however we
8 received enough money to do those repairs, we also
9 have a plan on how we could spend it faster and we
10 have some ideas about that and when we present the
11 fuller capital plan, we will include those. But
12 we're very aware that the current system, the process
13 of, and I'm not knocking competitive bidding, we have
14 it for a reason but it also means - these numbers
15 were never anticipated by HUD or really the state,
16 which actually sets some of the thresholds for what
17 we have to bid.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Alright, and I understand
19 the challenges that you have but I want to repeat,
20 had there been the private sector, it would not take
21 five years, even with competitive bidding and using
22 all of the protocols that are currently in place.
23 And one of the advantages we have with this Federal
24 Monitor is that we can streamline or supposedly
25 that's what I understand. So, there is no reason for

1
2 delay. There is no need for two years to define,
3 four years to spend. We can streamline, expedite,
4 and when it comes to some of the basics, whether it
5 be roofs, elevators, windows and boilers, that should
6 be our focus.

7 GREGORY RUSS: And I, no, I appreciate your
8 remarks because I agree with you and I think that one
9 of the things, to me, the agreement is really a
10 foundation stone for creating a new entity but also
11 for addressing the kind of issue you and I are
12 talking about. I think the Monitor has outside
13 experts that he works with on these kinds of things
14 and Bart and I have talked about expediting
15 procurement. And when we align on a subject, we have
16 the ability to go to HUD if we need to or other
17 places to figure out what that streamline should look
18 like, so we both actually have talked about this very
19 thing and that's on our list.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I hope it continues to be
21 a priority on your list.

22 GREGORY RUSS: It is.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Okay, there's a lot of
24 people out there that are suffering. I believe of
25

1
2 the 1,700 boilers, what's the number of temporary
3 boilers that we currently have?

4 GREGORY RUSS: 62.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Yeah, I would also make
6 those a priority, understand that every dollar is
7 valuable and scarce.

8 GREGORY RUSS: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: That we focus on those
10 building where the temporary boilers are a factor in
11 the expenses. They've been there for years and some
12 for decades.

13 GREGORY RUSS: And, I would say Council Member
14 that a few of them are actually there in preparation
15 for doing the repair work you're talking about. So,
16 some of them are there to take over while we do the
17 boiler room over.

18 BRIAN HONAN: And Council Member, I know that
19 locally this really hits home for you because at
20 Pelham Parkway, which has been a development that's
21 been a challenge during the heating season. We have
22 a mobile boiler and that was because of that, that
23 was put on our priority list and it's getting city
24 funding. We're on our way to getting new boilers at
25

1
2 Pelham Parkway. So, we should be seeing improvements
3 there.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I believe it's been there
5 for about seven years.

6 BRIAN HONAN: It's been there for a while.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: And I don't even know
8 what the cost is per month, I dare to ask the
9 question and I'm sure it's five times what the
10 average person is paying but I won't get into that
11 either. But I believe it's been there for seven
12 years.

13 BRIAN HONAN: Yeah, and we have funding now and
14 we are going to be replacing. So, you know, we'll
15 see the improvements shortly.

16 GREGORY RUSS: So, my moto with capital money is,
17 have money will spend.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just quick, what's the
19 longest mobile boiler you have right now running and
20 operating?

21 BRIAN HONAN: Pelham is the longest, so.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, seven years?

23 BRIAN HONAN: It's about seven years.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Is it more, I could be
25 wrong here.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: That's the longest?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Seven years, I wonder
4 what the cost is. Alright, earlier, you heard the
5 questions with the Federal Monitor regarding the
6 technology that is today widely used throughout the
7 industry that notifies a central location of a boiler
8 that is down.

9 We understand the urgency and the importance of
10 this. The quicker we're aware of a malfunction, the
11 quicker we can send a response team out there and, in
12 many cases, and I go back to the basics. My first
13 title in life, was supers son. So, at 2:00 in the
14 morning there was a knock at your door and you put on
15 your slippers and you walk down to the boiler room
16 and you hit the button that restarted that boiler.

