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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD

4

DEVELOPMENT AND THE HOMELESS

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, February 9, 2006
1:20 p.m.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL, CHAIR

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COUNCILMAN JUAN RAMOS

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COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN

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RESOLUTION 050871 - Resolution calling on the
Committee on Housing, Neighborhood
Development, and the Homeless to hold public
hearings on the administration's proposed
reorganization of housing agencies.

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COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Hello, everyone. Sorry to hold you. We had an emergency meeting with the Managing Director and the head of Capital Projects, Public Property and L&I.

Having said that, this is a continued hearing dealing with housing reorganization, Resolution No. 050871.

We'll have the Clerk to read that just so that everyone is clear as to what our discussion is.

THE CLERK: Resolution 050871, calling on the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to hold public hearings on the administration's proposed reorganization of housing agencies.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much.

I understand our Chief of Staff, Joyce Wilkerson, is here. We know that Kevin Hanna is head of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, but he is out of town. He has been subpoenaed to

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2 court.

3 The Chair notes Councilwoman
4 Blondell Reynolds Brown is here. We
5 thank her for her attendance. We also
6 note that as this is a continued hearing,
7 we are legally able to proceed.

8 We also thank Cathy Califano
9 for being here and Madam Chief of Staff.
10 We're happy to have you make a statement,
11 if you would like.

12 MS. WILKERSON: I really don't
13 have any prepared statement. The only
14 remarks I can offer are pretty much an
15 update on where we are with the
16 process --

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you. That would be fine.

19 MS. WILKERSON: -- as a
20 backdrop, just put information out about
21 what's going on with the federal budget.
22 I think it, in a lot of ways, has become
23 an overshadowing issue and I think that
24 it's something that's important to
25 everybody in this room, but also to the

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2 Councilmembers.

3 As you know, over the last two
4 years, the CDBG budget has experienced a
5 25 percent reduction. Back in the
6 good-old days, I remember when I first
7 came to the City, we were probably
8 getting around \$93 million a year from
9 the federal government. This year we're
10 down to about \$60-some-odd million.
11 We're experiencing a ten percent cut that
12 will take us down to about \$53 million.
13 And earlier this week, the President
14 announced his intention to further slash
15 CDBG funding by 20 percent.

16 So we're looking at something
17 that affects not only jobs, but will
18 affect, in a very substantial way, the
19 community development activities that the
20 City is able to undertake within
21 communities. So I think we all need to
22 be very involved in the coming years to
23 try to preserve what remains of our
24 Community Development Block Grant
25 Program.

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2 As you know, one of the tenants
3 of the Mayor's NTI proposal was taking a
4 look at housing reorganization, and
5 people in housing have been working for
6 over a year now looking at the various
7 aspects of that. We've looked at
8 technology, and out of NTI bond proceeds,
9 we've supported over \$5 million in IT
10 changes, and those will be rolling out
11 this winter.

12 We've looked at the processes
13 with the support of employees across the
14 housing organizations. We've looked at
15 how it is that we do business. And the
16 third piece of it we've looked at is how
17 we've structured ourself to do business.

18 We have some ideas about the
19 kinds of reform we think are appropriate.
20 We're currently briefing Councilmembers
21 on our ideas about this and hope to take
22 that feedback back to the Mayor so that
23 decisions can be made about what it is
24 that we'll propose finally for
25 reorganizing the City's housing agencies.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you. We are likewise concerned about the
4 cuts that this President outlined, and we
5 believe that in the future, that we are
6 going to have to then go to the General
7 Fund to use more in the housing area, if
8 we have it. We have no choice, because
9 those who are at the bottom rung of a
10 ladder and those who are homeless and
11 those who need housing and those who need
12 housing improvement dollars have to know
13 that irrespective of what's happening in
14 the White House, I mean, if they steal
15 the election again, what can we do. We
16 have to make sure that our people are
17 protected.

18 We're concerned about many
19 things. Obviously one of them is that if
20 there is an Office of Housing and
21 Neighborhood Preservation, and we know
22 that Kevin Hanna is Secretary of Housing
23 and Neighborhood Preservation, then under
24 him would be created a whole new
25 structure. We're concerned about that.

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2 Our opinion is that if we're not sure
3 that it improves matters, if it's not
4 broken, as they say, don't fix it. So
5 we're concerned that a new system may
6 cause people to be not only moved
7 around -- and I have our transcript from
8 our last hearing where Kevin Hanna said,
9 quote, "People may be given different
10 jobs. People may have different
11 responsibilities, but reorganization, in
12 and of itself, won't displace people from
13 their jobs."

