

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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June 16, 2021
Start: 10:13 a.m.
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HELD AT: Remote Hearing, Virtual Room 2

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Diana Ayala
Laurie A. Cumbo
Ruben Diaz, Sr.
Oswald Feliz
Vanessa L. Gibson
Mark Gjonaj
Carlos Menchaca
Kevin C. Riley
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Mark Treyger
Jimmy Van Bramer

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

Diana Blackwell

Beverly Macfarlane

Margaret Massac

Brian Honan
NYCHA

Al Ferguson
NYCHA

Vlada Kenniff
NYCHA

Josephine Bartlett
NYCHA

Diana Blackwell

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Computer has started.

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to today's remote New York City Council hearing of the Committee on Public Education. At this time would all panelists please turn on their video for identification purposes. To minimize disruption, please silence your electronic devices. And if you wish to submit testimony, you may do so via email at the following address:

testimony@council.nyc.gov. Once again, that is testimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you for your cooperation. We are ready to begin.

UNIDENTIFIED: Chair Ampry-Samuel?

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Good morning, everyone. This hearing is now [gavel] this hearing is now coming to order. The Committee on Public Housing oversight hearing, NYCHA waste management issues and pest problems, June 16, 2021. We are now coming to order. I am Alicka Ampry-Samuel and I chair the Public Housing Committee. I am joined by Council Members, Council Member Ayala, Council Member R. Diaz, Sr., Council Member Treyger, Council Member Riley, Council Member Menchaca, Council Member Gjonaj, Council Member Feliz, and Council Member

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2 Cabrera. The purpose of today's hearing is to
3 discuss waste management issues and pest problems at
4 NYCHA's developments. NYCHA is home to over 350,000
5 authorized residents, every one of whom deserves to
6 live in decent, clean, and free of, excuse me,
7 decent, clean housing that is free of infestations of
8 rats, roaches, and other pests, and that has an
9 effective system for storing and removing trash. But
10 for too long many of our city's public housing
11 residents has felt something totally different. For
12 too long NYCHA has struggled to get a handle on the
13 outsized populations of rats, mice, cockroaches, and
14 bedbugs in this developments. And we're all too
15 familiar with the headlines and horror stories in
16 daily newspapers about the rats the size of cats,
17 showers of maggots and cockroaches coming out of
18 ceilings, rodents climbing up garbage chutes, and out
19 of elevators. Just this week a constituent called
20 our office from Pop Rock Consolidation about rats
21 that have slowly and effectively poked their way out
22 of her floorboards in the apartment. Apart from the
23 persistent pest infestations NYCHA has also struggled
24 with managing garbage storage and removal, along with
25 mounds of trash taller than some development fences.

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2 No New Yorker would consider these conditions
3 acceptable and there is absolutely no reason we
4 should consider them acceptable for our NYCHA
5 residents. As the chair of the Committee of Public
6 Housing I am committed to seeing NYCHA follow through
7 on its plans to solve these problems. Rather than
8 simply sticking a Band-Aid on the issue, NYCHA is
9 working and should be working to address the
10 underlying that are contributing to its waste and
11 pest problems. On January 31, 2019, HUD, NYCHA, and
12 the federal monitor entered into an agreement to
13 address fiscal issues at NYCHA. This included a
14 number of action plans related to mold, heat, lead,
15 and pests that were all approved by the federal
16 monitor. I have chaired hearings on all of the
17 topics related to these action plans and now this is
18 one of the last focal points of that agreement with
19 the release of the pest and waste management plan.
20 This final plan is comprehensive and ambitious. My
21 hope is that today's hearing will be a productive
22 conversation on how we can learn more about the plan
23 and how NYCHA is working to change the way it
24 addresses the pest and waste concerns. I'm
25 interested to learn about the practical

1 implementation of NYCHA's plan, how it is being
2 funded, and how COVID-19 has affected the development
3 and rollout of this plan. We will also hear two
4 pieces of legislation. We have a bill from Council
5 Member Cabrera, who was with us today, which would
6 require 311 to directly accept NYCHA complaints and
7 make information on those complaints public. And we
8 also have a resolution at the request of Speaker
9 Johnson calling on the State of New York to pass
10 existing legislation that was introduced in the state
11 by Assembly Member Khaleel Anderson and State Senator
12 Michael Gianaris that would give a prorated rent
13 reduction to tenants who suffer interpretation to
14 their utility services. Together with my colleagues
15 we are seeking to not only identify the challenges,
16 but also work with NYCHA to come up with and bring
17 about real changes and remedies. I also want to say
18 that we are joined this morning by Diana Blackwell
19 from the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board and
20 local resident, as well as Margaret Massac, NYCHA
21 resident, Claudia Perez from the Washington Houses
22 Resident Council and I'm not sure if Beverly were
23 following this here, from Taft Houses, and Melanie
24 Perez. And so with that I will now turn it over to
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2 committee counsel, Audrey Sun, to go over some
3 housekeeping rules for today's hearing. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, thanks very much,
5 Chair. Ah, before I begin with the housekeeping
6 items, would you like to hear from Council Member
7 Cabrera?

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yes. Council
9 Member Fernando Cabrera, we'll hear from you now,
10 related to your bill.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you, thank
12 you so much, ah, Madam Chair, and to the Committee on
13 Public Housing for the opportunity to allow me to
14 speak on the NYCHA 311 bill 7681 today. I am often
15 frustrated and saddened to stand at press conferences
16 over and over again to complain about the same old
17 problems the NYCHA neighbors are being forced to deal
18 with for so long. Daily NYCHA residents are forced
19 to live in inhumane conditions because of the neglect
20 and lack of transparency of this agency. It is
21 unimaginable that NYCHA would allow tenants to live
22 without heat in the winter months, to live with
23 rodents and molds in their apartment as, ah, today,
24 Madam Chair, you're leading this, ah, this hearing
25 today and, and going over this specific issue, to

1 live with broken entrance doors which make our
2 tenants unsafe, elevators that at times go without
3 repairs for months, and the lack of cleanliness in
4 the NYCHA staircases. This is why I have submitted
5 this bill that will allow NYCHA residents to finally,
6 finally use the city's 311 system to register
7 complaints and make service requests since NYCHA's
8 system is dysfunctional and unaccountable. This bill
9 will bring transparency and accountability today.
10 Allowing NYCHA buildings to be processed with the 311
11 system just makes sense. The 311 system works, so we
12 should allowing it to work for all. Our NYCHA
13 neighbors are no less than others, so let us not
14 treat them as second-class citizens. Let us, ah,
15 examine our 311 system. The mission is to provide
16 the public with a quick, easy access to all the New
17 York City services and information while offering the
18 best customer services. The 311 also provides
19 insight to improve our city government through
20 accurate and consistent measurement, analysis of
21 service delivery, and now this will be allowed
22 through all of the complaints that will come through,
23 ah, our NYCHA tenants. We're finally gonna have a
24 way to hold them accountable. The council will get

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2 real time, ah, data with 311. Madam Chair, thank you
3 so much for allowing it come, ah, through, ah, this
4 committee. And I want to thank, ah, the staff, our
5 counsel as well, for working on this bill. Thank you
6 so much.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I also
8 want to recognize that the resolution that I just
9 referred to with the state is, Council Member Carlos
10 Menchaca introduced that legislation, and I just want
11 to introduce that resolution. I just want to, um,
12 check to see if Council Member Menchaca wanted to
13 speak on this bill, just wanted to double check.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yes, ah, can
15 you hear me?

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Wonderful. How
18 ya doing, Chair? Ah, really good to be here with you
19 and everyone here on the committee and NYCHA and all
20 the advocates. I, I just want to say that, ah, we
21 are in this council, ah, supporting some state
22 legislation that needs to get passed as soon as
23 possible. The NYCHA Utility Accountability Act is
24 something that really resonates with many members in
25 my district in Red Hook, who, like many of the

1 residents across the entire city, have for years now
2 been plagued by gas stoppages, electrical outages,
3 laden, ah, ah, drinking water that has been impacted
4 by lead. Too often those of us fortunate enough to
5 represent NYCHA residents make it a big deal, ah, and
6 come to the press and talk about this openly. We
7 bring it to the committee, and we are trying our best
8 to do the work of oversight over this agency. But it
9 has not been enough. And so many of the residents
10 have joined forces to really make it clear that we
11 need, um, relief, cash relief, and that this failure,
12 ah, is not only massive in scale, it has massive
13 impact in people's homes and wallets. Ah, this cycle
14 is beyond maddening and needs to stop, and this is
15 why this accountability allows for compensation,
16 compensation for these failures. This is why I'm
17 introducing a resolution with the Speaker and the
18 Chair and many other council members, ah, supporting
19 the NYCHA Utility Accountability Act. The bill would
20 prorate rent reductions whenever utility service
21 fails. It would, ah, allow for compensation cash
22 relief, ah, at the tune of millions of dollars to our
23 thousands of residents that are impacted every day,
24 across the year, every year. Ah, that's it for me.

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2 Thank you, Chair. I'm looking forward to the rest of
3 the conversation today.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so
5 much, Council Member. We've also just been joined by
6 Council Member Van Bramer. And I'll turn it back
7 over to Committee Counsel.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great. Thank you,
9 Chair. My name is Audrey Sun. I'm counsel to the
10 City Council's Committee on Public Housing. Before
11 we begin, I want to remind everyone that you will be
12 on mute until you are called on to testify. When it
13 is your turn to speak I will call your name and you
14 will be prompted to unmute. We will now hear from an
15 opening panel of members of the public, ah, including
16 NYCHA residents, followed by council member
17 questions. In order to hear from everyone, the clock
18 will be set to two minutes. First we will hear from
19 Diana Blackwell, followed by Beverly Macfarlane.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time begins.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ms. Blackwell, I
22 believe you're still muted.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Ms. Blackwell, you
24 need to accept the unmute request. I'm going to send
25 one to you now. I'm going to send it to you one more

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2 time. When you get the request, just accept it and
3 unmute. No?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All right, Ms.
5 Blackwell, while we try to resolve this issue we'll
6 move to the next members of the public, ah, Beverly
7 Macfarlane, and then we'll return to you. Thanks so
8 much for your patience.

9 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Yes, good morning,
10 everyone.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

12 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Good morning. Um,
13 thank you for having me, um, and I'm glad that these,
14 um, bills are up for to be passed, because it's very
15 important. Um, we are living in conditions where,
16 um, they, that NYCHA have imposed this AWS service
17 that these buildings are not [inaudible] but have not
18 implemented staffing so our buildings and our garbage
19 have not been cleaned. The rodents are coming into
20 people homes and in the buildings. Um, this is a
21 constant thing with, um, sitting with NYCHA, ah,
22 management, leadership, and it's still, it's
23 continuing to happening. Ah, you know, this is
24 preventive, this should have been preventive
25 maintenance during the whole course of, ah, during

1 this whole pandemic. This has not been, it either
2 has been no cleaning of our buildings or, um, you
3 know, it's just, it's a shame that HUD is given NYCHA
4 all this money and they have not been utilizing the
5 money on our residents' services. And these are
6 quality of life issues here. Um, and unfortunately
7 they have not been doing what was utilized. We can't
8 call 311, like you said. Um, we have to call, ah,
9 the 718 number. The 718 ticketing is they close a
10 ticket, open a ticket, close a ticket, and it's just
11 been a very, um, stressful for our residents and,
12 and, and this is a quality of life issue. So I urge
13 you all to pass these bills and not give NYCHA any
14 more, um, authorization in terms of, you know, you
15 know, they trying to pass us off as to these resident
16 management companies and private developers under the
17 Blueprint for Change Doors, which we as resident
18 leaders are against. So this is another opportunity
19 for them to see that they're not, ah...

21 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible]

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has expired.

23 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Thank you.

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1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 15
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will
3 now return to Diana Blackwell, followed by Margaret
4 Massac.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin
6 now.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ms. Blackwell, did
8 you receive a prompt to unmute? OK. While we
9 continue to work to resolve this issue we'll move to
10 Margaret Massac.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin
12 now.

13 MARGARET MASSAC: Um, good morning,
14 everybody. Ah, thank you for this meeting. But what
15 I would like to see is accountability for NYCHA, not
16 just in the form of tenants getting paid and because
17 we don't know if they're gonna use that against us,
18 ah, to say well they don't have enough money to do
19 whatever, is that there's some kind of, um,
20 discipline for the NYCHA, um, staff, for not doing
21 what they supposed to do, because from all the way we
22 have the monitor and people are still doing
23 [inaudible]. This makes no sense. I don't
24 understand why some people are not getting fired,
25 some people are not getting suspended for not doing

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2 their job, because they cannot be above the law. If
3 they messing up with tenants and not keeping their
4 promises they need to be held accountable and, um, I
5 appreciate all the work that the council people are
6 doing, but I would like to please, and then also now
7 they have because of COVID when you put in a ticket
8 they don't put no appointment time in, and they still
9 come, if you're still gonna come why can't you point
10 an appointment to say you're gonna come a certain
11 day? Ah, because now they don't work with you with
12 appointments, so we almost worse than we were before
13 because we don't know when these people are coming,
14 especially for people that work. We can't take every
15 day off because we think they may come. So it's
16 like, um, they need to know that there's consequences
17 coming their way. And I would like to see a bill
18 with that because no job should be above the law,
19 where they can do what they want to do and just clock
20 in, go home, and make all that money mistreating
21 people and not doing their job. Thank you very much.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much. Ah,
23 Diana Blackwell, we'll return to you one more time
24 and if it doesn't work we'll move to testimony from
25 the administration and then return to you.

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: OK. At this time we'll move into testimony from the administration. Ah, reminder to council members to please use the Zoom hand raise function if you would like to ask any questions. Ah, I will call on council members in turn in the order that they used the, ah, raise hand function. Um, after we hear from NYCHA we will hear testimony from the remaining members of the public. I will now administer the oath to the administration, which is represented by Brian Honan, Al Ferguson, Vlada Kenniff, Josephine Bartlett, and Andrew Korbul. After I say the oath please wait for me to call your name and respond one by one. Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before this committee and to respond honestly to council member questions? Brian Honan?

BRIAN HONAN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Al Ferguson?

AL FERGUSON: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Vlada Kenniff?

VLADA KENNIFF: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Josephine Bartlett?

2 JOSEPHINE BARTLETT: I do.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Andrew Korbul?

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Audrey, ah, Andrew, ah,
5 Andrew is here for support. He won't be taking
6 questions. I'm not sure if he needs to be. Ah, I
7 mean, it's up to the council rules, but he won't be
8 speaking today. He's just, he's here for support.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: OK, understood.