17 GREGORY RUSS: But, did you actually have to do
18 that?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I did. So, I'm familiar
20 with the mechanics behind it. The technology exists,
21 response time is key, it's a very efficient and
22 inexpensive way of guaranteeing some of the most
23 basic essential services of heat and hot water.

24 GREGORY RUSS: So, at the moment, we have 206
25 boiler rooms that do have some kind of automated

1
2 sensor system and those sensors do report through to
3 the heat desk, so we can see if there's an issue.

4 I think, and it automatically, next season those
5 sensors will be able to open, automatically open a
6 heating ticket when they detect an anomaly. So, and
7 I would represent that as we advance in the
8 discussions about our investments, the technology
9 that we can adapt and bring to NYCHA, is going to be
10 on the table for discussion.

11 The Monitor and I have talked about this as well
12 because if we can install something reliable that's
13 going to give us the readings, we need to make a
14 decision on heat, we will include it.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I encourage you and I'm
16 not sure how familiar you are with this type of
17 technology.

18 GREGORY RUSS: I have had them in other agencies,
19 so.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Good, it calls more than
21 one number, so it can call central. It can call
22 resident manager; it can call superintendent and go
23 down the line and it gives you the exact address.

24 GREGORY RUSS: Right.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Way before a tenant even
3 realizes that there is a problem.

4 GREGORY RUSS: No, I think, this to us is really
5 worth exploring. So, I actually encourage the staff
6 to think about new technology. Some already do but I
7 think this is the kind of thing we're going to have
8 to go after when we do the capital work coming
9 forward.

10 JOEY KOCH: And if I could just add to that. The
11 new systems, next heating season will, what we're
12 talking about the sensors, will automatically
13 generate work orders and notifications to phones, to
14 staff in the field. It won't just go onto the
15 dashboard to the heating season like the current ones
16 do. It's exactly what you're describing for next
17 heating season.

18 GREGORY RUSS: And the other thing I think I'd
19 like to add is, you know, listening to you talk about
20 the superintendent. This is another theme you'll
21 see; is how do we get back to the property level and
22 how do we staff the property? That's, if I'm
23 listening to some of the employees and the residents
24 who have been working or living, moving down to that
25 level, the ability to make a genuine decision based

1
2 on the budget and resources. And while that seems
3 like such a simple thing, we're really made it
4 complicated and we have to untangle that because you
5 know, anything about what NYCHA is or is not is at
6 the property.

7 So, that, we really have to make an investment in
8 setting up a structure that recognizes that you have
9 to build your staffing, your responsibility and your
10 budgeting from the property up.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you for recognizing
12 the importance and I hope that we come up with a
13 solution to this problem. It's very simple. There's
14 nothing more frustrating for a tenant and whether it
15 be a heat complaint, hot water complaint or a leak,
16 when you have to call and get a recording or a
17 stranger for something that could be addressed within
18 minutes and be told, we'll have somebody there within
19 eight hours.

20 Not only is that not acceptable but completely
21 avoidable.

22 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, so, when we do this
23 reorganization plan required by the federal
24 agreement, that will be one of its focuses.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Great, there was so much
3 talk about, so I would imagine full time
4 superintendents 24/7 live in is the ideal?

5 GREGORY RUSS: Let us look at it. We'll have a
6 plan and we can all chat about it.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Alright, I'll take that
8 as a maybe so we can continue working on it. I want
9 to continue the questions about getting off heat for
10 a second, because I'm practical about somethings and
11 with your approval Chair.

12 There was a major rodent outbreak and I had
13 brought this up several times. Much of this has to
14 do with the garbage collection. You need regular
15 routine garbage collections, not just wait for a
16 phone call from the resident manager that determines
17 now that we're at capacity and you have an overflow
18 problem. We'll wait for a day or two or three before
19 someone can come out and can they pick it all up. It
20 just adds to it. There is no reason why you can not
21 have regular routine three days a week service, you
22 don't need a phone call for garbage to be picked up.
23 It's done citywide, it's done in commercial, it's
24 done in residential properties, it's done as a
25 standard.

1
2 This protocol that no one comes to pick up
3 garbage until a phone call is made.