14 My question is, and I quote,
15 "The question becomes, if people are
16 transferred or given different jobs, will
17 these people maintain their same salary
18 and level of benefits?"

19 And Kevin Hanna stated, "Now
20 you're getting to a level of detail to
21 which I'm really uncomfortable talking."

22 So it seems to me that part of
23 the reorganization, that question still
24 remains. I haven't talked to anybody in
25 the union. I thank people who are here

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who work for the City. I thank our housing heads whom we've asked to be here. I thank them for being here. That's Anthony McIntosh, PHDC. We thank him for the fine job he does. We thank Herb Wetzel, head of Redevelopment Authority, for the fine job he does. We thank John Coates of Vacant Property Review Committee for the fine job he does, and Deborah McCulloch, Office of Housing and Community Development.

13 Having said that, we are
14 concerned about how a proposed
15 reorganization, how it is better, why it
16 is better and what happens to folks with
17 jobs.

18 Before you respond, let me note
19 that Councilman Juan Ramos is here, a
20 member of this Committee. Thank you.

21 MS. WILKERSON: Well, I guess I
22 would take issue with the assumption that
23 it's not broken. I think that I have
24 worked with a lot of the people in this
25 room in these housing organizations and

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2 can tell you that a lot of times the
3 structure that we have is one of the big
4 impediments we face. These programs have
5 delivered for the City of Philadelphia
6 because of individuals, not because we've
7 created an efficient system to support
8 these individuals.

9 We have a lot of redundancy in
10 these organizations. We've allowed
11 organizations to grow up that are
12 recently developing technology
13 capability. They don't interface like
14 they ought to interface.

15 So there are a lot of things
16 that we've allowed. We've managed to
17 pull off programs that are, to a large
18 extent, effective, but it's been despite
19 the organization that's been created.
20 It's not because of the organization
21 that's been created. So I don't agree
22 with the initial proposition.

23 I have a lot of respect, as I
24 said, for the individuals in these
25 organizations. I think they have a

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2 wealth of knowledge. As this
3 Administration has challenged everybody
4 to take a new look at neighborhoods
5 through the NTI program, one of the
6 reasons why we've been able to do that is
7 because we can draw on individuals in
8 these organizations who are enormously
9 talented. The Weatherization Program
10 probably works more effectively than it
11 has in a long time, and you have experts
12 and professionals like Tony McIntosh.

13 One of the reasons the
14 Redevelopment Authority Relocation
15 Program has been as effective and humane
16 as it's been is because you have experts
17 like Herb Wetzel and the relocation
18 staff, Melvis, people like that.

19 One of the reasons we don't run
20 a file of the CDBG regulations is, we try
21 to do new and creative things with our
22 housing monies, because you have people
23 like Deborah McCulloch who brought
24 expertise from HUD into the City.

25 So we have a lot of respect for

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2 those people, and in this reorganization,
3 we're not going to cut off our nose in
4 all of this, but change is going to come
5 whether we approach it in a strategic way
6 or not. You can't support the kind of
7 cuts we've had in our funding, the kind
8 of cuts we're looking at moving forward
9 without having some fairly dramatic
10 changes.

11 The challenge is going to be to
12 keep as much money on the street and to
13 try to align the people resources in a
14 way that makes sense. But we'd be
15 foolhardy to jettison some of our -- our
16 major investment is really in the people
17 that run these programs, and you change
18 all that very reluctantly.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
20 we're glad that Vacant Property Review
21 Committee -- and John Coates does an
22 excellent job there, that committee that
23 was created by Council back in, I
24 suppose, 1976, we're glad that department
25 won't be affected as much, but we believe

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2 that -- in fact, what we're looking for
3 is a commitment that the people who work
4 in these departments, if they're
5 transferred, that their salary and
6 benefits won't be reduced.

7 MS. WILKERSON: The Mayor has
8 said all along he's not looking to put
9 anybody out on the street. We cannot
10 guarantee that everybody will end up with
11 the same position at the same salary in
12 the same organization.

13 The City recently, the General
14 Fund side of the City, has recently been
15 through some contraction. We've managed
16 to rehire most all of the people who were
17 laid off for some period of time.