10 Thank you. You may begin when ready.

11 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Chair Alicka
12 Ampry-Samuel, members of the Committee on Public
13 Housing, other distinguished members of the City
14 Council, NYCHA residents, and members of the public,
15 good morning. I am Al Ferguson, NYCHA's vice
16 president of waste management and pest control. I am
17 pleased to be joined by Vlada Kenniff, vice president
18 of energy and sustainability, Brian Honan, vice
19 president of intergovernmental relations, and
20 Josephine Bartlett, deputy director of the pest
21 control department. I'd like to note that I have
22 over 32 years of experience with the New York City
23 Department of Sanitation. I started as a sanitation
24 worker and rose through the ranks, ultimately
25 finishing my career as the three-star chief of

1 Citywide Collection, Recycling, and Containerization.

2 Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the progress

3 NYCHA is making in the critical areas of waste

4 management and pest control, ensuring that our

5 buildings and grounds are clean and as pest-free as

6 possible is a top priority at the authority. We know

7 our residents are directly impacted by these issues

8 and we are working hard to ensure that NYCHA's waste

9 management and pest control methods are

10 comprehensive, modern, and adaptive as the industries

11 evolve. We have made significant changes to our

12 approaches in these areas. We continue to implement

13 new strategies and have long-term projects on the

14 horizon that will further improve residents' quality

15 of life. Over the past years, over the past few

16 years we have created a dedicated waste management

17 department that focuses on preventing and combatting

18 pest issues, developed IT enhancements that

19 facilitate our work, and trained staff on the

20 integrated pest management. NYCHA is budgeted for

21 131 exterminators, of which we currently have 109

22 exterminators on staff. This includes the 22 new

23 exterminators that we hired as part of the

24 neighborhood Rat Reduction Initiative. We are

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1 working on hiring additional exterminators. The New
2 York City Department of Citywide Administrative
3 Services is in a process of certifying the new
4 exterminator civil service list. Our pest control
5 department is also in the process of onboarding
6 additional exterminators by hiring residents via the
7 NYCHA Resident Training Academy. Under the
8 leadership of Chair Russ and in accordance with the
9 2019 HUD agreement, we are transforming our, our, our
10 organization to provide improved critical services to
11 our residents and we are investing in a significant
12 amount of funding and human capital to ensure
13 results, successful results. The federal monitor,
14 Bart Schwartz, approved, excuse me, approved our
15 pest, our pest and waste management action plan in
16 January of this year. The action plan is our map of
17 ensuring that our practices meet our goals of more
18 effective waste management and pest control. It is
19 our commitment to the use of integrated pest
20 management at the authority and the creation of
21 developments specific waste management plans for
22 every NYCHA property. This is accomplished by
23 targeted investments and capital upgrades, and a
24 willingness to reenvision our approaches to pest and
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1 waste management. A key focus, a key focus of the
2 action plan involves improving the way NYCHA
3 collects, stores, and removes waste to meet our goal
4 to remove or store all waste in sealed, rodent-
5 resistant containers once every 24 hours. This is so
6 important because better waste management means fewer
7 pests as we're eliminating their habitats and sources
8 of food. Today I'll describe some of the waste
9 infrastructure upgrades and programmatic improvements
10 that will enable us to achieve our waste management
11 and pest control goals. NYCHA's current waste
12 infrastructure, which is responsible for managing
13 over 200,000 tons of waste every year, is outdated.
14 Since NYCHA's developments were built the amount of
15 waste generated by Americans has tripled. At the
16 same time, NYCHA's infrastructure hasn't received the
17 investments it's needed to keep up with that
18 increase. In fact, more than 80% of our waste assets
19 are past their life cycle and need immediate
20 replacement. The federal monitor approved NYCHA's
21 city capital action plan last month, which unlocks
22 over 563 million dollars in funding to help the
23 authority fully upgrade and modernize its waste
24 infrastructure. Nearly 9 million dollars, ah, in
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1 state, city, and federal funds will be added to the
2 city capital action plan. A total investment of 47
3 million dollars toward Mayor de Blasio's Neighborhood
4 Rat Reduction Program has enabled us to accomplish
5 the following: Install larger trash chutes that can
6 accommodate a standard 13-gallon tall kitchen garbage
7 bag on the first level of 15 developments, which
8 helps residents dispose of trash properly. Next,
9 install new interior trash compactors at 38
10 developments, exterior compactors at 16 developments,
11 and 10 bulk crushers and 20 cardboard compacting
12 baling machines, all of which enable us to manage
13 waste more effectively and efficiently. Next, we
14 installed over 5000 of, ah, 8000 door sweeps that
15 prevent pests from getting into our buildings, and
16 installed 14 out of 50 rat slabs that eliminate
17 places for rodents to live, eat, and breed by
18 replacing the original dirt basement floors with
19 concrete. With this total funding of more than 619
20 million dollars we'll be able to replace aging waste,
21 recycling, and bulk waste equipment at 324 sites
22 across 197 developments. Better waste management
23 means fewer pests and fewer pests leads, ah, lead to
24 an increase in the overall quality of life for our
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1 residents. In conjunction with the increased funding
2 for infrastructure, we are making programmatic and
3 design improvements. For instance, at the beginning
4 of the pandemic we instituted a Clean to the Ground
5 Initiative to keep waste yards trash- and litter-
6 free, an especially challenging task considering that
7 stay-at-home mandates resulted in a significant
8 increase in the amount of household waste that was
9 generated at our developments. We worked with our
10 close agency partner, the New York City Department of
11 Sanitation, to obtain a sizable increase in the
12 number of DSNY-funded bulk container dump tickets.
13 This increase represents the removal of nearly 12,000
14 additional tons of bulk waste from NYCHA developments
15 last year. We've worked with the carting vendors who
16 currently service most of our bulk containers to
17 ensure that they increase capacity so that they could
18 increase the frequency of bulk waste removal at our
19 developments. To demonstrate the benefits of
20 increased waste collection frequency at a small group
21 of developments we purchased two six-yard rear-loader
22 compacting garbage trucks that can each hold
23 approximately three tons of household refuse per
24 load. These trucks are equipped with the latest in
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1 Vision Zero safety divine, designs, including 360-
2 degree cameras for enhanced driver awareness, and
3 have the latest in hybrid, ah, that's both diesel and
4 electric technology. NYCHA has also worked with our
5 sanitation department partners to develop a recycling
6 reset pilot program to improve recycling rates at 12
7 sites - Baruch, Baruch Addition, Bushwick, Highland,
8 Butler, Marcy, Morris One and Two, Reis One and Two,
9 Webster, and Morrisania. The results are tangible
10 and sustainable. Several sites, such as Baruch and
11 Reis Houses are recycling at record-high rates. When
12 the pilot began in early 2020 Baruch Houses reported
13 six bags of recyclable material for their weekly
14 pickup. In November 2020 they reported 253 bags of
15 recyclables. Reis Houses reported 384 bags during
16 that same period. The waste management department is
17 finalizing the individual waste management action
18 plans for each of our developments. We have gathered
19 development-specific data via both virtual and in-
20 person site visits over the past year. By cataloging
21 and mapping our current waste assets and reviewing
22 various critical aspects of waste management
23 operations and development-specific challenges with
24 NYCHA staff. We effectively created short, medium,
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1 and long term action plans to improve waste
2 management at each site. Some of the solutions
3 include providing additional bulk tickets each month
4 as well as shepherding the procurement process for
5 faster compactor replacement. We are also finalizing
6 a newly created scorecard cleanliness rating system
7 with the assistance of the federal monitor. This
8 will provide an objective rating regarding the
9 cleanliness of critical areas in both the interior
10 and exterior of all of our developments and will
11 allow us to highlight areas that need attention help
12 redirect resources on a development level. In 2019
13 the authority released the NYCHA 2.0 Waste Management
14 Plan, a comprehensive set of strategies for
15 delivering state-of-the-art infrastructure and
16 providing residents with convenient locations for
17 disposing recyclables and food waste, all to greatly
18 reduce pests and make our developments cleaner. To
19 advance the waste management plan, this year we
20 released requests for proposals for the redesign of
21 seven waste yards, and for a new pneumatic waste
22 collection system at Polo Grounds Towers, all to
23 start construction in 2022. By 2028 we will have a
24 completely overhauled, sorry, by 2028 we will have
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1 completely overhauled the waste yards at 194
2 developments. These redesigns will replacing aging
3 waste infrastructure with the new yards that will
4 have an increased footprint, have more operational
5 functionality, increase additional much-needed
6 recycling infrastructure, and have more reliable
7 compactors, making waste handling more efficient,
8 thereby improving the quality of life of our
9 residents. The new waste yards will be more
10 aesthetically pleasing than past designs and will
11 incorporate past resident feedback. The pneumatic
12 waste collection system at Polo Grounds will
13 transport waste from each building underground to a
14 centralized facility, where it will be compacted in a
15 sealed pest-resistant container. This new system
16 will reduce the amount of labor used to transport
17 waste and will minimize exposure to pests. This
18 summer we are launching a mattress recycling program
19 at 25 developments to containerize, remove, and
20 recycle unsightly mattresses while providing job
21 opportunities for NYCHA residents. It will
22 ultimately be scaled up to 100 or so developments.
23 Over the past year we piloted two dedicated exterior
24 cardboard compactors at Marcy and Morris One Houses.
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1 This resulted in recycling of more than 116 tons of
2 cardboard. We are evaluating the use of in-sink food
3 disposals at select sites to reduce organic waste
4 from household waste streams, eliminate food waste
5 food sources from pests, and divert organic materials
6 from landfills. Our farms at NYCHA sites are also
7 helping to achieve these goals. Since 2016 our led
8 partner, Green City Forest, has collected over 21,000
9 pounds, or 10-1/2 tons, of compostable food scraps
10 from NYCHA residents. One Green City Forest alone
11 and former NYCHA resident, Domingo Morales, is
12 working to expanding composting at NYCHA developments
13 through an initiative he started called Compost
14 Power. In 2020 Compost Power organized composting at
15 five NYCHA developments that can now process at least
16 50 tons of organic waste per year. Compost Power
17 provides NYCHA residents with the opportunity to
18 reduce waste from landfills while creating more eco-
19 friendly drops. Our waste management efforts are
20 being carried out in partnership through outreach and
21 education programs led by NYCHA, residents, and other
22 stakeholders. For example, NYCHA is developing a
23 campaign for a clean NYCHA to better communicate with
24 and engage residents on proper waste management and
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1 recycling programs. The campaign is rolling out at
2 five developments this summer. It will apply the
3 tools of public awareness and behavior change to
4 define and promote a positive waste culture at NYCHA.
5 It will feature highly visible signage and other
6 visual prompts developed in close collaboration with
7 and input from residents, community-based
8 organizations, and other advocates. Mayor de
9 Blasio's City Clean-Up Corps Initiative has granted
10 us 7 million dollars in funding to hire 1000 seasonal
11 workers who will keep our grounds clean and well
12 maintained. This include waste handling and
13 assisting with our pest control work. An integral
14 cornerstone of our new approach to pest control was
15 the agency-wide roll-out of the industry gold
16 standard - integrated pest management. IPM focuses
17 on sustainable and long-term solutions that target
18 the underlying cause causes of pest infestations.
19 Exterminators perform a thorough inspection, looking
20 forward and removing sources of food and water, as
21 well as any points of entry. They perform exclusion
22 work such as caulking and installation of escutcheon
23 plates while minimize the use of pesticides. We
24 incorporated IPM protocols into our IT systems and
25

1 issued updated standard procedures and guidance
2 regarding IPM to staff. We have trained over 700
3 staff, caretakers, supervisors, and other property
4 management staff, on the fundamentals of IPM and we
5 kicked off quarterly trainings on specific IPM
6 topics. Resident education is an essential element
7 of pest prevention. Educational materials have been
8 created to inform residents about IPM best practices
9 for prevention, including hand-outs, rent inserts,
10 and a comprehensive NYCHA pest control web page. We
11 have provided targeted relief to more than 6200
12 apartments with recurring pest problems. The
13 targeted relief program also involves inspecting and
14 treating the adjacent apartments above, below, to the
15 left and the right of the apartments that had the
16 identified recurring pest problem. While we know
17 that more work needs to be done, it is clear that we
18 are making progress. Reducing pests and creating
19 cleaner and keep cleaner communities is truly a
20 collaborative effort. By working together, NYCHA
21 employees, residents, community organizations, city
22 agency partners, we can continue to bring our vision
23 to fruition. We will keep advocating for the funding
24 we desperately need for critical capital investments
25

1
2 and we will continue to engage our residents to make
3 sure that their needs and priorities are incorporated
4 into the work we're doing to improve pest and waste
5 management practices. Thank you. We are happy to
6 answer any questions you may have.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Wooh, thank
8 you. Thank you, Mr. Ferguson, um, and welcome
9 aboard.

10 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I, I, I
12 have to say that I am, um, pleased to hear you have
13 such an extensive background and experience and
14 working history, previous working history at
15 Department of Sanitation. And, um, it seems as
16 though just from your testimony that you have a lot
17 of work ahead, but you've been implementing a lot of
18 work, um, utilizing your expertise and experiences.
19 So I do appreciate that. Um, so let's just get right
20 into it. With, I represent 27 NYCHA developments
21 just within my own council district, and my
22 constituent services, constituent complaints,
23 clearly, um, have a lot to do with pest control and
24 waste management. Um, but as we focus on our health
25 and as we focus on our environment and sustainability

1
2 and just seeing what happened during 2020 with the
3 pandemic, we have to make sure that we are being
4 strategic in the work that we're doing, um, providing
5 information to the residents and really being, um,
6 focused on health and safety and just an overall
7 clean environment. Um, and so with that I want to
8 just begin with a lot of background questions. How
9 many pest complaints did NYCHA have in 2019, 2020,
10 and right now in 2021 for each pest type, and that is
11 rats, mice, cockroaches, and bed bugs.

12 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you,
13 Chair, for that question. Ah, I'm gonna refer you to
14 my deputy director of pest control, ah, Josephine
15 Bartlett.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Thank you,
17 Chair, for the question. So in 2019 there were 3434
18 verified rat complaints, and 85,341 mice, bedbugs,
19 and roaches. In 2020 it was 4741, ah, verified rats
20 and 46,492 of the other three public health pest
21 types. And so far this year we have 1204 verified
22 rat complaints and, um, 15,600 so far this year in
23 the other pest types.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And right now
25 to date are you able to tell us how many open

1
2 complaints, like how many, um, complaints that are
3 open right now that you're actively working on for
4 today?

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So as of
6 yesterday when I pulled the numbers we have 4417
7 extermination work orders open. And this is
8 corrected maintenance work orders, and these are the
9 work orders that come in through the CCC, um, that we
10 will have created it our. It's not preventative
11 maintenance work orders that we also do.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, and can
13 you explain the difference between, so going back to
14 the, the, my first question how many pest complaints
15 did NYCHA have in 2019, 2020, and 2021, and then you
16 gave me a number for 2021. So can you explain the
17 difference between the pest complaints for 2021, what
18 number was that?

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Ah, we've got
20 1204 verified complaints, ah, in rats, and 15,600 for
21 the other three pest types so far this year.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, so the
23 4417 extermination correction, ah, work orders that
24 you're working on, can you explain what that number
25

1
2 is out of the 15,000? Just trying to get some
3 clarity.

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah,
5 absolutely. So, um, we have inspection work orders,
6 corrective maintenance work orders, and preventative
7 maintenance work orders. The corrective maintenance
8 work orders are what is called in through the CCC,
9 but it's also what, um, our staff when they're on the
10 grounds, if they see a, um, rat burrow that they need
11 to, um, address right then they'll a make a
12 corrective maintenance work order and, um, treat that
13 right then. So that might have been, that was
14 captured when I ran the numbers yesterday. Ah,
15 preventative maintenance work orders, at the
16 beginning of each month we have, um, a p.m. work
17 order that's created for every single building an
18 exterminator goes and does a check of the basement
19 and the grounds. And this is part of our new
20 philosophy and integrated pest management, really
21 inspecting, getting to the root cause, not, trying to
22 get ahead of, um, infestations, not just waiting for,
23 um, it to be told to us. Um, and then there's also
24 inspection work orders that are mostly tied to, um,
25 special initiatives that you heard with the HUD

1 deliverables, the targeted relief program, um, clean
2 building initiative, um, such of that nature.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. How, how
5 much garbage did NYCHA collect in tons in 2019, 2020,
6 and in 2021?