4 BRIAN HONAN: So, Council Member, no, we do get
5 regular pick up and in many of our developments, it
6 depends on the development, but it's three times a
7 week we get regular pick up. It does not count on a
8 manager or super calling someone to come and pick it
9 up.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I'm sorry, he said in
11 many.

12 BRIAN HONAN: No, in all of our developments, we
13 have regular pickup and in some of them, it's more
14 frequent than others but it is three times a week is
15 our average.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Throgs Neck had a major
17 problem with overflow and it became such an issue,
18 even the Borough President had to get involved and
19 throughout the complexes where garbage was out there
20 for weeks.

21 BRIAN HONAN: Yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, if there was a
23 scheduled, a routine pickup, that would have never
24 escalated to the point -
25

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2 BRIAN HONAN: I think what you're referring to is
3 a problem that we had over the summer with the
4 carting company that went out of business and this
5 was an issue because that was bulk trash but bulk
6 trash is different where we do hire private carters
7 to do bulk trash but when we're talking about regular
8 household trash, we do many different systems but we
9 have compactors or we have trash in the street. But
10 all of that is picked up with partnership of DSNY.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, then, maybe I'm
12 talking about bulk trash here.

13 BRIAN HONAN: That is bulk trash.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, what is the schedule
15 for bulk trash?

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, what we're going
17 through right because this has been going on for
18 awhile and we're talking about heat.

19 So, we can schedule a meeting, a follow up
20 meeting to talk about sanitation and we can even have
21 a round table discussion because sanitation is an
22 issue throughout all of our NYCHA developments
23 throughout all five boroughs.

24 So, to be respectful of people and their time,
25 we're going to make sure that we follow up, okay.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you Chair, I take
3 an opportunity when I see one.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I know you do.

5 GREGORY RUSS: We will continue the discussion
6 though, because this is also something we've been
7 looking at as part of the monitor ship.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: So, I want to go back to
9 the heating issues and you heard earlier -

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Don't forget we still
11 have a panel.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Yeah, I'll get my last
13 question and I'm done. Some of these items are basic
14 and I heard that we have to estimate for air valves
15 and there should be a standard supply here. If
16 there's a problem in a line, it's simply going to be
17 an air valve that's clogged that's not allowing the
18 cold air to escape quickly enough and that's
19 preventing the upper floors from getting heat. Your
20 maintenance people, plumbers know this, heating
21 people know this and it's just like you would have a
22 number of extra faucets at hand. You don't wait for
23 a kitchen to come up before you order a faucet, you
24 order in advance knowing there could be a problem.

25 JOEY KOCH: We do.

1 GREGORY RUSS: We do have that.

2 JOEY KOCH: We have inventory throughout the five
3 boroughs and we are actually decentralizing it even
4 more for next heating season. We're incorporating
5 the heating inventory into the NYCHA wide materials
6 management department that was started recently.
7

8 So, we do have materials and inventory throughout
9 NYCHA, not everything is centralized at Long Island
10 City.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Great, thank you so much.

12 GREGORY RUSS: Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, I'm just going
15 to speed through four questions, that's all I have
16 left, four questions.

17 GREGORY RUSS: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: The law books. Real
19 quick, there was a discussion at the last hearing and
20 the hearing before that related to the heating plant
21 technicians that go out to the boiler rooms and have
22 to enter information on the logbooks that are in the
23 boiler rooms. And so, we were told that staffers
24 would eventually move over to handheld devices that
25 would then be uploaded into Maximo. And so, we were

1 told that they are still entering information
2 handwriting into the logbooks and so, can you talk to
3 us a little bit about what's the plan for utilizing
4 the handheld in the boiler rooms?
5

6 JOEY KOCH: Yeah, so, there are, I think there
7 are a couple of things associated with that. So,
8 each boiler room has a logbook that you have to sign
9 in and out when anyone goes into the boiler room, so
10 that's the logbook. I think you're talking about the
11 daily inspections and the preventative inspections.
12 Some of which have been automated and some we're
13 still working on. We have made significant changes
14 to our Maximo system and priorities just had to be
15 kind of realigned.