18 The City always has attrition.
19 The people don't necessarily get the same
20 job back, because the City doesn't have
21 the same needs. As we incorporate
22 technology, as we devote more resources
23 to our neighborhoods and fewer resources
24 to some of the City's other lines of
25 business, we put the people where the

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2 need is. And so people are -- not
3 everybody is going to have the same job.
4 Our goal, though, is, to the extent
5 possible, is not to put anybody out of a
6 job.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: That's
8 very important to us. People who have
9 City jobs, people who are part of the
10 civil service area, people know they have
11 City jobs and their benefits and their
12 longevity and their pension and
13 everything, that's one thing, but when
14 you talk about going from maybe 36
15 agencies to 23, it concerns us, because
16 it is our responsibility to be concerned
17 about the public, but we have to concern
18 ourselves with the workforce as well.

19 MS. WILKERSON: I agree with
20 that. I think that it's the same tension
21 we face when we talk about the General
22 Fund. One of your premises with the
23 cutbacks in the federal government, the
24 General Fund is going to have to put more
25 money out on the street. You can't do

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2 everything, and so we will -- the
3 Personnel Department takes its charge
4 seriously, and any time we downsize, as
5 we did about a year and a half ago
6 through the rest of the City, whenever we
7 propose reorganizing, as we've done with
8 the City's cluster, administrative
9 cluster initiative, we put a lot of time
10 and energy into the individuals that will
11 be affected to make sure that whatever
12 dislocation they suffer is minimized.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
14 think that people don't trust it. I
15 mean, for example, we asked them to not
16 charge people a \$35 application fee.
17 Sometimes people find out about jobs
18 right at the deadline, and then when they
19 go to apply, if I don't pay it -- I pay
20 some. I do what I can. I can't pay
21 everybody's application fee, nor do I
22 always know when people go there. People
23 can't afford to pay it. The City said,
24 Okay, we'll hold up. Well, they went
25 back to charging a \$35 application fee

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2 again. They didn't tell me we're going
3 to do it. They just did it.

4 And it's that kind of thing --
5 that's a small example of what happens
6 and why people don't trust what they
7 don't know for a fact, even that way. So
8 if somebody applies on the last day for a
9 job and the job is closing at 5:00 and
10 they come to me at 4 o'clock and they
11 say, I don't have \$35, what if I'm at a
12 meeting? If I'm there, I've given it to
13 them, but if I'm not there, then they
14 lose the opportunity to apply. And it is
15 that spirit where things happen without
16 people knowing it's going to happen or we
17 loosely get, I'll try. People just don't
18 trust it.

19 One of the concerns, I'll say
20 major concern, is that we want to do
21 this -- reorg has been a rumor and
22 started forever, for many years, but here
23 we are talking about starting housing
24 reorganization in '07. So how do you
25 work out kinks? The end of this term is

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2 '07.

3 MS. WILKERSON: We have a
4 quarter of our tenure left, and this is a
5 project that has been in the works. We
6 have done our homework. We've developed
7 IT systems. I think we've had people
8 looking at process changes. I think we
9 have the capacity to do this.

10 Change is going to happen one
11 way or the other simply because of the
12 budget cuts. I don't want to hide behind
13 that, but that's just the reality, and we
14 can either do this in a way that allows
15 us to move forward effectively or we can
16 just go in departments and say, 20
17 percent off the top, you get cut by 20
18 percent, and continue to operate in a way
19 that's inefficient and not take advantage
20 of the efficiencies that ought to happen.

21 We don't need three Personnel
22 Departments. We don't need three Law
23 Departments. We don't need three
24 Procurement Departments in these
25 organizations. Throughout the rest of

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2 the City, we've begun tackling these
3 things and said, look, these back-room
4 operations don't have to be duplicative.
5 Across the country, best practice
6 indicates that you begin to streamline
7 these things.

8 These are changes that we need
9 to make. We need to stay focused on
10 keeping these dollars out on the street.
11 We have enormous challenges rebuilding
12 our neighborhoods. The Mayor has made a
13 commitment, with your support, to end
14 homelessness in ten years. At some
15 point, we've got to squeeze as much
16 inefficiency as we can so that we can
17 keep as many dollars on the street to
18 tackle the very real challenges.

19 We have vacancies opening up in
20 the rest of the City all the time, if for
21 no other reason because of attrition.
22 That's an opportunity to help assure
23 that, to the extent possible, we can
24 minimize the individual pain, because
25 it's hard.