7 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
8 the question. Ah, in, ah, we do not have that
9 information. Ah, that information is maintained by
10 the New York City Department of Sanitation. Ah, and
11 I, I would like, I'd refer you to them for that
12 answer.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [laughs] OK.
14 So I'm not gonna refer to them. I would like to get
15 that number.

16 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, especially
18 since you were there for 50 years and then now you're
19 over at NYCHA [laughs].

20 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And so, and I
22 say that, you know, just seriously.

23 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So I when I
25 set the stage about where we are today. I just want

1
2 to make sure that we're not just having a
3 conversation, but that we're really, we're able to
4 receive information so that we can figure out, um,
5 how we move forward, so that, you know, everyone is
6 working together, right?

7 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I, and I
9 really think that that's why, I could only imagine
10 that that's why you're in the position that you're
11 in...

12 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Right.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...um, at
14 NYCHA is because of your, you, you know, your, um,
15 experiences and your relationships at Sanitation.

16 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, and, and
18 it would just be helpful to just kind of have that
19 information.

20 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Absolutely,
21 absolutely. Ah, that, I, I will, I'll make the
22 appropriate contacts to get, ah, as much information
23 as we can, but I just want to let you know that, you
24 know, we should be able to, you know, Sanitation
25 should be able to get, ah, containerized information

1
2 because that's recorded at the dumps. Ah, we should
3 be able to get bulk information from them because
4 that's also recorded at the times. Uh, but the only,
5 ah, information that we probably cannot get is for
6 curbside collection material, which represents about
7 half of our developments, ah, because that material
8 is comingled with, ah, the other residential garbage.
9 Ah, of the neighborhood surrounding the developments.
10 It's all on the same route. When they pick up NYCHA
11 they pick up all the, the different, ah, buildings in
12 the neighborhood as well. So they wouldn't be able
13 to pinpoint the tonnage. You know, they can only
14 make guesses or estimates probably on that. But
15 we'll, well continue that conversation. I'll set
16 that up and, ah, you know, I, I look forward to it.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, cool. But
18 just so you know, whenever there's, there's a, a
19 issue with Sanitation or a question, you know, we're
20 gonna look at you like you should know, call
21 somebody.

22 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Um, all
24 right. Um, what is the common pest complaint that
25 NYCHA receives? The most common.

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
3 your question, Chair. Ah, I'm gonna refer you to
4 Josephine Bartlett.

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Hi, Chair.
6 Thank you for the question. It's roaches.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. And
8 what is the, what, is there a common complaint even,
9 and I hate to even dive into this part of it, where
10 you, like, you really get into the weeds, but just to
11 understand it. Um, what is the common complaint even
12 within the, the roaches themselves? Because I know
13 that they could be roach infestation where there's
14 roaches everywhere, and then it can also be where,
15 um, you know, you're removing the cabinets, which is
16 something that, you know, they did a story with
17 [inaudible] in my development there, you know,
18 roaches in the cabinets and when you remove them
19 they're just everywhere. Is it when there's, you
20 know, a renovation happening, you know, maintenance
21 work? Can you just?

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So mostly it's
23 low-level roaches that we, um, see and, you know, the
24 resident sees them underneath the sink and in the
25 cabinets. But what I can tell you as part of

1
2 integrated pest management, this new approach about
3 getting to the root causes and sealing up cracks and
4 holes that these roaches are coming through is that
5 updated, um, work that exterminators now have to do
6 is caulking in the cabinets, so like sealing around
7 all the little cracks in the cabinets so they're not
8 like getting through. We're also looking for holes,
9 um, around pipes, um, and stuffing them with, um,
10 steel wool mesh, um, so that they can't get through
11 there. Ah, we using the HEPA vacuum, which, um, you
12 know, can vacuum up their, ah, we call it frazz.
13 It's the roach poop and wings and skins and things
14 like that. And it is a way that we can get required
15 of that, which keeps the roaches coming back, um, and
16 so we get required of that, and then we use gel, um,
17 exactly where we see it, so more targeted.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. How
19 long does it take NYCHA to resolve a roach
20 infestation, bedbug infestation, rat infestation, or
21 mice infestation? So can you now just go over like
22 the timing with your timeline, or how you resolve
23 these issues when someone calls it in, or if they
24 don't call it in?

25

1
2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Absolutely.
3 So I'll just keep going with this question. Um, for,
4 um, by the time the, the work order is created till
5 the first time our exterminator goes for rats it's an
6 average of 3.3 days as of last month and, um, all the
7 other three pest types it's an average 4.47 days as
8 of last month. That is not, um, like the completion
9 of the work order when it's, um, a more complicated
10 work order where we're doing, um, leaks, cabinet
11 repair, all of that. It jumps up to bedbugs is 36
12 days because we have to do follow-ups, it's not just
13 one treatment, unfortunately. 24 days for mice, 15
14 for rats, um, and 44 for roaches. That's when, and
15 this comes into play [inaudible].

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I heard the
17 number 24. What, [inaudible] again? I wasn't...

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: That is...

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...sure if
20 that 24 hours or 24 days.

21 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Days, it's
22 days. That is not from, to our first look at the
23 situation, though. For, ah, mice, which is the 24
24 days, um, it is 4.47 days. So from when that first
25 call is made till when our exterminator gets in.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Has NYCHA
3 implemented its planned enhanced routing "pest-
4 resistant work orders"?

5 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
6 the question, ah, Chair. Ah, I'm gonna refer again
7 to Josie Bartlett.

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Thank you,
9 Chair. Can you clarify on the enhanced routing?

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So I was
11 actually under the impression that there was the new
12 planned strategy for when you receive a complaint and
13 just the timeline coming in from the action plan
14 itself and, um, and, and that's why I wanted the
15 clarity [inaudible] four days because I remember
16 reading something, um, that mentioned, um, like if
17 there's a, a rat infestation it would be a 24-hour
18 response and, um, you know, you...

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...[inaudible]
21 and address the issue within were hours. And so just
22 what you mentioned, the timeline just seemed a little
23 different from what I was, what I actually read.

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah,
25 absolutely. Um, so we get into jargon and we call it

1
2 our priority matrix and this is part of our new
3 standard procedure that we just created, and you're
4 absolutely right. Um, rats in the interior
5 apartments are a priority 7 that we must respond
6 within seven days. Um, and as of this month we are,
7 um, hitting that deliverable most of time. Why you
8 saw a different number than what I say because
9 there's, um, rats on the grounds, too. Um, rats on
10 the grounds have a priority level 4, which is, um,
11 within seven days, but we are doing rats as of last
12 month within 3.3 days. Um, so we are hitting our
13 deliverable, um, for that. But, um, the priority
14 matrix, that's what, so it's, um, priority 7, within
15 24 hours, um, for interior, and priority 4, within
16 seven days on that exterior for rats.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So when
18 someone, just, just as an example, um, received a
19 call on Monday from a resident who had rats coming
20 in, she had one rat that she saw in her apartment
21 and, um, she called it in, she called us. So what
22 would be the process of someone coming in? So she
23 makes the call. I have a rat that came into, I just
24 saw a rat in my kitchen. What happens then? With
25 the priority, just explain just a snapshot of the

1 process, of getting rid of that rat in that building,
2 in that apartment, and just the timeline of it.

3
4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah,
5 absolutely. So rat inside of an apartment, when we
6 get that we, our goal and what we're hitting is
7 within 24 hours. So we would get it from the CCC.
8 They tell them right then we'll be there. Um, if we
9 have someone assigned to that development right then
10 they, um, part of our new standard procedure is even
11 if they have other work orders, ah, assigned to them,
12 which they will, ah, with a rat inside with the
13 siding they, they stop their usually scheduled work.
14 They call their supervisor. They say, you know,
15 there's a rat inside an apartment. This is
16 [inaudible] so we go to that work order right then.
17 If it's, ah, after hours our, um, emergency services
18 teams [inaudible].

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. And
20 so if it's not a rat, let's say they see, um, on a
21 sticky pad they captured on a sticky three mice.
22 What would, and they call and the say, you know, I
23 have, um, mice in my apartment. What happens with
24 the, with that?

1
2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Mice within an
3 apartment is, um, we're doing, um, within the initial
4 an average of 4.47 days. That's our response time
5 for mice. So the, we would get the CCC call, um, the
6 planning unit would get the, um, work order ticket.
7 They would, um, reach out to the resident if we have
8 the phone number on, um, in our records or, um, and
9 if we can get a hold of them regardless we schedule
10 it and the letter goes to the management office.
11 That letter goes under their door, um, from the
12 caretaker staff saying we're coming at such and such
13 date and then hopefully on that date. Um, if the
14 tenant is not home on the day that we are there, um,
15 we go a second time on a different day.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. What
17 types of pesticides does NYCHA use at the
18 developments?

19 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
20 your question, Chair. I'm gonna defer you again to,
21 ah, Josie Bartlett.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, and, and
23 while I'm asking that question, does the pesticides
24 have any side effects? Um, does NYCHA provide any
25 warning when they treat an area with the pesticides,

1 and, um, and can you, and does NYCHA determine which
2 infestation complaints warrant the use of, you know,
3 particular pesticides? So can you just kind of take
4 us through the steps of the usage of pesticides, what
5 they are, side effects, things of that nature.

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Absolutely.

8 Thank you for the question. Um, all of the
9 pesticides that we use are on our new pest control,
10 um, website. Um, we're using things like [inaudible]
11 and Vendetta Gel, First Strikes Off Bait, which is,
12 um, for rats, Final Pellets for direct burrow
13 baiting, um, Sterifab for bed bugs. I mean,
14 pesticides are a chemical so yes, but what we do do
15 is there is Department of Environmental Conservation
16 regulations which we, um, follow. Um, exterminators
17 like to say the label, and not to say, but this is
18 how it goes. Um, the label is the law. You have to
19 follow what the label says when you're, um, treating.
20 It gives you exactly the amount that is appropriate,
21 so, um, like First Strike on the grounds you can put,
22 um, in the bait stations, um, 15 to 30 feet. Um, you
23 can't do it less than that. So we follow, um, the
24 DEC regulations. And I can say as part of our new
25 approach of integrated pest management, which is all

1
2 about being more environmental and healthier for
3 residents that we really only, we use when it is
4 needed. So that's why we're using the HEPA vacuum on
5 roaches, so it stops the roaches from coming back.
6 And then we use gel in specific areas where, um, we
7 see the infestation. We're really reducing the
8 amount of spray that we use for roaches, which as I
9 said was our biggest pest type. Um, spray, you know,
10 goes elsewhere. Gel really sits where the
11 infestation is. So that's how we're minimizing when
12 the pesticides go. We also have, um, a burrow
13 collapsing team that works at our highest, um, rat
14 infestation developments and their job is to go
15 around and collapse rat burrows. And this is a
16 nontoxic way of getting rid of rats, so it collapses
17 their home. They have to spend their time rebuilding
18 their homes out of needing, so this reduces, um, the
19 amount of rats. It also lets our exterminators know
20 which burrows are active and which are not active, so
21 we don't have to use pesticides in, um, the rat
22 burrows that are inactive. So we're using less
23 pesticides overall.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And you're
25 tracking that? Like how are you tracking that? How

1
2 are you tracking pesticides, well, versus, you know,
3 other, um, technology or strategies to make that
4 determination, you know, as to this is not effective
5 and we need to now do a pesticide. How are you
6 tracking that?

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah, so every
8 work order, um, the exterminator has shows exactly
9 how much, um, pesticides they use, what type of
10 pesticide, and, um, what component of the apartment
11 that they put it on. So did they put in the cabinet,
12 did they put it on a baseboard, um, the exterior, did
13 they do like bait along the foundation? So we can
14 track how much, what it was, um, and where it was.
15 And we're also tracking, um, and this is a new thing
16 that we did within the last, ah, year and a half as
17 part of integrated pest management. Also on the work
18 tickets we track, um, what other work we're doing.
19 Um, are we sealing up holes? Are we caulking around
20 cabinets? Are we using the HEPA vacuum? Did, um,
21 the resident receive our, um, best tips about to keep
22 your home pest-free flyer that we're giving to every
23 resident when the exterminator comes into your house
24 because, ah, really integrated pest management is us
25 working together and sometimes it's simple as, you

1 know, putting your dog food, um, bowl away overnight.
2
3 Um, so it's things like that you don't really think
4 about, but it helps out our extermination team a lot.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. I just
6 have, um, one more question for now, because I know
7 that we have some very long days, um, in the council
8 and my colleague, Council Member Ayala, has her hand
9 raised. Um, so I'll stop after this question and
10 then go to Council Member Ayala. Are NYCHA rat
11 complaints recorded with DOHMH Rat Information
12 Portal?

13 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
14 your question, ah, Chair. Ah, I'm gonna refer you to
15 Josephine Bartlett.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Ooh, Josephine
17 [laughs].

18 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: [laughs]

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Do you need a
20 water break, Josephine? [laughs]

21 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: [laughs]

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: I got it,
23 thank you. Um, yeah, so we do work with our
24 Department of Health partners there, um, for
25 Neighborhood Rat Reduction Developments, which is

1
2 104, ah, developments. They, um, count the rat
3 boroughs mo. It wasn't monthly during the pandemic
4 because their inspectors were pulled in other
5 directions, but for the most part we get monthly
6 counts and that we have, um, access to that map in
7 real time, and we're currently working with our, um,
8 monitor, the federal monitor, to, um, release our
9 numbers on a quarterly basis, um, publicly. So that
10 will be coming.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. I'm
12 gonna stop there and then go back to my question.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll now
14 turn it over to other council members to ask any
15 questions, again, in the order that they've used the
16 Zoom raise hand function. Ah, council members, we
17 please ask that you keep your questions to five
18 minutes in the interest of time. The Sergeant at
19 Arms will keep a timer and let you know when your
20 time is up. Um, first we'll begin with Council
21 Member Ayala, and again a reminder to other members
22 if you'd like to ask a question to please use the
23 Zoom raise hand function.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: [inaudible]

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 49
2 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Is it possible for
3 you to come back around to me because I'm on, ah,
4 Land Use as well and I'm expected to vote in a
5 second. Sorry about that.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Sorry
7 about that [laughs].

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure, lots of, ah,
9 lots of multi-taskers on the council.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [laughs]

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Um, are there any
12 other council members at this time who have
13 questions? It looks like no other members have their
14 hand raised, hands, ah, OK, we have a hand from
15 Council Member Riley.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Good morning, good
17 morning. I'm also on Land Use right now, but I do
18 want to ask a very quick question. I'm sorry if it's
19 garbled speech. NYCHA development, is it weekly, is
20 it monthly, how frequently is garbage picked up?