16 So, inspections, I'm hoping that they'll be done
17 by the start of next season. We've kept pushing it
18 down because we've made other enhancements in Maximo,
19 but the preventative maintenance inspections have
20 been done on the handheld.

21 We also updated the handhelds that staff got.
22 Originally, they had the same handheld that I'm
23 holding in my hand and it was very hard to utilize,
24 so we got the larger ones with larger screens and
25 with the stylist, so that they can write directly in

1
2 there. And so, we think that's been helping a lot
3 too, but not all of our daily inspections are
4 automated but the preventative maintenance ones are.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And how do you track
6 residents with disabilities and health conditions
7 that would be impacted by hate issues.

8 GREGORY RUSS: That's in the action plan
9 actually, because we do have a section on that right?

10 JOEY KOCH: No. So, we do not necessarily
11 prioritize people with disabilities in the same way
12 that we do with elevators. Elevators, when an issue
13 comes in out of various buildings where there are
14 self-identified mobility issues or the senior
15 building, we prioritize it.

16 NYCHA heating, we think of every building as an
17 emergency and we treat it accordingly. However, we
18 are cognizant of where if there is a prolonged
19 outages, if people do self-identify, we do door
20 knocks and we try and make sure that people who are
21 self-identified with whatever disability it might be,
22 that we reach out to make sure they are okay.

23 GREGORY RUSS: I do want to add one thing. In
24 the action plan, we are set by October 1st of this
25 year. There are four items related to this issue.

1 We have to identify the vulnerable residents who are
2 not reached by any automated call. We have to call a
3 subset of unreached or vulnerable residents. We have
4 to conduct an in person visit and we have to leave
5 information.

6
7 So, we'll be working with the Monitor and our
8 staff to implement that by the date that the action
9 plan is set forth.

10 JOEY KOCH: And we currently do the door knocks
11 if it's a prolonged outage.

12 GREGORY RUSS: Yeah, so there will be more on
13 this as we roll this out.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, well, thank you
15 so much for being here today and we do have several
16 other questions but we will submit those to NYCHA for
17 follow up.

18 GREGORY RUSS: Sure.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And also, I just want
20 to make note that I think I've heard the word
21 communication a thousand times today and that's just
22 been a key word and the buzz word and so, for me,
23 that's always the most important piece is
24 communication. How are we communicating to our
25 residents and the community as a large and how are

1
2 you communicating with each other and I really
3 believe that if there's a formal system in place that
4 provides for the opportunity for residents to give
5 feedback, that's taken in a meaningful way, we'll be
6 able to address a lot of the issues that we have.
7 And so, I just wanted to highlight that because
8 that's always a major part and I don't want that to
9 be an afterthought because you know, everything else
10 is so critical.

11 GREGORY RUSS: Okay, thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you.

13 GREGORY RUSS: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so much.

15 And now, we will hear from oh, Lucy Newman, thank you
16 so much and Louis Flores, Mr. Flores with Fight For
17 NYCHA. Thank you so much for still being here and
18 your patience and this is our final panel.

19 LUCY NEWMAN: Is it okay if I start?

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yes.

21 LUCY NEWMAN: Thank you very much Council Member
22 Ampry-Samuel for having this important hearing and
23 also for your continued commitment to the public
24 housing residents of New York City.

25

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2 We've submitted written testimony. I just wanted
3 to say a couple of things. As you know, every tenant
4 in New York City, whether you live in privately owned
5 apartments or publicly owned apartments is entitled
6 to adequate and uninterrupted heat during the heat
7 season and hot water 24/7.

8 What we know and have known for the past years
9 and have heard today is that hundreds of thousands of
10 NYCHA residents have suffered from heat and/or hot
11 water outages for years and they continue to do so.
12 As a result of that, they suffer from the
13 consequences of these outages as you mentioned.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: One second. Brian,
15 Brian Honan, NYCHA. Some one go get, thank you.