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2 I remember when I was at the
3 RDA, I know that people came out of high
4 school and went to the RDA to work.
5 People have committed their lifetimes to
6 these jobs, to these organizations. I
7 appreciate that, but I think we also have
8 a responsibility to look at what's going
9 on in these neighborhoods, commit as much
10 of the resources we can to making sure
11 that these dollars go for their intended
12 purpose, which is to rebuild our
13 neighborhoods.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
15 believe that we have to at some point
16 from the General Fund, we have to have a
17 cushion to protect people in need.
18 That's our responsibility as a moral
19 nation and a nation who cares about those
20 in need, at the bottom rung of the
21 ladder, as well as seniors who may not
22 have it.

23 So President Bush can't totally
24 control what we do, because we know, my
25 God, he cut Medicaid, Medicare, AIDS

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2 education. He cuts everything. We have
3 our sons and neighbors dying overseas and
4 he just says he's going to do it, but it
5 doesn't absolve us from our
6 responsibility to make sure people are
7 protected.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
10 believe, and I said this to the Mayor, we
11 know that we're in a technological age.
12 We support that. All of us want to move
13 forward. I believe that we support the
14 opportunity to Land Bank so we have area
15 ready for development, but I don't know
16 that we support anything else.

17 I really do believe that as
18 long as RDA has one appraiser, we know
19 we're not doing the job. I believe that
20 we can make our systems better so that
21 the process doesn't have to go through
22 Finance three times, or whatever the
23 number is. We can always streamline our
24 process, but in terms of actually dealing
25 with the issues, that we really, really

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2 aren't able to do all of that.

3 As you know, I've seen the
4 film, the housing reorg film, and I would
5 venture to say for my colleagues who have
6 not seen it, it is very detailed, very
7 long. People know that for technology
8 changes, that's the time we live in,
9 that's fine. Land Banking may be a good
10 idea, but all the other stuff, taking the
11 departments from 36 to maybe 23, let me
12 ask you -- let me just phrase my
13 question.

14 If our federal cut is 7.6
15 million -- is that correct? Is it 7.6?

16 MS. WILKERSON: 7.8.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: 7.8.
18 If this housing reorganization saves us
19 1.2 -- is that correct?

20 MS. WILKERSON: That's without
21 reflecting any personnel reductions.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
23 right. Then we still have some \$6
24 million in the middle that we're not
25 dealing with in spite of all this housing

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2 reorganization. Are we to turn our City
3 upside down for a million dollars?

4 MS. WILKERSON: Yeah, I think
5 that this is a challenge the City needs
6 to take on. I think that you cannot
7 minimize the significance of even \$1.8
8 million. I think there's probably
9 substantially more than that in this
10 housing reorganization.

11 The other thing is, we have an
12 obligation to deliver service more
13 efficiently, and IT is going to help with
14 some of that, but I think that we need to
15 take a look at our processes. We need to
16 take a look at how we use and align our
17 resources.

18 The Mayor is committed to
19 putting as much money out on the street
20 as possible. That's our commitment, to
21 rebuilding the neighborhoods, and we
22 intend to support people in these
23 departments, to the extent possible, with
24 other jobs in the City. But our primary
25 commitment is to use these dollars to

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2 foes, the housing community, housing
3 organizations, people who work inside,
4 nobody supports this reorganization plan.
5 And I think given that, sometimes --
6 maybe it was like that dawn of
7 prohibition when the law changed and
8 people wouldn't abide by it. Sometimes
9 when we know that it is not an idea whose
10 time has come, that people do not -- I
11 don't know anybody who supports this
12 plan. I mean, nobody talks about it, and
13 I wouldn't put anybody on the spot if
14 they wanted to. None of us support it.
15 I don't support it, and I'm a supporter
16 of the Mayor.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And I
19 dare say this is not the way to go. I've
20 seen the film. After you visit all my
21 colleagues in Council, they'll listen.
22 They will maybe agree to part of it, like
23 I do. I agree to the technological
24 changes and I'm fine with Land Banking,
25 but all that other stuff, where you move

21 So there are going to be
22 changes, and we can talk about
23 fine-tuning the changes, but there are
24 going to be substantial changes. We
25 don't support lobbying 20 percent out of