21 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Garbage is
22 picked up, ah, between two and four times a week, you
23 know, depending on the neighborhood. The low- and
24 medium-density areas are picked up twice a week and
25 the high-density areas are picked up three times a

1 week. Recycling at those locations are picked up
2 once a week.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Vice
5 President Ferguson. Um, and just a request because,
6 um, I was walking through, um, Eagle Houses, which I
7 believe is the second-largest NYCHA development in
8 the city, um, and there was abundance of garbage, um,
9 in front of a lot of the buildings. And what we do
10 see is, ah, when people usually see abundance of
11 garbage they keep putting more garbage there. And I
12 did hear a lot of, um, amazing plans, um, that NYCHA
13 is doing now and [inaudible] together to come
14 because, um, we really want the individuals that live
15 in the NYCHA developments to [inaudible] community,
16 but when it looks like garbage and garbage is just
17 overflowing. Thank you, NYCHA, for your hard work.
18 Hopefully we can work together in the [inaudible].
19 Um, thank you.

20 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK, um, thank
21 you.

22 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Ah, thank you,
23 Council Member. And, Council Member, we'll make sure
24 that we have folks look at it, both on the bulk side,
25 um, and the regular trash, too, as well. Um, and

1 we'd, you know, also [inaudible] summer is here, ah,
2 we would, you know, look, ah, to use the time, ah,
3 that things slow down a little bit, if that's ever a
4 thing. But we can walk the grounds with you, too,
5 and you can point some of these issues out with
6 [inaudible] love to do that as well.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Brian,
9 I really will appreciate that. We, we always had a
10 great relationship working together, so I really
11 would appreciate that. Thank you. Um, that's,
12 that's it. I'll yield my time. Thank you, Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
14 Council Member Riley. Audrey, that's it?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, I think that's
16 it for Council Member questions at that time.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Moving
18 along, um, to the pest waste management plan. How
19 has COVID-19 impacted NYCHA's ability to comply with
20 the goals set in the pest and waste management plan?

21 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you. Ah,
22 thank you, Chair, for that question. Ah, I'll handle
23 the waste side, ah, first. And then I'll handle over
24 the pest side to, ah, Josie Bartlett again. Um, so
25 as far as the waste, ah, the waste management plans,

1
2 ah, we, ah, we were able to accomplish a lot, ah,
3 with, you know, during the pandemic. Ah, we
4 initiated a Clean to the Ground initiative, where,
5 ah, we actually, ah, we instructed developments to,
6 ah, make sure that all the grounds and the waste
7 yards were absolutely clear of material. From my
8 sanitation experience I know that, ah, and, and very
9 much like Council Member Riley indicated that
10 Edenwald, garbage begets garbage, that, you know, you
11 need to have an absolutely clean facility, ah, clean
12 development. Ah, it's not only a quality of life
13 issue but, ah, you know, it, it, it causes, ah, other
14 types of problems as well. So, ah, we were able to,
15 during the pandemic we were able to, ah, better
16 enhance, ah, you know, some of our waste-related
17 infrastructure, you know, making upgrades, installing
18 in-sync foods, ah, food waste disposals, ah,
19 cardboard balers, bulk crushers, ah, enlarging the
20 ground floor trash chute. Ah, I'm not sure if you
21 are familiar with the, you know, the trash chutes in
22 the buildings are, ah, you know, are relatively small
23 on each of the floors and, ah, one of our big
24 initiatives I think that will help out tremendously
25 is by putting the, ah, enlarged hopper door on the

1
2 ground floor. So, ah, because most people have the,
3 they use the tall kitchen garbage bag, which is about
4 a 13-gallon bag, and that will fit in these, ah,
5 enlarged trash doors in the lobbies. Ah, we also
6 were able to create and hire staff in the waste
7 management department. Um, ah, I mentioned about the
8 bulk tickets that we're able, additional bulk tickets
9 we were able to get from Sanitation. Um, we, ah,
10 actually, when I started, ah, Sanitation was giving
11 NYCHA 800 bulk tickets per month and that number has
12 grown to 1250 and, ah, even, and some months that we
13 actually requested more I think our, our peak number
14 was, ah, 1450, ah, bulk loads removed from our
15 developments in one month. So, ah, you know, we've
16 been able to get rid of a lot of material, ah, and,
17 ah, you know, the, the bottom line with waste
18 management is you have to get rid of it as soon as
19 it's created. And, ah, you know, because it's just
20 gonna, ah, create a host of problems that could be
21 eliminated. Um, and now I'll give you, ah, Josie
22 Bartlett for the pest control side.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just for, um,
24 [inaudible] purposes, um, can you just explain bulk
25 tickets?

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes, yes. Ah,
3 I'm sorry, I, ah, I apologize that it was, ah, ah,
4 that bulk tickets are tickets that are given to the
5 Housing Authority from the New York City Department
6 of Sanitation, where we use our, our private vendors
7 to, ah, pull the boxes of, the 30-yard containers,
8 you know, the big containers of bulk, ah, but
9 Sanitation pays for the, ah, disposal of that. So
10 Sanitation originally was giving us 800 and we are,
11 ah, you know, we're upwards of 1250. That is the new
12 quota that they're giving us every month, and I would
13 say in the last couple months during tax season and,
14 ah, with the stimulus money there has been a lot of
15 extra bulk at the developments. So, ah, basically
16 these developments have grown from 1250 number, you
17 know, for the month and it's, ah, I've requested an
18 additional 200 tickets, which Sanitation, by the way,
19 has been a super, super agency partner, ah, in
20 accommodating and being very responsive, quick
21 turnaround. I don't think I made the request at, at
22 1:30 in the afternoon and I had a response by like
23 1:37. And they, they immediately said come pick it
24 up tomorrow morning and we got an additional 200
25 tickets. And what does that mean to us? Ah, I'm

1
2 glad you asked that question. Ah, that each bulk
3 container holds about 2.2 tons of material. You
4 know, that's the average amount of bulk that's in
5 there. Ah, and again, all of this material, ah, you
6 know, we, we find it on old, on many visits at NYCHA
7 properties that, ah, people get new furniture or new
8 things and they're, they're not always sure where to
9 put it, so they just put it outside. They put it in
10 the front, they put it in the back, they put it over
11 near the waste disposal, you know, where we have our
12 waste yards. So, ah, you know, we, we have a lot of
13 education to do and that's also part of the action
14 plan going forward, ah, that, ah, we need to create a
15 better process, a better system at our developments.
16 Did I answer your question on the bulk tickets? Was
17 that clear?

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yes, that was
19 clear. You know, sometimes you hear tickets you, you
20 might think, um, you know, like something. Like you
21 received a ticket and had to pay for.

22 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible] I
24 just wanted just clarification on it.

25

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes. It's
3 actually, it, it seems a little, the system seems a
4 little primitive, because it's actual a physical
5 ticket that they give us for the dumping of the load,
6 but that's, it just happens to be that's, that's the
7 way it is right now and, ah, we, we, it has a control
8 number on it and, ah, you know, they have to dump the
9 load within three hours, ah, from leaving the
10 development, ah, to go into the actual dump itself.
11 So, ah, you know, the, there's a lot of, ah, you
12 know, there's a lot of red tape in there. But, ah,
13 I, I will tell you, bar none, that since, ah, since
14 I've been communicating with Sanitation that they
15 have been nothing but responsive and any development
16 that has requested additional bulk tickets I have
17 granted them, because they, they definitely need it.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: That's good
19 to, so, so it's excellent to know that there's been,
20 ah, you know, like a, a double fee, tickets are being
21 issued, and it is very helpful. But then for the,
22 the crazy part is, it's an actual physical ticket,
23 right? That's just so crazy to me.

24 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

25

1 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Like a ticket
2
3 in this age of technology we would have, you know.

4 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: I am trying to
5 work with Sanitation because that, that is, um, that
6 is a, I'm not sure if it's like a DOI issue, ah,
7 that, but it was something that was created, ah,
8 quite a while ago and, yeah, clearly, ah, and it's
9 just something that we actually even have to get when
10 they, they take the actual ticket and they stamp it
11 at the development as well.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [laughs]

13 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: It's stamped
14 with the development name and a, a time punch to
15 start the clock for the three-hour window that
16 they're allowed to dump the load and, you know,
17 that's, you know, and in, in some cases it was a
18 logistical nightmare, to have somebody come in, you
19 know, the machine wasn't working to do the punch and
20 things like that so I'm definitely, ah, you know, I'm
21 definitely looking to change that. I am a fully
22 automated person. I, I like everything, and that was
23 one of my signatures at Sanitation, was to automate
24 everything because I am not into pencil and paper
25

1 because automation leads to better accountability all
2 across the board.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you for
5 that. I know Brian is kind of squirming in his chair
6 right now, Brian Honan, 'cause he's like oh my
7 goodness.

8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: [laughs]

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [laughs]
10 Because that would be like a whole of the, how a
11 request is related to [inaudible] it reminded me of
12 [inaudible] and signing into...

13 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm getting
14 flashbacks [inaudible] yes [laughs].

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, I'm gonna
16 move this along.

17 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: I can jump in
18 about some of the, ah, pest, ah, things that we've
19 done as part of the, um, HUD deliverables. So on the
20 pest side we, ah, implemented the prioritization
21 matrix, that's what we spoke about earlier with the
22 different priorities based on pest types. We've
23 created a flag for units with self-reported health
24 conditions, so, um, we know if a resident is pest
25 sensitive, if they've let us know, and then we

1
2 respond to that pest complaint, ah, quicker than
3 otherwise. We've created a new standard procedure
4 all around integrated pest management so it updates
5 the roles and responsibilities of staff members and
6 what they now have to do. Exterminators aren't just
7 treating. They're doing the caulking and have the
8 vacuum, the [inaudible] ceiling. Um, we did the
9 Targeted Relief Initiative. This is part of the HUD
10 agreement where, um, there is a certain timeframe
11 and, um, any apartment that had one or two or more,
12 um, pest infestations we went in, we did the full
13 integrated pest management, and we also, if there was
14 an infestation we did the adjacent units, so up,
15 down, side to side.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, I just
17 wanted to remind you of the, the question itself. So
18 what I was asking has COVID-19 impacted NYCHA's
19 ability to comply with the goals that were set in the
20 plan?

21 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: OK.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Cause I just
23 wanted to, you know, you know, get a sense of, of,
24 like the impact of COVID-19...

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Absolutely.

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 60
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...[inaudible]
3 itself.

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So we were
5 able to do a lot of things that, um, weren't in-unit
6 work, but things such as the Targeted Relief program
7 took us longer because we weren't able to get into
8 apartments. But we did finish it at the end of last
9 year and, um, the NYCHA Pest Infestation Indexing,
10 which is another HUD deliverable that requires us to
11 get into apartments, that was, um, a shorter program
12 than we would have otherwise done, um, if it wasn't
13 COVID. But we were able to do a lot of IT fixes and
14 standard procedures and trainings, um, instead.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Do you have
16 like a percentage or any kind of numbers at all
17 related to, um, the number of apartments that you may
18 not have been able to enter because of COVID or, you
19 know, um, and my next question is, um, are you
20 experiencing a backlog of work orders due to staffing
21 and maintenance adjustments in response to COVID-19?

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So during
23 COVID, um, there was a backlog of work orders that
24 built over those months, um, to 7694. Um, but as
25 soon as we could start getting back into the

1
2 apartments we worked on a plan to hit that backlog
3 and we've got into those tickets now. Um, however,
4 now, also people were not calling in as the same rate
5 during the like heavy COVID 19 because they didn't
6 want people inside their apartment actually. So now
7 we're seeing people call and as I, ah, testified
8 earlier we currently have a little over 4000 work
9 orders right now, um, that we are getting to.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: How much
11 funding has been allocated to NYCHA to address the
12 goals set forth in the pest and waste management
13 plan? Um, and can you disaggregate between the
14 expense and the capital spending?

15 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you,
16 Chair. Ah, I am going to refer you to Vlada Kenniff,
17 vice president of energy and sustainability.

18 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you,
19 Chair, for that question. I'm going to focus on the
20 capital side of your question. Um, as we've
21 discussed yesterday I came to NYCHA to focus on waste
22 management and we wrote the comprehensive waste
23 management plan specifically to advocate for
24 recapitalization of NYCHA's waste management assets.
25 We recognize that many of the waste management assets

1
2 of both compaction and containerization, the interior
3 compactors, the exterior compactors, many of them are
4 the end of their useful lives and we've been
5 successfully able to advocate for 563 million dollars
6 for, ah, capital investments in, ah, NYCHA's
7 infrastructure through the City Capital Action Plan.
8 We are very proud and very, ah, happy to start
9 working on this. Procurements are in motion for a
10 lot of this work already. Ah, NYCHA has been
11 focused, ah, on the neighborhood rat reduction work
12 up until now. Ah, that's been, ah, approximately 47
13 million dollars, both in city and federal funding,
14 um, and there's another 9 million dollars that's, ah,
15 invested in capital infrastructure outside of the
16 neighborhood rat reduction areas. Did I answer your
17 question? And I think the expense side of the, ah,
18 the question we may have to get back to you on that.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. I'm gonna
20 just, just in case I missed something I'm actually
21 just gonna read the question so that you can answer
22 it and be able, just, now this is for the record so
23 that, um, we can just have like just a clear question
24 and clear answer. What is total amount NYCHA has

1
2 committed to pest and waste management to date? And
3 can you disaggregate this by project type?

4 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Ah, to date we
5 have 619 million dollars in total committed in
6 capital funds. Um, I described the 563 million
7 dollars, the part of the City Capital Action Plan,
8 and that could be broken down further in the City
9 Action Plan, um, by project type, and, ah, the 47
10 million dollars of neighborhood rat reduction
11 funding, ah, that is another part of funding that's
12 been focused on things like hopper doors, interior
13 compactors, exterior compactors, some bulk crushers,
14 some rat slabs, um, and we can give you those precise
15 numbers separately. And there's another 9 million
16 dollars that is, ah, outside of the, um, neighborhood
17 rat reduction work that we can also disaggregate.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Um, I'm
19 gonna stop there because I see that Council Member
20 Ayala is back and I want to make sure that she's able
21 to jump in because you may have to leave again.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you. I
23 actually have a few questions. But, ironically
24 enough, when I was waiting somebody just text me, ah,
25 from Morris Avenue, 414, if somebody can deal with an

1
2 issue over there. Apparently the door broke and now
3 the residents cannot access the building. They can't
4 come in and out because it's locked. So I would
5 appreciate it if somebody could look into that.