16 Is there someone from NYCHA that's going to
17 remain. Thank you.

18 LUCY NEWMAN: You mentioned earlier you know, the
19 consequences that come from these outages in daily
20 life, it means that kids are unable to bath before
21 they go to school. People who are going to job
22 interviews are unable to have showers. Seniors and
23 elderly people who are home during the day are left
24 freezing under blankets and there are also financial
25 consequences of these outages where people are having

1
2 to buy space heaters and also additional utility fees
3 from having to pay for electric heaters.

4 So, we are optimistic about the change that
5 hopefully will come from having Mr. Russ is the new
6 Chair and also the influx of money as a result of the
7 consent agreement where the city committed to giving
8 additional funds and obviously the state money.

9 But Legal Aid really believe that what we need
10 here is more money and in fact the Chair just
11 mentioned that the missing ingredient here is money.
12 And so, we really urge the City Council to push for
13 more funding for NYCHA. We heard about the things
14 that money could do, which is replacing more of the
15 boilers that are not functioning. More than just the
16 108 that are going to be fixed with the state money
17 and in addition to that, the windows, which also
18 impacts peoples warmth in their homes and also hiring
19 additional staffing.

20 So, we really are looking to secure more money
21 from the city. We're obviously working to do that
22 with the state and the federal government too.

23 The heat action plan, obviously it's a good thing
24 and it's great that they are finally procedures in
25 place and that they are publicly available but what

1
2 they really do is put in procedures that are followed
3 when there are outages and we really look forward to
4 hopefully the day where there aren't outages and so,
5 we don't need these procedures.

6 In addition to that, Council Member you know that
7 all residents living in privately owned apartments in
8 New York City can call 3-1-1 if they have conditions
9 in their apartment and HPD sends out inspectors who
10 come and verify whether or not those conditions exist
11 and then they will place a violation accordingly.

12 NYCHA residents can't do that. They have to call
13 NYCHA's CCC line and then log a workorder which we've
14 heard a lot about today and then the only way that we
15 can see whether there are these outages is based on
16 NYCHA's self-reporting. The fact that there are
17 these outages and when they are actually fixed and we
18 really urge the City Council to push HPD to actually
19 put violations against NYCHA for these conditions, so
20 that there is much more accountability and
21 transparency for NYCHA residents and they can use
22 that information either in housing court as a defense
23 to a non-payment or to make sure that they can you
24 know, properly track when something was fixed.

25 Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just have to say
3 this for the record. It puts me in the mind of the
4 fact that with our new placard abuse bill, the folks
5 that have to go out and enforce the placard abuse are
6 the police officers and they could essentially you
7 know write summonses and tickets to their own fellow
8 police officers and so, I just think there's interest
9 in how we have stated that, we talked about the
10 difficulties of having HPD go into developments and
11 you know issue violations and like the differences in
12 the 3-1-1 system and the CCC system and how it just,
13 more reasons why it should not happen but we do
14 prioritize what we want to prioritize as a city. It's
15 just interesting to me but thank you. Mr. Flores.

16 LOUIS FLORES: Thank you so much Honorable Chair.
17 It's a privilege to be here. I would like to thank
18 the esteemed Committee Council, thank you so much and
19 ladies and gentleman who remain.

20 Recently, the Federal Monitor released a heat
21 action plan to address the routine and relentless
22 heat outages causing misery and suffering at New York
23 City Public Housing.

24 I want to go back to what the Federal Monitor
25 said, he earlier today claimed that NYCHA had been

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2 working on the heat monitor plan or the heat action
3 plan since this summer but the heat action plan was
4 actually released two months late from when it was
5 called for in the settlement agreement and when it
6 was released, it was I believe no explanation for why
7 it was so late. It was released at a time when
8 already the winter season had already begun and NYCHA
9 residents were already beginning to experience heat
10 outages.

11 With all due respect to all of the hard work that
12 undoubtedly went into creating the heat action plan,
13 all it can do is make promises about the restoration
14 of heat. In the agreement it said that NYCHA's
15 obligation for restoration time of heating shortages,
16 under the agreement is twelve hours. That's the
17 passage from the heat action plan.