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2 the housing programs in the City, the
3 money on the street. We're not for that.
4 We prefer to take advantage of all the
5 efficiencies that the City has talked
6 about, acknowledged for over a decade,
7 and we've always failed to step up to the
8 plate on these things. We're not
9 prepared to -- it's the same thing that
10 we've been through on the City side. On
11 the City side, tackling things
12 differently. It's what has enabled us to
13 propose things like the commercial
14 corridor initiative and support for the
15 arts, because we've been willing to
16 undertake some change. We haven't made
17 the same demand of our housing delivery
18 agencies, and the time has come.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: But if
20 we have \$162 million surplus, I think we
21 can absorb \$6 million. The issue is
22 priority.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
25 issue is, and it has always been, one of

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2 priority. In leadership roles, we have
3 to decide what's most important and what
4 matters most. We have to decide what our
5 City needs. We have to decide how our
6 workforce feels about it, their morale,
7 and we have to decide how to help our
8 seniors, how to help our homeless, how we
9 help first-time home buyers, how we help
10 people to stay inside.

11 Obviously I support the Mayor's
12 recent initiative to help with mortgage
13 payments. I support putting a half
14 million dollars more into utility funding
15 for people who can't pay their utilities.
16 I support all of that. It's where my
17 heart is and where my commitment is. And
18 I say again, it's a matter -- sure, we
19 want the money on the street, but if we
20 have a surplus, then we can certainly
21 find \$6 million so we don't have to do
22 this.

23 There's no guarantee -- you
24 can't show us a chart and -- well, you
25 can maybe some people, but I've been in

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Do my
16 colleagues have any questions?

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We're
19 absolutely concerned that you
20 representing the Administration,
21 Mr. Hanna and you, know we do not support
22 an Office of Housing and Neighborhood
23 Preservation. I've seen the reports. We
24 do not support these changes. We do not
25 support -- let me say this: I think that

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2 I would be more comfortable if you asked
3 the department heads to decide where cuts
4 would be than to just reorganize them and
5 say this is what they have to do. Why
6 can't they make these decisions on some
7 level of cuts and then we can go from
8 there?

9 MS. WILKERSON: We don't allow
10 the departments to organize themselves.
11 We're trying to take a perspective on the
12 whole City. It's not a question of what
13 PHDC wants, what RDA wants, what OHCD
14 wants. This is one city. The Mayor is
15 the executive in charge of the City.
16 It's his responsibility to organize these
17 agencies. We look to do it in a way that
18 makes sense, that serves the goals of the
19 City, the Administration and ultimately
20 also the goals of the various agencies.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Don't
22 you think they know what they're doing?

23 MS. WILKERSON: We look for
24 input, have solicited input, but at the
25 end of the day, it's the call of the

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2 Mayor.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Of
4 course it's the call of the Mayor, but we
5 have responsible leadership and
6 experienced leadership. They've been
7 around as long as I have, and we've all
8 been here. We've almost grown up here.
9 And they know what they're doing, they
10 know what works, and they know where they
11 can tighten up. They have done it in the
12 past.

13 I would feel more comfortable
14 letting them tighten up where they need
15 to than outside saying, This is how
16 you're going to work, this is what the
17 new world will be like. It's just
18 fundamentally not fair. It's not the
19 thing to do.

20 (Applause.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
22 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.
24 Thank you, Madam Chair.

25 Good afternoon. Madam

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2 Chairwoman raises, I believe, a
3 legitimate question. Given the
4 environment as you, I believe, fairly
5 portrayed it in that government has to
6 work smarter, government has to be more
7 responsible in getting the dollars in the
8 neighborhoods where they belong, I am
9 curious to know now what the process was
10 if there was not an opportunity presented
11 to the leadership of the departments so
12 that they could indeed take the
13 environment as you've just described it
14 and provided a picture of a
15 recommendation of the way government
16 should move to work smarter.

17 MS. WILKERSON: There's been a
18 lot of process that I guess has been
19 described in the earlier hearings. We've
20 had committees of anybody in the
21 organization taking a look at the
22 processes. We've had meetings with
23 directors. We've been through a process.
24 It probably took --

25 MS. CALIFANO: We went through

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Please
4 identify yourself for the record again.

8 The process started out early
9 on with interviews of senior management,
10 both executive -- senior management
11 throughout all three organizations,
12 interviews with external stakeholders,
13 community development corporations and
14 developers that do work with the City,
15 other City agencies that have a central
16 role and interaction, like License and
17 Inspection.