6 UNIDENTIFIED: I'll, I'll get on that,
7 Council Member.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you. Um,
9 you know, I have a, I have to bring this up and I,
10 you know, I apologize because I'm one of those, ah,
11 people very much so that, you know, I don't like to
12 shoot the messenger. Um, because I understand
13 there's a lot of complexity that happens. You know,
14 NYCHA is a huge agency and there's a lot that's
15 happening and, you know, we could be here for days
16 talking about this. However, I will and I have been
17 bringing up and I will continue to bring it up at
18 every single hearing until it has been rectified,
19 because my buildings are horribly, horribly, I mean,
20 ah, dirty, beyond dirty. They're filthy. And, you
21 know, we have been meeting and having conversations
22 about this for some time, um, there are a lot of
23 reasons why, and I get, you know, um, that there has
24 to be some responsibility also on the end of, you
25 know, ah, residents, right? Residents shouldn't be

1
2 throwing garbage out of their window. But then what
3 is NYCHA doing to address that? Um, every single
4 building in my district, and most specifically, I
5 don't know why, the ones in the south Bronx, East
6 Harlem buildings have problems. But the ones in the
7 south Bronx are so dirty that I want to cry every
8 time I go into those buildings. Um, on the inside of
9 the buildings, you know, you can tell they haven't
10 been properly cleaned and maintained for a long time,
11 to the point that, again, and I've mentioned this
12 before, you have humungous like spider webs on top of
13 people's doors. Um, outside the garbage buildup is
14 really just, you know, I, I, I'm speechless every
15 time I'm there. I really literally want to cry when
16 I'm there because it's that bad. Um, and that
17 obviously is contributing a humungous, you know, ah,
18 rat population problem that is beyond controllable at
19 this point. Um, I was at Mitchell Houses right
20 before the pandemic and I'll tell you that there a
21 rat hanging out in front of the building on Alexander
22 Avenue, just sitting on, he was just sitting on the
23 front, on the front of the, the stoop, you know, the
24 door was open, and eating an orange peel, because
25 there was garbage everywhere. I, I couldn't believe

1
2 it. I actually have video of, you know, of these
3 encounters. I have pictures if you'd like to see
4 them. Um, I have been meeting with the staff, ah,
5 and we are trying to address this. But every single
6 time that we meet it's like we're coming up with a
7 plan, we're thinking of a plan, we're gonna implement
8 a plan. And I would love to know today when can I
9 expect to see relief for my buildings, because the
10 conditions that the residents that I represent are
11 living under, um, are really just beyond anything
12 that is, you know, that can be explained away and,
13 um, and I'm horrified for them. So I would love to
14 know what the timeline is. Like when are people
15 gonna go in there and start, you know, ensuring that
16 the buildings are clean, not only on the inside but
17 the outside. You know, we're holding these
18 contractors to task and, you know, and ensuring that
19 they're cleaning behind the scaffolding and behind
20 the netting, um, because a lot of that is
21 contributing to the, the pest issues. Um, and then
22 you have all of these scaffoldings. Rats are
23 climbing into the scaffold and I'm getting reports of
24 like rats literally going into people's windows. Um,
25 horrible, just horrible. In East Harlem it's Taft

1
2 Housing and I know that [inaudible], you know, some
3 time ago, you know, we had instances where we had
4 raccoons climbing. You know, I don't know if
5 raccoons are part of your pest management, you know,
6 strategy, but they have been, we have them, right?
7 We have them at some of our developments as well, um,
8 and all of the garbage attracts them, right? And
9 then the scaffolding doesn't, doesn't help. Um, so I
10 know that there's a, there's a lot here. But I, I'm
11 really just, you know, I'm hoping to create some sort
12 of a partnership and to get some clarity, um, on when
13 exactly are we gonna start to address these issues.
14 Like is there a timeline?

15 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Um, thank you, um,
16 thank you, Council Member. I'm, I'm gonna turn to,
17 um, Al and, um, and, and, and Josie, who both oversee
18 both these areas. But the one thing I did want to
19 start out with, the common theme that you hear all
20 the time, because we meet regularly with the tenant
21 leaders and staff, ah, locally in your districts,
22 both in the Bronx and in East Harlem, is staff will
23 tell us we're really trying, but we're short-handed.
24 And, and, and I feel for the them and they're right.
25 Um, so as part of, ah, the federal money that came in

1 through COVID, um, we are going to be able to hire an
2 additional 1072, ah, workers, um, as many residents
3 as possible, ah, for, ah, a six-month stint, um, to
4 make sure that they concentrate on the grounds, um,
5 and, um, and then our permanent NYCHA staff can then
6 concentrate inside the buildings, um, as well. Um,
7 this, we can get you a breakdown of, of that 1072 of
8 the number that we assign to your district. Um, in
9 fact we'll get the committee, you know, where they're
10 gonna be broken down, ah, as well for each of the
11 committee members. Um, but we believe that, you
12 know, this will, um, greatly, um, it's much-needed
13 relief for the staff who's on, on hand right now.
14 Um, and it, it will certainly help. Um, but, in
15 addition it's, um, a strategy is needed, a strategy
16 is in place, ah, through the action plans that were
17 recently approved by the monitor. Both Al and, ah,
18 Josie can talk a little bit more about, about those,
19 but, ah, I, you know, I've seen all the pictures that
20 you sent. Um, we, um, most [inaudible] in, in real
21 time, um, and, ah, but it's been going on for too
22 long. You're 100% right. Um, Al, if you can add,
23 ah, add more to that, um, and, ah, Josie as well.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Sure. Ah, ah,
3 thank you, Council Member, for bringing that, you
4 know, that issue to our attention. Ah, the concerns
5 that you have are, are shared by the pest waste, pest
6 and waste management departments. Um, the, ah, you
7 know, the, the short answer, ah, I know you have a
8 lot of concerns, are that, you know, one of the, ah,
9 which I mentioned in my testimony, one of the, ah,
10 reasons for creating a scorecard cleanliness system,
11 ah, cleanliness rating system, is so that we can
12 measure both the interior and exterior conditions of
13 our developments throughout the city. OK, we, we
14 have worked with the federal monitor in developing
15 this. This is an objective rating system, ah, that
16 will give it, it'll be on the scale of 1 through 5,
17 ah, you know, 1 being, ah, dirty, 5 being the
18 cleanest. Ah, there are composite scores for each of
19 the areas. It'll be elevators, lobbies, walkways,
20 waste yards, ah, etcetera. Ah, and it...

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I'm sorry, Al, and
22 I don't want to interrupt you, but I...

23 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: That's OK.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: When, when does,
25 when do you guys plan to implement this, ah,

1
2 scorecard system, and what is different about the
3 scorecard system, because I'm assuming that now
4 there's still a shared responsibility, right? People
5 are expected to, to, ah, to perform. Um, but it
6 doesn't seem like there's anyone that's like
7 supervising now. Like it doesn't seem like anybody's
8 like going out there and saying, OK, like we have a
9 problem at this specific development, like, right,
10 this garbage has been building up for quite some
11 time, so it's pretty evident that no one's gotten to
12 it in, you know, in a while. Like if that's not
13 happening now how am I supposed to feel comfortable
14 with the fact that we're implementing a scorecard
15 system? Do we have enough staff to oversee that?

16 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Well, that's,
17 thank you, Council Member [inaudible]. Ah, the,
18 basically, ah, why we, you know, having a scorecard
19 system, ah, as you, you may have heard, I, I came
20 from the Department of Sanitation, which, ah, you're
21 familiar with, ah, the scorecard for street
22 cleanliness and sidewalk cleanliness, that it's, now
23 this is going to be, I would say, ah, an enhanced,
24 ah, scorecard, something that will actually get down
25 to granular detail so we can focus not only what the

1
2 problems are, but where in the developments
3 themselves the problems lie, and then we would use
4 them as a way of determining what resources we have,
5 what people, what equipment, you know, what we have
6 at the property level, and then we have to determine
7 if that is a sufficient amount of people.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I get it. I get
9 it. But, again, this all sounds like a glob, it's
10 gonna take, a, a few months to implement.

11 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: It's we're
12 rolling it out, we're actually rolling it, it's, it's
13 kind of in its infancy. We've been testing it at
14 different locations. We've rated different
15 developments. And we've seen where, ah, you know,
16 where we have, ah, some issues and concerns, and
17 we've also seen positive results. You know, we've
18 seen, ah, and this is a way, ah, I think, ah, by
19 investing time in this, I know, ah, I, I just want to
20 assure you by us investing our time in this that what
21 we're establishing is something that is, ah, not only
22 short-term, but it's a long-term measure of your
23 developments, so that you will get a rating and we'll
24 supply it to you when it's all, you know, at your,
25 you know, full transparency, this is what your

1
2 development was rated and the goal is to rate it
3 every month. And not your development, but in the
4 individual areas that we're talking about. Um, and,
5 look, I understand. I, as far as immediate relief
6 goes I'm more than glad for my, myself and my staff
7 to meet with you or members, ah, of your staff at
8 specific locations. Ah, and we can discuss the
9 issues, ah, and, and, and you know, and come up with
10 the plans. I mean, we already have some preliminary
11 plans, but I would definitely like to include you and
12 your staff and, you know, I, I really, I, I, I hear
13 your frustration. I share it and, and I, I, I assure
14 you that you have my...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: [inaudible], you
16 know, we will be out there this entire summer making
17 sure that, you know, we're, you know, like I'm, ah,
18 if we have to, if we have to start facilitating
19 cleanup, you know, ah, events at the different NYCHAs
20 then that's what it will be. But, you know, we're
21 gonna keep hammering away at this until there is
22 relief, because it's just really [inaudible] at this
23 point and it's been years and, you know, like years,
24 years, um, you know, I, I'm a very reasonable person,
25 like I can work with you. I understand when things

1
2 are happening. Like I'm, you're not gonna find a
3 more reasonable person in the world. However, within
4 limits, within limits. You know, when you keep, when
5 you, when I keep coming to hearings and I keep
6 hearing well, we're about to implement this and we're
7 doing, we're in the process of doing that, and then
8 it's like Jesus Christ, this is another year. It is
9 another six months that you're telling me, and in the
10 interim people have to walk through, you know, they
11 have to try to run through the rats in the front of
12 the buildings. You know, they have to hope that one
13 of them doesn't climb into their, you know, apartment
14 window in the interim. Um, and I, I just, you know,
15 I'm not, you know, we don't even know, and I'm sorry,
16 Madam Chair, thank you, you're always so generous,
17 um, with, you know, allowing me the time. Um, but,
18 you know, it, when you are doing [inaudible], ah,
19 pest management at the developments, like the
20 resident leaders are not even informed. Like there's
21 not even a communication, there's not even a
22 communication were done that says hey, you know what,
23 um, you know, we, you know, let's have a
24 conversation. We understand that this development,
25 you know, has a severe, you know, ah, rat infestation

1
2 issue. This is what we're doing. Well, you don't
3 know, you know why, because when the residents come
4 to the resident leaders, the resident leaders have no
5 information to give. And then the resident leaders
6 come to the council member and the council member has
7 no information to give, because nobody is
8 communicating with me, nobody's communicating with
9 them. Um, that would be, you know, I, I would, I
10 would suggest that that be, you know, part of the
11 strategy is, you know, ah, really improving the lines
12 of communication, maybe posting the buildings when
13 you're doing, um, pest management that advised, you
14 know, residents, hey, these, these are the days when
15 the exterminator is gonna be, you know, um, outside
16 of, of the development so that at least people know
17 and they see. Um, because, you know, when people
18 know they understand. They may not like it. But at
19 least they have information, tangible information.
20 Um, and just my final question really is around the,
21 ah, the city cleanup corps jobs. Are those jobs, are
22 those the same jobs that, ah, Brian referenced or is
23 this a different set of, of, of employment
24 opportunities and how many of those, ah, would be
25 coming to NYCHA and where?

1 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Um, Council
2
3 Member, yes. Those, those jobs are, are the same.
4 So out of the, um, 10,000 jobs that the city will be
5 creating, ah, 1072 will be at NYCHA.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: And they start
7 when, do you know?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We are currently
9 interviewing, but we hope to have this ramped up by
10 the summer, you know, which is coming soon. You
11 know, within the next few weeks.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: OK. Is there a
13 plan for what happens after, because you said this is
14 six months?

15 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Six months, yeah.
16 I mean, it's largely dependent on federal funds and
17 how far they can stretch, but the this is, you know,
18 ah, we'll, we'll deal with it, you know, at the end
19 of this. But, um, it would be great if we can, you
20 know, keep this going as long as possible. It's
21 certainly needed. The one...

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I'm, sorry, Brian,
23 because I, just because it's a part of the, it's part
24 of the same question. What prevents NYCHA from
25 hiring people in the first place? Don't you get, you

1 know, isn't, isn't there like a budget for
2 development that, you know, I'm, I'm assuming that if
3 you have funding for six, seven caretakers, whatever
4 that, whatever that is, right?

6 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: And sure, like
8 what, what's preventing you from hiring up?

9 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Um, the question
10 always comes back to the same, it's funding, funding,
11 funding, right? So when I first started at NYCHA
12 years ago we had 15,000, um, workers. We're down to
13 south of 11,000. Um, and that just shows you the
14 level of operating funds that we have been cut over
15 the years, um, and, um, and you don't experience cuts
16 like that without seeing the effects. And the
17 effects that you see in your district, the effects
18 that you see in Council Member, ah, Alicka Samuel's
19 district, um, you know, places where you have a large
20 concentration of public housing, of course those are
21 the places where you feel it the most. Um, and so
22 when I go to developments, staff don't, they don't
23 say to me I wish I had more money, I wish I had more
24 vacation time. They say I wish I had more colleagues
25 who could help me, you know, clean the buildings.

1
2 And they're right. Um, it is something that as part
3 of our transformation plan we're looking to do a more
4 localized style of, of management. Um, we're looking
5 to, ah, make sure that, ah, managers, too, are
6 equipped to make decisions at their developments so
7 it's not, you know, only folks at 90 Church and 250
8 Broadway who are making these decisions, who in some
9 cases have never been to some of the developments
10 where they're making the decisions. So, um, we agree
11 with you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Well, I can
13 [inaudible] myself I, would volunteer myself and I'm
14 sure that, ah, Chair Samuels would, ah, would join me
15 in helping create some sort of advisory group with
16 NYCHA so that we can help, you know, implement a lot
17 of these, ah, action items, because I think that the
18 turnaround is really what is bothersome here, is the,
19 you know, the constant reinventing and strategy after
20 strategy that just take way too long to implement and
21 then observe whether or not they're, they're, they
22 work or they don't work, and, um, so I'm, you know,
23 I'm, listen, I'm, I'm happy to helpful where I can.
24 I will come back again, you know, to the next hearing

1 and hopefully we have better news, um, but I
2 appreciate the time. Um, thank you, Madam Chair.

4 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Thank you so much.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
6 Council Member Ayala. And just a quick follow-up.
7 Out of the 1072 positions does NYCHA already have
8 that funding in, do you already have the funding?

9 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yes, it's, it's,
10 ah, part of, ah, 7, 7 million dollars in federal
11 funds that came from the COVID relief. Um, so it is,
12 it's in place, yeah, for now.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: It is not
14 something that if you don't use by a particular time,
15 like a certain time, it...

16 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: No, no. But, no,
17 it, it won't go away, but, ah, but, ah, we plan to
18 use it as fast as we can, because we need, the summer
19 is the time when you see more garbage, when you,
20 'cause more people are outside, they're more active,
21 um, and, you know, we need the relief here as fast as
22 possible. So when the funding is in place we just
23 have to now get the, you know, the bodies, you know,
24 into developments so they can start, you know,
25 working.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. And I see
3 that we have been joined by Council Member Vanessa
4 Gibson as well. And I want to remind, um, the public
5 and NYCHA residents that after the Q&A we will return
6 to the residents first, um, to speak again. Do you
7 have a upcoming caretaker onboarding process
8 happening this week or next week at all?

9 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't know. Um,
10 but we can look into that.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible]
12 'cause I've been hearing, um, a few people told me
13 just in passing that they're starting, um, some like
14 training class and they have to go to 90 Church
15 [inaudible].

16 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We do regularly
17 hire caretakers. There's a lot of, ah, there's a lot
18 of turnaround in caretaker position. Um, it is very,
19 very tough work, um, and so we regularly hire, ah,
20 caretakers. But, um, I can see if there's something
21 special and get back to you, get back to by, before
22 the end of the day.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, thanks.
24 How many staffers does NYCHA have that work on pest
25

1
2 and waste conditions, and how many of these staffers
3 are at the local developments?

4 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank...

5 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member,
6 ah, go ahead.