18 The 35 page plan essentially speaks only for
19 funding to address heat outages, the provision of
20 mobile boiler connection lines and the management of
21 boilers. And I'm very happy that the Legal Aid
22 Society is now speaking up about the need to provide
23 more funding for NYCHA because Fight for NYCHA as a
24 group has been calling for more funding for NYCHA as
25 well.

1
2 And, in that regard, I submitted along with a
3 copy of my prepared statement, a copy of the people's
4 budget which shows that there is a way for us to
5 provide funding for NYCHA. One of the things that
6 Fight for NYCHA is seeking is the provision of \$3
7 billion, which is what is estimated it would cost for
8 NYCHA to upgrade its heating system, system line. I
9 think this is a minimum commitment the city should
10 make to public housing residents. \$3 billion is
11 something that is manageable and we've been tweeting
12 the people's budget and use social media a lot to
13 bring awareness to this plan.

14 The people's budget basically shows ideas as a
15 guidepost to raise taxes on the wealthy to fully fund
16 NYCHA. Some of the ideas are already legislation
17 ready. One of the ideas that has come up in the time
18 since the creation of the people's budget is, US
19 Representative Nydia Velazquez from Brooklyn has
20 introduced legislation in congress that would fully
21 fund all the capital repairs needed in public housing
22 nationwide and there would be an allocation in that
23 funding bill for the \$32 billion that NYCHA needs.
24 And I would like to invite the Public Housing
25 Committee Members to sign on to the resolution that

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2 was introduced by Council Member Rivera from I
3 believe the East Village who is asking the City
4 Council to get behind representative Velazquez's
5 bill. So, I invite all the Council Members to sign
6 on that resolution.

7 Fight for NYCHA respectfully asks that the
8 Committee Members also sponsor any funding
9 legislation in addition to that they see fit and
10 earmark that money to NYCHA to put NYCHA in the city
11 budget so that we can upgrade and replace the boiler
12 systems systemwide. This is a city that has so many
13 resources but for some reason the administration
14 denies those resources to people who live in public
15 housing and I just want to close my remarks by noting
16 that when the city settled the federal investigation
17 into NYCHA, the city basically provided nine cents on
18 the dollar spread out over ten years for public
19 housing residents.

20 That's very telling and it's also very damning.
21 It puts into paper a commitment that we're going to
22 continue to neglect public housing residents. That's
23 very unfair and it's also very discriminatory and
24 because it's discriminatory it's unlawful and I'm
25 hoping that the Public Housing Committee can show

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2 leadership and fight for people who are being
3 neglected as a matter of policy by this
4 administration.

5 And just one footnote, in order for NYCHA to be
6 turned around, we need accountability and that means
7 failure needs to be called out and it's very
8 important to note that although this work has to be
9 done as a group and it calls for cooperation, we
10 shouldn't allow and accept our partners to come up
11 here and give false information. And I hope that as
12 we move forward, we are rigorous about accepting
13 information when we are being told that things are
14 improving when they're not improving.

15 Earlier today, someone said that NYCHA had begun
16 to make improvements in heat outages last year and
17 that's not 100 percent truthful because 90 percent of
18 tenants experienced some form of heat outage last
19 year. That doesn't sound like something that people
20 should be calling an improvement.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so much Mr.
23 Flores and I will state that we had conversations
24 with Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney who is the new
25 Chair of the oversight Committee and requested if we

1
2 could partner and possibly testify on Capitol Hill
3 about the needs for public housing and NYCHA right
4 here in New York City. So, if we can work together
5 on anything, it will be helpful.

6 So, thank you so much everyone for your testimony
7 and that will conclude. Oh, before I forget, I want
8 to clearly thank my Council, our Council on the
9 Committee, Madiba Dennie for all of your work, Jose
10 Conde the Senior Legislative Policy Analyst, Ricky
11 Chawla the Legislative Policy Analyst as well as
12 Sarah the Principal Financial Analyst, along with
13 Jeff Baker and Terzah Nasser for all of your work in
14 making this hearing happen and with that, that
15 concludes today's hearing with the Committee on
16 Public Housing, oversight hearing NYCHA's Winter
17 Preparedness on January 15, 2020.

18 Thank you so much. [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