18 We then went through a process
19 of establishing five process teams,
20 themes of the major functions of the
21 organization: Housing development;
22 housing preservation; best practices, to
23 look at not only how we did it here, but
24 how it was done nationally;
25 administrative services; and real estate

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2 activities, and those included over 50
3 employees. It was almost a six-month
4 period of time where they met regularly
5 with consultants to come up with specific
6 recommendations on how to make
7 improvements on both the delivery of
8 service and the coordination between
9 agencies. Those recommendations were
10 compiled. It was over 100
11 recommendations, and are part of the
12 roll-out strategy.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So to make
14 sure I'm understanding what you're
15 saying, you actually posed the challenge
16 to the leadership of those departments,
17 presenting what the new environment is,
18 and asked them to present to you
19 recommendations on how the departments
20 could work smarter?

21 MS. CALIFANO: We talked about
22 the functions of the agencies, and those
23 included line staff as well as management
24 in the organizations. That information
25 was compiled and those recommendations.

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2 Then the consultants looked at three
3 structural ways to organize the housing
4 agencies.

5 That decision has been
6 presented to the Mayor to select how to
7 structure those organizations. And that
8 has been a process of the consultants
9 with the Secretary of Housing and the
10 Mayor's office, that component.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Did I hear
12 in the testimony that in an effort to be
13 very circumspect about this process,
14 there's been a look at best practices in
15 other major metropolitan cities that have
16 gone through this similar type of
17 evolution?

18 MS. CALIFANO: There was a team
19 of employees led by consultants that,
20 yes, looked at the best practices, the
21 type of programs both here and
22 nationally, and the way to deliver those
23 services most effectively.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Knowing
25 that it's been a while since you probably

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2 looked at that material, can you cite any
3 one, two or three cities that have made
4 this type of transition and ended up at a
5 different place in providing the similar
6 services?

7 MS. CALIFANO: One of the
8 components that we looked at is
9 Cleveland's Land Bank Program, which does
10 reflect in the new organization. It's a
11 way of being more proactive to determine
12 what the appropriate reuse is for land,
13 tagging it and then marketing or
14 promoting it for that reuse.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Can you
16 share with us any areas where there was
17 common ground across the board with the
18 new proposed changes?

19 MS. CALIFANO: The Basic
20 Systems Repair Program run by PHDC is
21 actually a model that other cities are
22 looking at replicating because it is such
23 a good homeless prevention program.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Was there
25 common ground amongst the departments

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2 that are slated to be affected by this,
3 common ground in terms of -- did the
4 leadership of any of those departments
5 that are being affected find a common
6 denominator where it made good sense to
7 move to this particular place?

8 MS. CALIFANO: Are you
9 referring to the structure?

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

11 MS. CALIFANO: The structure
12 has been presented to the Administration.
13 It has not yet been formally presented to
14 each of the three agencies.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see. I
16 see.

17 MS. CALIFANO: That is part of
18 the roll-out strategy.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.
20 Thank you for your testimony.

21 Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 We would like more information
25 about when these negotiations --

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2 Ms. Califano, you said that you've been
3 dealing with this or negotiating for
4 reorganization for six months? We would
5 like to know when these meetings took
6 place, who was included. Not in general.
7 We want to know with whom you met.

8 MS. WILKERSON: We will pull
9 together a document that itemizes all the
10 meetings, the committee structure, who
11 participated, and we'll provide you with
12 the document.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Was
14 there a request for proposals?

15 MS. CALIFANO: From the outside
16 with selecting the consultants? I'm
17 sorry. Just for clarity, when you're
18 saying request for proposals --

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We've
20 been asking for a document for three
21 hearings. We have no document. We don't
22 know what housing reorganization is.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
25 Mayor always thanks me for our work on

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2 NTI. I love my City. I love my Mayor.
3 I love my folks with whom we work, and I
4 love the people in neighborhoods. If
5 everything is fine, why do I have to call
6 this third hearing and still say -- why
7 can't I have a copy of -- if it's so
8 great, what's the big secret?

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. WILKERSON: When the
11 Administration has a final proposal, we
12 will make that available.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Was
14 this a no bid or a bid contract?

15 MS. WILKERSON: We've been
16 working with TRF and PFM, and we
17 solicited publicly for that.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: When
19 did this begin and where are you now in
20 the process? So I assume all of this is
21 over and you've presented to the Mayor
22 then and he's agreed to all of this?