7 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: I got it.

8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Oh, good.

9 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: I got it. Ah,
10 thank you, thank you again, Madam Chair, for that
11 question. Um, the, the total number is 4619
12 staffers. Ah, there are 140 people, ah, in the pest
13 control department, ah, 25 in the waste management
14 department, and 4454 caretakers. OK, and the
15 caretakers, obviously, are the, the development level
16 and, and for the exterminators, ah, that pest control
17 has, ah, has 22 people and 87 people are allocated to
18 the borough shops, you know, for the exterminators.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Got it. What
20 trainings, what training does NYCHA staff receive to
21 address pest and waste conditions at NYCHA? How long
22 is the training and how much does the training cost?

23 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK, like, ah,
24 thank you for the question, Madam Chair. Ah, I'm
25 gonna refer you to, ah, Josephine Bartlett.

1
2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [inaudible]
3 thank you for the question. Um, all of our
4 exterminators have done integrated pest management,
5 um, trainings. They, ah, the full one was a full
6 day. Um, and this was year, this has been yearly,
7 and we've been doing, um, many trainings like to use
8 the HEPA vacuum, um, caulking, kind of like specific
9 IPM trainings that are, ah, a few hours. Um, those
10 are done in shop by our technical advisor, who has
11 decades of, um, pest control experience. So it's
12 part of salary, so no additional cost there. We are
13 also, as part of integrated pest management, we're
14 really putting emphasis on the like pest issues are
15 not just a extermination problem. We're working with
16 caretakers to let us know when there's infestations
17 near compactor rooms or if little holes need to be,
18 um, plugged, we're saying that the caretakers need
19 to, to do that. If they can't they need to report it
20 to their supervisor. So we are doing, um, new, um,
21 part of the four-day training that, um, caretakers
22 do. There is an IPM, um, component. We also have
23 trained more than 700, um, people, um, on IPM, um,
24 which was through our partners at Stop Pests, which
25 is a HUD-funded, um, program which is free of cost.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And how many
3 vendors does NYCHA have working on the pest and waste
4 management plan, and how many of these vendors are
5 employing NYCHA residents? You can also talk about
6 the roles of the vendors within the plan.

7 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK. Ah, thank
8 you, Madam Chair, for that question. Ah, I will, ah,
9 I'll cover the, the waste side. Ah, the vendors that
10 we have, ah, as I discussed before, the private
11 carters for bulk removal at the developments, ah, as
12 well as there are vendors for compactor repairs, ah,
13 you know, and, and as you have seen by the age of the
14 equipment there are a lot of them. Ah, we also have
15 a mattress recycling program, ah, that is on the
16 horizon...

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: A what? What
18 did you just say?

19 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: A mattress
20 recycling program.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Oh, OK
22 [laughs].

23 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: [laughs]

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, continue.
25

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK. Ah, and
3 so, ah, and that will also be run by a vendor that
4 actually has, will be, ah, be employing NYCHA
5 residents. That was for the mattress recycling
6 program. And that's the one that I mentioned in my
7 testimony that was 25 locations and we plan to expand
8 it to 100 or so down the road.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And is that
10 [inaudible] on the, um, the, is that online for the
11 public to see for residents to be able to know what's
12 happening and...

13 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: It will...

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...is there
15 information process or sessions with [inaudible]?

16 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Ah, I, I know
17 that will be. Ah, I can, ah, Vlada, can...

18 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: We do...

19 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yeah, that's
20 OK.

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Sorry. Ah,
22 thank you for the question, Madam Chair. And we do
23 work with resident engagement. We have also, to
24 complete the question, ah, we have, ah, vendors for
25 cardboard baler installations, interior compactor

1
2 replacements, enlarge hopper doors, and other waste
3 and recycling initiatives. Um, there are seven
4 vendors so far. Ah, I understand they've hired 32
5 NYCHA residents in total. Um, we do publish the, I
6 believe some or most of these initiatives that I've
7 listed on our energy sustainability page. Um, there
8 is a GIS map that shows, ah, some of the improvement
9 work that's happening.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Is there a
11 vendor performance tracked to assure the quality of
12 services that they have been doing?

13 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Absolutely.

14 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And is there a
16 way for residents to be able to interact, and I'm
17 thinking along the lines of when you had the private
18 vendors that were cleaning the buildings during the
19 COVID-19 process there was a way for the residents to
20 be able to, to, um, file complaints or, you know, let
21 you know how the vendors were operating, what they
22 were doing, what they were not doing in their
23 individual developments. Is there a way for the
24 residents to be able to file a complaint or, you
25

1 know, know who the vendors are and what's happening
2 with them?

3
4 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yeah, so what
5 worked really well with the vendors during COVID was,
6 um, we had a really open relationship with the
7 compliance department and I think it was the first
8 time people, ah, understood what the compliance
9 department, you know, did and the value of it. Um,
10 that exists for any, ah, any vendor of, of NYCHA. So
11 if you, um, have somebody, you know, come to your
12 apartment who's a vendor who is supposed to do some
13 work, you can go to either the compliance department
14 or the quality assurance department and say the
15 vendor came, um, they, um, didn't do, do the work
16 properly, or they didn't treat me respectfully, or,
17 you know, they did have the work and never came back.
18 All those complaints can go to the compliance
19 department or the, um, quality assurance department
20 and they, they will then be charged to make sure that
21 [inaudible].

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And when I
23 asked if there was a, a, a tracking system for the
24 quality of services [inaudible] said yes, but, I
25

1 mean, I [inaudible] how, like how is it tracked, how
2 is the performance tracked?
3

4 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: The performance
5 is tracked. Our, ah, project managers evaluate the
6 work and they, ah, ah, use our E-Builder system to,
7 ah, make sure that all the work is completed on time
8 and on schedule. And, um, we have field inspection
9 staff that goes out and checks on the work that is
10 happening.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. And I
12 know we've been talking a lot about the compactors
13 and their life cycles, but now I just want ask
14 specific questions about the life cycles of, of the
15 compactors. According to the pest and waste
16 management plan, NYCHA conducted a 2018
17 infrastructure assessment of 274 developments. 255
18 had interior compactors and 108 had exterior
19 compactors are at the, 255 had interior compactors
20 and 108 had exterior compactors at the end of their
21 useful, at the end or past their useful life. How
22 old is NYCHA's oldest compactor and what is the
23 performance of this compactor?

24 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you for
25 that question, Madam Chair. I'll take it. Ah, the

1 performance is completely dependent on the use and
2 the maintenance. We actually have two compactors
3 that are 28-1/2 years old and functioning well. Um,
4 they're located at the Bedford Stuyvesant Rehab on
5 Lower East Side, ah, 2. Ah, so we wouldn't look to
6 replace these compactors if they're maintained and
7 functioning well. Um, we have another exterior
8 compactor that is over 25 years old and it's located
9 at Carlton Manor.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: What is the
12 average age of an interior compactor and the average
13 age of a exterior compactor?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you for
15 that question. The average age of an interior
16 compactor is approximately 18 years. And an average
17 age of exterior compactor is approximately 14 years.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: What is the
19 useful life of an interior compactor and the useful
20 life of an exterior compactor?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: The manufacturer
22 recommended useful life for an exterior, interior
23 compactor is 10 to 15 years. And, ah, the
24 manufacturer's recommended useful life for an
25 exterior compactor is seven to 10 years.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, um, can
3 you explain, so just looking at those, the, the
4 useful life question, and then going back to the
5 oldest compactor and the performance of that
6 compactor, can you explain that number of 30 years
7 and 25 years compared to what is, um, suggested for
8 the useful life and, and then comparing that number
9 10 to 15 years?

10 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah, um, the
11 manufacturer generally projects that a compactor will
12 fail within those timeframes. Um, but apparently in
13 those particular developments the staff have been
14 taking care of those compactors and they've lasted
15 much longer than the useful life. Ah, it does
16 happen. Ah, but, ah, in, across the portfolio, as
17 you've heard in Mr. Ferguson's testimony, 80% of our
18 equipment is at the end of its useful life and may
19 not be functioning properly.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Has NYCHA
21 found that buildings with the upgraded compactor
22 infrastructure showing a reduction in pest-related
23 complaints?
24
25

1 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you for
2
3 that question, Chair. I'll pass it on to Mr.
4 Ferguson to answer this question.

5 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you for
6 your question, Madam Chair. Um, I, I don't know, you
7 know, we don't track it that way. We don't track
8 that information. Ah, but, ah, that, that's, I think
9 that's a great idea. You know, that, you know, going
10 forward, ah, that that's definitely something that we
11 should be looking into.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. All right
13 [inaudible]. According to, so, I didn't want to go
14 into details, like dive into that, but I just, you
15 said you don't, you don't track that. So the
16 question was how, has NYCHA found that buildings with
17 upgraded compactor infrastructure, do they show a
18 reduction in pest-related complaints. So we're
19 talking about compactors, right, and the, the, how,
20 how old the compactors are and, um, you know, and I,
21 and I understand the development being able to, you
22 know, maintain that particular compactor. But if you
23 had upgrades to it, you know, we try to see that the,
24 the, clearly the correlation and linkage between the,
25 the, the age of the compactor and pest complaints.

1 So I would think that there would be some kind of
2 tracking of that.
3

4 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: I, I, ah, I
5 agree, I agree. It's logical. You know, it's
6 illogical that's there's, there's...

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK.

8 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: ...definitely
9 would be, no, I, I just, um, that, ah, you know,
10 we're, we're trying to establish, ah, all of the, the
11 metrics. Ah, for example, in preparation for this,
12 ah, for this hearing that, ah, I was able to, ah, get
13 the, you know, the number of interior compactors are
14 2975, ah, exterior compactors you have 36, um, and
15 then, you know, also, ah, you know, piece of trivia
16 information is that in Williamsburg they have the
17 largest number of interior compactors. Ah, they have
18 136 of them, you know, for the interior compactors.
19 Ah, and then on, as far as exterior compactors,
20 Throgs Neck has six. That is the largest number of
21 exterior compactors that we have. Ah, and, ah, to,
22 to clearly answer your question, I'm sorry, I just,
23 ah, to, ah, go, you know, one step further, I just,
24 you know, I was looking to answer your question and,
25 and, and I, now I can embellish or, or, or go a

1
2 little bit further, ah, but it, it's definitely a
3 valid concern, ah, that, ah, I'm not sure if you're
4 aware or, or the numbers, or I may have mentioned,
5 ah, that about half of NYCHA locations, NYCHA
6 developments, are curb, have curbside collection.
7 And, ah, the balance have, ah, exterior compactors.
8 So, ah, you know, there, there should also be a
9 relationship of, you know, a seal, having a sealed
10 compactor, OK, and that's part of the HUD agreement
11 insertion, is that the material either has to be in a
12 sealed compactor or picked up once every 24 hours.

13 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: [inaudible] I, I
14 think the, the, going back to the question you asked,
15 I think the, the data match, um, looking at, um,
16 developments that have had upgraded, upgrades in the
17 infrastructure and, ah, pest complaints could be done
18 very quickly. It's something that we could, we can
19 do and, and share with you. It'd be really an
20 interesting exercise and, ah, a different way of
21 looking at things too. It also would certainly help
22 us when we make the case for investment, um, to go to
23 council members such as yourself and say when you
24 invest in compactors you see X results. So, um...

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I got it.

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: ...I think that's,
3 I think that's, I think that's helpful. Ah, so we
4 can come back to you with that shortly.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. And
6 I'm just thinking, you know, as you're, as you're
7 strategizing and putting your plans in place, that
8 may just be, it would just be helpful. Um, and I
9 know that Council Member Riley had, um, you know,
10 spoke to and had questions around the, the collection
11 of trash and you was just speaking on that, um, how.
12 So, according to the pest and waste management plan,
13 NYCHA asked Sanitation on November 2019 to increase
14 the curbside collection to seven days a week. But
15 Sanitation was unwilling to provide these services
16 because of costs. And so would this increase in
17 curbside collection lead to an increase in head count
18 at NYCHA and/or Sanitation? And what is the
19 associated personnel will, um, the OTPS cost and
20 personnel services costs, um, if there was this
21 increase in the collection to seven days? And if you
22 can just go back over what service does Sanitation
23 currently provide to NYCHA.

24 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK. I'll, I'll
25 start off with the Sanitation currently provides, ah,

1
2 for, ah, the curbside locations, right? We, we have
3 the, the curbside, the bucket, we have curbside, and
4 then we have containerized. Ah, the curbside
5 locations get anywhere from two- to four-time service
6 a week. Ah, it's, the majority of them are either
7 two or three times. Most of our developments, I will
8 tell you are getting three-time service and that
9 means they're getting service either on Monday,
10 Wednesday, Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday,
11 OK, at the curbside locations. Now at the
12 containerized locations they get as much service as
13 they need, that, ah, if they have, ah, we have
14 certain containers that are serviced every other day,
15 that get, you know, multiple service. So some
16 people, some containers actually even get service
17 four times a week or five times a week. So as
18 needed, ah, we have two types of service when it
19 comes to containerization. There's scheduled service
20 and there's call-in service. There's either, because
21 the, the high generation rates that we have at our
22 locations that they'll pick up on Monday, Wednesday,
23 Friday, or Tuesdays and Fridays. They'll pick all
24 the compactors. Ah, so that's a scheduled or a call-
25 in could be at certain locations that do not generate

1
2 as much, that they wait for the, ah, the compactors
3 to be filled. There's a red light that goes on, on
4 the power unit that powers up the compactor, and when
5 that light goes on it says it's at 80% capacity and
6 you basically have another day or to of room left in
7 that compactor so they call it in. That's called
8 call-in service. Does that make sense, did I?

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yeah.

10 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK, so we have
11 scheduled service, call-in service, and then curbside
12 service. Um, ah, as far as, you know, Sanitation,
13 ah, providing, you know, the additional service, it
14 would be to the curbside locations, because, I
15 believe, that the containerized locations, ah, need
16 upgraded, need upgraded containers in most locations.
17 You know, obviously based on the useful life and, and
18 the current age of the containers, ah, that we
19 definitely, we definitely need to, you know, keep
20 improving, which we have it in the plan to get our
21 new, ah, compactors. So we're gonna go back to the
22 curbside location, ah, which we generally get either
23 two- or three-time service and recycling is picked up
24 once a week at those locations as well. So the
25 more...

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 95
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible]
3 requested the seven days a week for the curbside
4 collection...

5 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...um, and, and
7 Sanitation, you know, was not able to do that. Have
8 you come up with what that would cost at all and,
9 and, um, have conversation with the administration on
10 increasing funding to be able to do seven days a week
11 curbside collection?

12 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Ah, no, no I
13 did not. Ah, the Department of Sanitation, ah, I'm
14 just gonna tell you from my experience about the
15 challenges that, you know, they're, it, it, you know,
16 how they develop the cost plan, ah, will be, you
17 know, whether or not the trucks could go, ah, across
18 district boundaries. You know, the sanitation
19 districts are coterminous with the community boards.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um-hmm.

21 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: So, ah, you
22 know, they'll, they'll be a lot of, ah, ah, you know,
23 various options, ah, that, ah, and, and factors that
24 would be considered in their cost. Ah, but the, the
25 lion's share of the cost would be on the New York

1 City Department of Sanitation's side. I do not know
2 what that cost is. Ah, but, ah, the other, the other
3 component is us, which I did not, ah, I honestly did
4 not, ah, you know, I didn't calculate how much more
5 effort. Ah, however, ah, what we're, I, I want to
6 put out there, I had mentioned in my testimony that
7 we purchased two compactor trucks.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I was just
10 about to say that [laughs].