23 MS. WILKERSON: No.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Is
25 this what you're telling us?

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2 MS. WILKERSON: No. We have
3 reviewed along the way some of the
4 information with the Mayor. We have made
5 a preliminary proposal to the Mayor.
6 He's asked us to solicit additional
7 input. We're going through that process.
8 And then he will review that with
9 additional parties and then a decision
10 will be made about what's to be proposed.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: What
12 parties and about what issue?

13 MS. WILKERSON: We are talking
14 with the Councilmembers. We will talk
15 again with the directors of the
16 organizations. We'll talk with the union
17 representatives.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Or
19 what organizations?

20 MS. WILKERSON: Excuse me. The
21 agencies, the three agencies.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
23 three housing agencies?

24 MS. WILKERSON: Correct.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: RDA,

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2 OHCD and --

3 MS. WILKERSON: PHDC.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: --

5 PHDC.

6 So how long have you been
7 meeting on this?

8 MS. CALIFANO: The solicitation
9 of proposals would have been in January
10 of '04. The consultants were engaged in
11 September of '04.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And do
13 you have any idea how insulted we feel or
14 even understand why?

15 MS. WILKERSON: I think I
16 understand how much is at risk,
17 particularly for District Councilmembers.
18 What happens out of these housing
19 organizations goes to why a lot of people
20 have chosen to be in City Council,
21 because they want to see changes. I
22 think that folk over the years have
23 learned how to make these systems
24 function. I've watched people in City
25 Council identify who it is in these

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2 organizations that can get the work done,
3 and when you come to the table and
4 propose fairly substantial changes, the
5 question is, will it make it any better.

6 We believe that it can be
7 better, that we can do a better job for
8 the citizens of Philadelphia, that we can
9 deliver services better, that we can, in
10 times of shrinking resources, put more
11 money out on the street. I think that
12 with all the other dollars shrinking, we
13 do have to do more out of the resources
14 that we have, and we think we've come up
15 with a proposal to do that, but I think
16 there is -- we are asking for a lot of
17 change, and that always involves risk. I
18 think that we've been working hard.

19 We talk housing reorganization.
20 What we've been doing with technology
21 over the years with the NTI dollars is
22 going to make a huge change. It's going
23 to be a radical change. It's going to be
24 very, very different, but I think at the
25 end of the day, we're going to have a

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2 housing -- a land acquisition/disposition
3 process that is much, much, much better
4 than what it is that we have now. It's a
5 key part of housing reorganization.
6 We've been working on it for years.
7 We're about to roll that out. I think
8 it's going to make a big difference.

9 I think some of the other
10 changes are going to present challenges,
11 but I think at the end of the day, we're
12 going to end up with a system that's more
13 efficient, we'll be able to put more
14 dollars into programs and --

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Were
16 contributions made by any elected
17 officials or were they included in
18 anything on either end of this process?

19 MS. WILKERSON: Input
20 solicited?

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

22 MS. WILKERSON: In addition to
23 the briefings that we're going through
24 now early in the process --

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,

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2 the briefings we're going through now are
3 still without any document. They're a
4 film saying this is what we're going to
5 do. There's no way that anybody who has
6 seen it knows why, what's at the core of
7 it. It's very detailed and there are no
8 main -- there are a million details, not
9 a lot of main points, and nobody really
10 knows, other than the fact that you go
11 from 36 to 23 organizations, that you say
12 it's better, that you create a new Office
13 of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation
14 and move everybody else around. Why do
15 we have to have -- we know that Kevin
16 Hanna is head of the Office of Housing
17 and Neighborhood Preservation. I don't
18 mean to mention him in his absence, but
19 we continued this last time for him, so
20 we're having our hearing.

21 But why does everything have to
22 go under an Office of Housing and
23 Neighborhood Preservation when we already
24 have four departments? I mean, I don't
25 know that Kevin Hanna is going to be here

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2 under a new administration.

3 (Applause.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So I

5 don't understand. You say no elected

6 officials are included in the plan. You

7 say you've had proposals out since

8 January '04. This is '06. You say that

9 you can't have one document, one piece of

10 paper. You say that you can move people

11 around, take their jobs and maybe you'll

12 try to bring them back, or they may have

13 lesser jobs, lesser benefits, and we're

14 just supposed to say, thank you, we're

15 glad. I mean, what do you --

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And

18 we'll also ask Ms. Pankey -- Ms. Pankey,

19 are you here?