11 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: In your
13 testimony you mentioned [inaudible].

14 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: So there are
15 two six-yard, ah, compacting trucks. So, um, each,
16 you know, a six-yard, ah, the department, so you get
17 a sense. Department of Sanitation has a 25-yard, ah,
18 compactor truck, right, so that's the amount of, it's
19 a volume, the amount of material that it holds. Each
20 sanitation truck holds, can hold between, ah, 10 and
21 15 tons, on average, OK. So we bought two six-yard
22 trucks. The thought behind buying these trucks were
23 so that they could be at our developments and that
24 they can navigate the developments safely, because,
25 as you know, the behemoths that Sanitation has, the

1 25-yarders, are huge. They have the double wheels in
2 the back and, you know, I, I think there's a certain,
3 you know, for, ah, the type, the additional
4 collection, I mean, there is curbside collection,
5 which there's, there's, there's no concern, but if we
6 were to pick up garbage within the developments, you
7 know, to make it easier. And, and, and it goes to
8 your point. Ah, part of my thought process if we
9 were to go with additional service how would we do
10 it? Would we just put the material at the curb, or
11 would we, ah, navigate, you know, the interior roads,
12 you know, depending on the size of the developments.
13 So there's a lot of factors that have to be
14 considered as well. Ah, but, ah, just even getting
15 back to the request, ah, Sanitation's, ah, you know,
16 initial response was to, ah, for us to, you know, ah,
17 start by, you know, recycling more, you know, and
18 instead of just putting everything by the curb, ah,
19 you know, 'cause NYCHA had a history of, of not
20 recycling as much as they could have. Ah, but, you
21 know, we're, we're definitely looking to, ah, you
22 know, change that around. Ah, so, ah, again, getting
23 back to the, the additional service, if we, if we run
24 into any problems, if we need additional service,

1
2 Sanitation has been more than accommodating, more
3 than responsive, ah, in getting us anything that we
4 need, ah, you know, in terms of additional service
5 and, ah, and, and, and my feeling is also that as we
6 go location to location developing our individual
7 waste management plans, ah, and, and just to give you
8 another, ah, ah, I'm sorry, I don't want to take up
9 your time, or, or, just, I just want to give you a
10 better explanation that, ah, the action plans are
11 living, breathing documents that it's a plan and it's
12 only as good as up to that date that it's made, and
13 we're trying to always make it better. You know,
14 look at it, change it, make it better, um, you know,
15 it's something that, ah, must be constantly revised
16 based on, ah, the needs and the changing needs. Ah,
17 for example, I'll give you a quick for example,
18 Baruch Houses. It has a tremendous amount of Sandy
19 work being performed right now. Ah, so there is a
20 tremendous amount of construction, fences, gates, ah,
21 you know, the, the Local Law 11, like, you know,
22 we've mentioned the Local Law 11, ah, sidewalk
23 shedding. Ah, all of that, all of those things
24 change the way we do business, right? The change how
25 we have to, it's making it more challenging to clean

1
2 the development. You know, when we have to revise
3 plans we have to revise janitorial plans. We have to
4 revise grounds plans. Ah, so, ah, does that make
5 sense? Am, am I, ah, I just, I want to make sure
6 that I'm not...

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: It's, it's,
8 no, I get, I get it, I get it. We see a lot of, um,
9 changes in, in development changes and when I say
10 development, development construction, um, cleanup
11 initiatives. There's, there's a lot going on in New
12 York City right now and so, um, I, I, I get what
13 you're saying. I just have a, a quick question to
14 another follow-up. What was the cost of the two
15 trucks?

16 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Ah, they are
17 \$136,000 each.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, all right.
19 And, um, and I'm just gonna, you mentioned recycling
20 in that and I want to get some of those recycling
21 questions, um...

22 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Sure.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...on the
24 record as well. On March 30, 2020, NYCHA issued an
25 RFQ to re-envision its waste yards, which pose

1
2 significant health risks to residents, as they are in
3 close proximity to play areas, apartments, and other
4 public spaces. Um, can you identify for the
5 committee the seven developments subject to the NYCHA
6 design bill RFQs for improvement to the exterior
7 yards, um, and also by what criteria were these
8 developments chosen and what's the status of the RFQs
9 for each development, um, and is the construction
10 still on schedule, ah, to be completed by December
11 2022, um, you know, with so many changes happening
12 with COVID, and if any of the projects, you know,
13 like have broken ground at all. So just the status.

14 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK. OK, thank
15 you for your question. Ah, I'm going to refer you to
16 Vlada Kenniff, that she has, that's, that's one of
17 her projects and, um, I'm sure she has more
18 information on that.

19 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you, Al.
20 Um, the seven developments are Jackson, Marcy, Morris
21 2, Webster, East 180th Street, St. Monterey Avenue,
22 Laguardia, 303 Vernon Avenue. Um, the, we are in our
23 fee stage. We just released the, our fee, um, for
24 the short-listed teams. Um, we are on schedule with,
25 ah, these, ah, waste yards. We are very excited

1
2 about these waste yards. We do think that they will
3 be, um, re-envisioning how we do waste management at
4 our developments. Um, they are no longer
5 replacements in kind. They're looking to do new
6 equipment and recycling storage as a part of the, ah,
7 waste yards. Um, also noise reduction elements are a
8 part of the new design. We are also considering
9 visual screening material for cleanliness and
10 security. And we're focused on the aesthetics and
11 ability to customize each site. Um, so we're very
12 much looking forward to, ah, working with the
13 residents in particular on the designs and placements
14 of the recycling infrastructure as a part of these,
15 ah, new waste yards. The first one, ah, is Marcy,
16 where we are, ah, working very closely with
17 residents. The residents have weighed in on the
18 placements of the tested locations. We've done
19 surveys, um, through resident engagements. We've
20 done webinars and we are gonna be working with the
21 design teams that are selected, um, to be able to
22 weigh in on additional waste stations.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Ah, does NYCHA
24 have recycling centers at all developments.

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: NYCHA does have
3 recycling centers at all developments. Ah, this was
4 rolled out as a part of the 2015-2016, ah,
5 coordination with, in coordination with Department of
6 Sanitation. At the same time NYCHA, ah, and DSNY
7 developed signage and education, training materials
8 for both residents and staff.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And can you
10 just quickly explain some of the recycling centers
11 are indoors and some are outdoors? So you can
12 explain like which ones are outdoor, which ones are
13 indoor, um, if that's possible? Like what's the
14 difference?

15 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: The, the, all
16 the recycling infrastructure that I am aware of, ah,
17 particularly the glass, metal, plastic, paper,
18 cardboard recycling, is outdoors. Um, the, there may
19 be in some places e-waste recycling and [inaudible]
20 recycling that is indoors, but all of the glass,
21 metal, plastic, paper, cardboard, recycling
22 infrastructure is currently outdoors.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And what's the
24 ones that are outdoors? Are the recycling centers
25

1 placed in one location per development or are they in
2 multiple locations?
3

4 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: They are,
5 there's at least, um, two bins per building. If it's
6 a single building, if it's more than three buildings,
7 um, that would get, ah, two, two bins of the, the
8 green and the, and the blue. And so there is, ah,
9 centralized infrastructure in, ah, both single
10 buildings and, ah, campus-style buildings.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And what about
12 senior-only buildings? Where are they located within
13 senior-only buildings?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: They are usually
15 right outside of the building. Those are generally
16 single, ah, ah, single buildings and so those are
17 generally right outside of the, ah, buildings.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Is NYCHA
19 tracking diversion rates at developments that now
20 have recycling centers?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you for
22 that question, Madam Chair. Al, would you like to
23 take this question?

24 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Ah, we, we
25 currently do not track, ah, recycling at these

1
2 locations. Ah, the, ah, the amount of anything
3 that's collected in the recyclable containers, ah,
4 are placed in the recycling areas and they're picked
5 up once a week at the developments, and that material
6 is comingled with the, ah, the household recyclables
7 of the, the truck that services the entire
8 neighborhood. So there is no way for us to
9 determine, ah, you know, come up with a weight, which
10 would give you your diversion rate.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, do you
12 have any plans at all to set any goals related to how
13 you would be able to collection this information if
14 you feel it's necessary and, um, like even working
15 with the residents on, um, expanding residents, ah,
16 recycling participation?

17 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Yes,
18 absolutely, absolutely. I'm glad you asked that
19 question. Ah, that, ah, recycling is, is a high
20 priority, ah, for the authority. And, um, the
21 recycling, which I'm trying to break down currently,
22 ah, how we can determine, ah, which material, you
23 know, we're picking up, where we can grab the
24 numbers, ah, for, to come up with a diversion rate.
25 You know, we could do diversion rate either by weight

1
2 or by volume, because, as you know, landfill, it
3 doesn't know weight, it knows volume. It's space.
4 So, ah, basically we want to take all of the
5 initiatives, the mattresses, ah, the cardboard bales.
6 We have these, the new cardboard balers which I
7 mentioned in my testimony, ah, that we're able to
8 make, ah, you know, it's, it's much simpler. It's
9 basically you just lift open the top, throw your
10 cardboard boxes in there at the development, and then
11 they actually have a baling machine that it actually
12 gets, you know, when it reaches the weight limit that
13 has the baling machine and that particular piece of
14 equipment reports back. That actually has new
15 technology that has, it's cellular technology that
16 reports back and it lets you know how many bales were
17 made, and we already know what it set it, you know,
18 for weight so that Sanitation could pick it up, ah,
19 without straining themselves. It'll be 40, 50
20 pounds. You could set it to like 100 pounds if you
21 wanted to. But Sanitation said 40 pounds is, is a
22 weight that they're OK with. So we know how many
23 bales are created, ah, and it's only at select
24 locations, but it's a start. My goal is to have ah,
25 e-equipment or i-equipment, you know, however,

1
2 however you want to stay very intelligent equipment
3 that can report back to us when people are using
4 things. And part of the baling machine, ah, and, you
5 know, not to bore you to death with this, the little
6 details, ah, but, ah, with the baling machine you can
7 actually see when people are using the baler. It
8 knows when the baling machine is actually working.
9 So it helps us to make sure that if we want to know
10 if somebody's recycling it'll report back to us
11 saying they use this machine every day, and then
12 another, then another, you know, another development
13 may report back that nobody has used this machine in
14 two days, or three days. And then that, these are
15 all flags that come up. And these are great, great
16 management tools, ah, and it's ways of
17 accountability, and it's a way of also determining,
18 ah, and develop our new diversion rate. Ah, the
19 mattress, that'll be something else, because
20 mattresses is another, ah, big volume item, that we
21 can figure out how much landfill space, you know,
22 part of the diversion rate, right? Diversion rate is
23 the amount of material that we're diverting away from
24 landfills. So we'll be able to tell with the
25 mattresses. Ah, we recycle also, ah, stoves and

1
2 refrigerators. You know, we have, we're, we're
3 getting numbers on that now, ah, as well as
4 Sanitation does pick up some of them. Ah, so, you
5 know, I want to come up with, ah, good estimates on
6 our front as well as working with our Sanitation
7 partner and providing a, ah, reliable diversion rate.
8 I hope I've answered your question.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You have, you
10 have. You answered that question and you answered
11 the, you know, a, a series of other questions that I
12 had related to clarification around the mattress
13 [laughs].

14 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: OK.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So thank you
16 for that. Um, I only have a few more questions, um,
17 that I need to just get on the record. The
18 neighborhood rat reduction program began in 2017 with
19 the goal to reduce the rat population by 70% at 110
20 sites. Has the program met or come close to the
21 goals that were set? How much does the neighborhood
22 rat reduction program cost and, um, has NYCHA
23 successfully installed the 50 rat slabs across nine
24 developments, as stated in the planning, and if not
25

1
2 what were the causes for the delays? So could you
3 just speak to the rat reduction program?

4 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you,
5 Madam Chair, for that question. I'm gonna defer the,
6 ah, the pest part of that question to Josephine
7 Bartlett.

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Hi. Um, we
9 are close. Um, we, month to month we are about at
10 65%. Last month we had a 67%, um, reduction. This
11 month right now we're at 61%. So we are getting
12 close to our 70%. Um, this is, um, the cost of it
13 is, our 22 exterminators that work on this, um,
14 burrow collapsers, which is eight people, our, um,
15 our 72 seasonals, eight caretakers, three SOEs, one
16 program manager. Um, it is 51 full-time staff for
17 NRR. This is \$2,288,954, um, and the seasonal budget
18 to date is \$322,000. Um, for the rat slabs I'll pass
19 it to Vlada.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you. Um,
21 I understand that 14 slabs have been completed. Ah,
22 there are 36 that are in progress. Ah, COVID has had
23 an impact on delays in this particular project.
24 There was a, um, citywide funding freeze for eight
25 months. This program was capitally funded, um, city

1 funded. Also, um, rat slabs are, ah, done in
2 compliant spaces so some of that work couldn't be
3 performed during COVID restrictions.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: But can you
6 just briefly give us, ah, um, like a quick
7 understanding or just put into context the, the
8 complaints that you've heard around, um, the rats
9 recently, right, and the rat reduction program. Can
10 you explain, um, why we still hear, um, rat
11 complaints, um, and, you know, just kind of explain
12 for the public why and what, and you know we can talk
13 about this, you know, this amazing program, and then
14 on the other hand folks still struggling with rats.

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Absolutely.
16 Um, unfortunately, we can't get rid of the rats
17 completely. So we are still seeing these complaints.
18 Um, we have made, um, a lot of headway. Like Council
19 Member Ayala speaking about, um, places in Harlem,
20 like Jefferson in her district had 152 rat burrows
21 when they entered the program in 2019, and last month
22 were at 70. Johnson has also seen a very, um, big
23 decrease from 131 from their baseline to 44. Kings
24 Tower 184, and last month were down to 18. So as she
25 said, but also as she said, she said south Bronx is

1
2 having, um, a lot of difficulties, and yes, we're
3 having a lot of challenges. Um, Patterson, which is
4 in the neighborhood rat reduction, um, is at the same
5 level as when it came in. It does fluctuate,
6 obviously. Every month is different and we work with
7 our Department of Health, um, partners. They have an
8 inspection team that does these burrow counts. But
9 Patterson is at 82 rat burrows and last month they
10 were at 83. Our team has been working really
11 diligently on the gardens. There's a few gardens
12 that were created with partnership with the Knapp
13 program and we've been working with those gardeners
14 to really, um, target areas where we're seeing a lot
15 of rat burrows, um, in these spaces. So our team is
16 there treating the grounds twice a week and is
17 working on that closely. Mitchell, although it's not
18 a neighborhood rat reduction program, we know it has
19 issues and we have, um, a team of exterminators there
20 twice a week treating the grounds and, um, working in
21 the basements as well. So, um, yes, we, you know,
22 there's ups and downs and each, um, development has
23 its challenges, um, but that's part of the integrated
24 pest management to kind of see where the root cause

1
2 again is, where we can target and get better results
3 in the future.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, thank you
5 for that. So now I'm just gonna ask a question, a
6 couple of questions about the, um, preconsidered
7 Intros, the bills themselves related to the New York
8 City Housing Authority complaints. When NYCHA
9 responds to a resident complaint about pests and does
10 some kind of fix, is it NYCHA's policy to ask the
11 resident whether the pest condition has been
12 addressed before marking the complaint resolved? And
13 does NYCHA have any particular policy involving
14 senior households or households with children?

15 VICE PRESIDENT FERGUSON: Thank you,
16 Madam Chair, for that question. Ah, I'm gonna refer
17 you to Josie Bartlett again.

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So, um, part
19 of our new standard procedure when we go into an
20 apartment if there is a pest infestation, um, on the
21 work order we put corrective action taken, and they
22 must mark the level of infestation that they saw,
23 low, medium, and high, and this is all standardized
24 and has been taught to our exterminators. This
25 triggers a follow-up work order automatically, which

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2 we, has, ah, priority, like what we spoke about with
3 the matrix earlier and our exterminator goes back
4 again on this new work order. Um, if they see, ah,
5 signs of pests again they would do corrective action
6 taken again and another follow up was created until
7 really the issue is resolved. Um, but they can put,
8 yeah?

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Like you said
10 the first time, so they make a complaint, and then
11 someone comes out. And you said corrective action
12 was taken and there's a follow-up. I don't really
13 understand that.

14 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: OK.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: How do have
16 corrective, corrective action taken if it wasn't, um,
17 resolved?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So the, a
19 treatment is done on that visit. So they put down
20 pesticides, they do HEPA, they do, ah, HEPA vacuum.
21 Um, they caulk, they seal. You know, it's different
22 for each work order and we track it, we see what is
23 done. But they don't know if that has eliminated the
24 issue until they come back. So if corrective action
25 is marked, so this is a little nitty-gritty, but on

1 each work order there's four options you can do.
2 There's preventative. You don't see pests but, um,
3 we put, we did some caulking, we did some gel to be
4 preventative in case in the future. Um, satisfactory
5 means no pests. We don't use pesticides and, um,
6 there's not a follow-up. But when corrective action
7 is marked on this work order, the infestation level
8 has to be marked and automatically a follow-up work
9 order is done and that's just to make sure to see
10 that when they come back again what is the level of
11 infestation again? Is it still medium? Is it low?
12 Has it been, gone away? Like this is the way that we
13 know if what we've done, um, has eradicated the
14 issue.
15

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So whose job
17 is it with, within NYCHA to, to make sure that if a
18 case or complaint is marked resolved that's it's
19 actually resolved?

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So we have, on
21 the pest side we've got a few levels of, um, Q&A
22 going on. Um, we, all of our five teams of
23 exterminators have one to two supervisors of
24 exterminators which are always doing pop-ups on their
25 staff. They put their labor code on the work orders

1
2 and we can from, um, a management side which
3 apartments they've done and what has been done. Um,
4 we also have environmental health and safety which
5 does, um, reviews of the work orders and, um, does
6 reviews in person to see what is being done and that
7 it matches up with what you're seeing on the work
8 order. We have a QA department that is doing the
9 same, and then the pest control department that I am
10 part of, we are looking at these work orders and we
11 have two technical advisors who have decades of
12 experience that go out, shadow staff, and make sure
13 that, um, when they're doing integrated pest
14 management they're doing it to our standards and that
15 the work is being done with what we want.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So because,
17 you know, the conversation is always around
18 accountability and transparency and making sure that
19 agencies are working together, you know, um, if
20 there's a rat infestation and, you know, how is that
21 being tracked with DOHMH and when we're talking about
22 waste management, you know, what, you know, how are
23 you working with Sanitation? Um, can you speak to
24 this bill around, um, being able to call in
25 complaints with 311? Um, do you think it's possible

1
2 to merge the NYCHA call center with 311? You know,
3 if you just give us your thoughts around the bill
4 itself?

5 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member,
6 um, so, as you know, this is an idea that's been
7 around for a long time, um, at different times NYCHA,
8 you know, has entertained it and had conversations
9 with, with [inaudible]. Um, the, and you've been to
10 our call center in Long Island City, and it's
11 actually a very, it's a very good call center. It
12 really is. I think, I, I kind of wish that, um,
13 that, you know, more residents and, and more council
14 members could go there, because, ah, if you see it
15 runs really well. I think people get frustrated, um,
16 because, um, they call the call center, they get a
17 work order number, and yes, it's true, sometimes the
18 work doesn't get done the way, in, in the time that
19 it was supposed to, the quality of the work is not
20 what they wanted, and they, and they think
21 automatically it's the call center that was the
22 problem, when in fact oftentimes the call center did
23 its job. You know, you call there, you, you put in
24 your complaint, they give you the ticket number. The
25 problem, I think, a lot of times is and something we

1
2 recognize, the problem is, you know, oftentimes with
3 the, um, making sure that the work gets done and
4 making sure that it's quality, is, is getting done,
5 but it's not the call center. Um, NYCHA residents,
6 um, can call 311, ah, currently and those complaints
7 do get routed to NYCHA, you know, and would anyway,
8 you know, would, would, would no matter what. Um,
9 just like any other landlord, though, if you lived, I
10 always compare to [inaudible] because it's a big
11 apartment complex, or Starrett City, or something
12 like that. Your first line of defense would be
13 called the landlord, you know, ah, in that, in that
14 instance. If the landlord does not do what they're
15 supposed to do then you can call 311 and, and, and,
16 ah, and they would, ah, be able to route it to the
17 proper agency. Um, we believe that we need to get
18 better in terms of quality assurances with work order
19 tickets. And I know that this bill is well

20 intentioned, but I'm not sure it achieves that goal.
21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. And, um,
22 just, I mean, this is a resolution, but it's a state
23 bill. But, you know, what do you think your thoughts
24 around the Utility Accountability Act?

25

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yeah, so I, I,
3 I've, I've had several conversations with the, ah,
4 with Assembly Member Anderson about this bill. We,
5 and we've looked at it very closely. It would cost
6 us about 35 million dollars, um, um, ah, in expense
7 dollars, um, if we were to, ah, to enact the bill,
8 um, as, you know, as written. Um, we, ah, I think
9 that the goal here is to make sure that we have
10 fewer, um, outages and make sure that they last a
11 short, short a period of time. I'm not sure how
12 taking resources away from us does, ah, achieves that
13 goal. Nationally we're having a conversation around
14 infrastructure and I think we all agree that the way
15 to get better services is to invest in our
16 infrastructure and not to be punitive on a
17 municipality or an, an agency, and I think, you know,
18 in some ways while very long outages, especially
19 around gas, are more than frustrating, I, I, I don't
20 even have the words, you know, in my vocabulary to
21 describe what they are, um, are, you know, just
22 unacceptable. Um, I don't, you know, costing, you
23 know, um, I, I, I'm not sure if this is the right way
24 to go. Um, the, the other thing the, the bill does
25 needs to be tightened up and I, and I told the

1 sponsor this, too, and we'd, we'd be happy to work
2 with him on. It does not differentiate between the
3 cause of the outage, right? So it could be NYCHA, it
4 could be, for instance, I remember a few years ago we
5 were at Howard Houses, Con Ed, you know, just shut
6 down elevator service for everybody. Well, the way
7 the bill is written right now NYCHA then would have
8 to pay residents, you know, for that shutdown in
9 service, um, as well. Um, and Council Member
10 Menchaca I know, who, you know, is, you know, pushing
11 this resolution, um, understandably because in Red
12 Hook we've experienced a lot of gas outages. Red
13 Hook Houses is 82 years old and the infrastructure is
14 the same age, and if you, if, if you know any who is
15 82 and really didn't take very good care of
16 themselves they're probably not in good shape and Red
17 Hook Houses, um, is also experiencing about 500
18 million dollars in upgrades around Sandy. So as we
19 dig, you know, um, contractors sometimes are, you
20 know, hitting things that they're not supposed to
21 but, you know, it does cause outages, um, and, but
22 it's also, there are pipes that are well past their
23 shelf life. Um, we've had conversations with the
24 council member. We've had conversations with Red
25

1
2 Hook Initiative, other groups in that area, and say
3 really the best way to go is to look to replace the
4 gas risers rather than, you know, and then, you know,
5 long term we probably wouldn't have, you know, that
6 issue and, ah, and I, I think, I think through
7 investment we can, we'd, we'd be better suited to
8 achieve the goal here.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, thank you
10 so much for that, Brian. Um, I actually do not have
11 any other questions. Um, but I do hope that just
12 hearing your testimony today we're able to, ah, you
13 know, really work together on pests and waste
14 management. Um, there's been some real take-aways.
15 And I know Council Member Ayala mentioned it, um, you
16 know, [inaudible] together, um, clearly there's some
17 need for some round tables and working directly with
18 the residents related to communication, um,
19 information, um, sharing, um, everything else. So,
20 um, there's definitely a need for some follow-up.
21 But I do appreciate, um, the conversation. So,
22 again, I have no more questions for, um, NYCHA, but I
23 do know that we have a couple of residents who wanted
24 to, um, speak after the community group, the
25 authority. So I'll turn it back over to...

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: And, and, and
3 Council Member, could I just add, could I just add
4 something that came up earlier? Earlier you had
5 asked about, you know, what's going at 90 Church
6 around hiring. Um, that is around the cleanup corps,
7 um, and to date, um, we have hired, um, over, um,
8 500, ah, 500 people for that, ah, for those positions
9 and over half of them have been residents. So, ah,
10 and they started, ah, some of them started the last
11 week of May. So we're halfway to our goal. We hope,
12 ah, by July to be fully there, ah, to be 1000 hired.
13 And, ah, the current numbers are 539 hired, 224 of
14 them are residents.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Say, what
16 [inaudible] number?

17 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: 539 hired to date.
18 Ah, 224 are residents.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, OK. And
20 is there, and there is a, a heavy push to inform the
21 residents about this job opportunity?

22 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We sent this all
23 to, you know, all, you know, all residents with email
24 addresses. We've been, you know, putting it out
25 there on social and made sure that all the tenant

1
2 leaders, too, do have it. You know, any council
3 members, if you, ah, want to make sure that the
4 residents in your district know about it, you know,
5 please encourage them to apply.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Thank you
7 so much. Thank you. Audrey?

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much. We
9 will now return to testimony from members of the
10 public. Ah, please listen for your name. Once your
11 name is called please accept the prompt to unmute.
12 The Sergeant at Arms will set the timer and announce
13 that you may begin. Your testimony will be set to
14 two minutes. Um, I would now like to welcome Caller
15 One to testify. For the record, could you please
16 state your name, Caller One?

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

18 DIANA BLACKWELL: Well, good afternoon.
19 Thank you, Chair Ampry-Samuel and committee council
20 members for having me here today. My name is Diana
21 Blackwell and today I'm speaking as a member of the
22 NYCHA Recycling Committee for the Manhattan South
23 Solid Waste Advisory Board, or the MSSWAB, a
24 voluntary citizen advisory board dedicated to helping
25 NYC achieve a zero waste goal. As advocates for

1 consistent, equitable access to sustainability and,
2 um, sanitary waste management systems, the NYCHA
3 Recycling Committee and I are eagerly following the
4 development of the pest and waste management action
5 plan. Today at the community discusses oversight and
6 waste management issue and pest problems, we want to
7 remind the council the sustainability and community
8 can, can and should be embedded in the work laid out
9 by this plan. The purpose of the pest and waste
10 management action plan is to provide decent, safe,
11 and sanitary housing for NYCHA residents by the way
12 of litter- and pest-free campuses. The members of
13 the NYCHA's newly formed waste management department
14 have begun a reinvigorated campus waste management
15 primarily by way of individual waste management plans
16 for each campus, waste assets inventory, and
17 infrastructure upgrades. The NYCHA Recycling
18 Committee applauds these plans as the foundational
19 structures for the provisions of sanitary waste
20 collection and removal. Proper infrastructure is the
21 basis for any style of waste management program. We
22 are aware that NYCHA is developing recycling programs
23 for institutional waste, such as back of house
24 cardboard and mattresses. However, a more vigorous
25

1 effort is needed in order to contribute to the city's
2 reduction goals for waste and greenhouse gas
3 emissions. According to the NYCHA's 2018 waste
4 management report they now have a diversion rate of
5 an increase of 2%. This means a staggering 1900, I'm
6 sorry, 196,000 tons of NYCHA waste is sent to
7 landfills or incinerators. This is equivalent to
8 50,000 tons of gas, ah, GHS emissions every year.
9 75% of these totals could be reduced with a robust
10 recycling plan. To further increase NYCHA recycling
11 rates, NYCHA must make additional plans for
12 sustainability, increasing residential participation
13 in recycling. These plans should be implemented and
14 alongside the infrastructure and institutional
15 improvements. As NYCHA works hard to revitalize
16 waste yards and build recycling infrastructures into
17 new campus waste systems they, they must also work
18 with the residents to build in recycling programs.
19 Just like every other New Yorker, NYCHA residents
20 should know how in their building their recycling
21 bins will be reliable, to be located, and they should
22 know which materials go in each bin. Achieving an
23 excellent residential...

24
25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

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2 DIANA BLACKWELL: Thank you. We will
3 applaud NYCHA. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ms. Blackwell, please
5 continue.

6 DIANA BLACKWELL: OK, thank you. Ah, I'm
7 just gonna repeat. Achieving excellent resident
8 participation takes residents' investment, ongoing
9 education, and hands-on contamination control. The
10 bureau should coordinate with these environmental
11 leaders to ensure effective recycling education at
12 each campus and discover which campuses might benefit
13 from the installation of a DSNY program, such as e-
14 waste and textile recycling that are currently
15 available to NYCHA campuses. You know, we do applaud
16 NYCHA for creating a comprehensive plan for the
17 institutional waste management, as rapid improvements
18 continue to occur in NYCHA's waste infrastructure and
19 collections. We ask that you extend these
20 improvements to NYCHA's sustainability and community
21 investment so that we create campuses that are not
22 only cleaner but greener and safer and more
23 empowered. And I thank you very much.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thank you very
25 much. I believe this concludes public testimony.

1
2 However, if we have inadvertently forgotten to call
3 on anyone to testify please use the Zoom raise hand
4 function now and we will try to hear from you.
5 Seeing no hands, I will turn it back over to Chair
6 Ampry-Samuel to close the hearing.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so
8 much. I do want to recognize, um, the committee
9 staff. Thank you so much, Audrey, for your
10 assistance during this, um, hearing and for all the
11 prep leading to it, as well as Ricky Challa and Hozay
12 Condey. Um, I also want to, um, just personally
13 thank Ms. Mcfarlane, um, Ms. Blackwell, and Ms.
14 Massac for coming in and testifying today. I always
15 appreciate your voice, um, and your expertise, um,
16 and I would like to do that follow-up, um, Ms.
17 Mcfarlane, um, with Diana Ayala, Council Member
18 Ayala, and Ms. Blackwell I would also like to follow
19 up with you because you mentioned some things around,
20 um, just, just gas and our sustainability, and I do
21 have a gas, um, ban bill that has been introduced in
22 the council and I would love to be able to get your,
23 um, your input. Um, thank you so much, NYCHA, for
24 your testimony today, and I do look forward to the,
25 um, follow-up. So we will receive, um, you know,

1 clearly a follow-up from the committee and I look
2 forward to those next steps. So with that, um, that
3 will conclude today's, um, hearing with the Public
4 Housing Committee, um, and enjoy, ah, a safe and
5 prosperous day and week [laughs]. [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 July 21, 2021