20 I'm curious to know who these

21 people were who you say you met with in

22 these various departments who gave you

23 input. I mean, you can do a question

24 box, a suggestion box, and people put in,

25 let us stagger our time or whatever, but,

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2 I mean, really. I mean, do you really
3 expect that I think that people in this
4 room had any major input in this plan?

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. WILKERSON: We will develop
7 a document for you that, as I said,
8 identifies what the process was, who was
9 involved in the process, the briefings
10 that we've had for parties along the way.
11 We will also tie it back into what it was
12 that -- if you'll recall back when the
13 NTI legislation was introduced initially,
14 one of the things that Council wanted to
15 see was what the Administration intended
16 for housing reorganization, and we've
17 identified these challenges all along as
18 being challenges. We've talked about the
19 inefficiencies. We've been doing
20 homework since then that flushes it out,
21 and we'll get to you by the first of next
22 week a document that identifies exactly
23 who was involved, what the timing was,
24 what briefings have happened.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We'll

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2 all in attendance. My name is Veronica
3 Pankey. I am President of AFSCME Local
4 1971, and this is our newly elected
5 Vice-President, Joseph Wills, employed at
6 the Redevelopment Authority of the City
7 of Philadelphia.

8 We did not have prepared
9 testimony today because I believe that it
10 would be redundant. We have delivered to
11 you who we are, the employers for whom we
12 work, the functions performed at those
13 agencies. We have demonstrated to you
14 our ability to meet any and all
15 productivity limits to our lines or
16 levels that have been set. We have
17 passed any audit that has been performed,
18 either externally or internally, in terms
19 of quality of work and productivity,
20 performance, quality. We have
21 demonstrated all of that in previous
22 testimony, and today we were here to see
23 what the Administration had to say as it
24 pertained to this housing reorganization
25 and the impact it has still had on our

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2 labor negotiations, which we still do not
3 have a contract.

4 And, again, we listened to the
5 comments that are stated here today, and
6 much of it is not of any surprise to me
7 or to any of our Executive Board, because
8 they clearly talked about what I stated
9 they were going to hide behind, and
10 that's the impending budget cut. It has
11 absolutely nothing to do with the
12 reorganization, as far as we're
13 concerned.

14 Reorganization, as you know and
15 everyone else knows, has been out there
16 on the table for a number of years. We
17 have layoff language that covers budget
18 cuts. We have layoff language that
19 covers reorganization. Not to mention
20 that they want to gut it, but they do
21 have language that's in place at this
22 time.

23 You talk about the \$168.6
24 million surplus that the City has, none
25 of which is incorporated to cover the

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2 deficit which the City is getting from
3 the federal government for housing, which
4 is supposed to be one of the Mayor's pet
5 peeves. But I haven't seen anything in
6 his presentation that talks about issuing
7 any of that surplus into the deficit for
8 his pet peeve.

9 You talk about trust here
10 today. You talk about risk. You talk
11 about, Joyce Wilkerson and Cathy
12 Califano, they talk about these issues
13 that are all of importance to us. They
14 talk about how they had discussion with
15 Labor or we were part of a group. That
16 was a year ago. It's been one year ago
17 when they last met with Labor to talk
18 about reorganization and entering the
19 second phase.

20 We have no knowledge as to what
21 took place during that second phase. We
22 don't know what happened in the third
23 phase, and still today we do not have
24 anything, anything to look at to say this
25 is the result of our \$500,000 contract

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2 that we gave to the consultants.

3 But what we have been able to
4 obtain is to find out exactly what -- to
5 get proof of exactly what we knew they
6 were doing, and that's to meet with their
7 attorneys and other individuals on
8 abolishing our jobs. We have obtained
9 documents to show that there have been
10 meetings on -- preparing for meetings to
11 eliminate our jobs, where they have met
12 with the Mayor on housing reorganization.
13 This is a \$6,500 bill they paid their
14 attorney to meet on our jobs, but yet
15 they have yet to come to us and sit down
16 and meet with us.

17 We have from the very beginning
18 expressed an interest to be involved in
19 this. We have never ever portrayed any
20 level of resistance, although they will
21 come to the Administration and to Council
22 and say that Labor is hindering this.
23 We're not hindering this. We clearly
24 want to know where we stand. If you're
25 only going to take five of us, tell us

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2 it's five of us. They have yet to tell
3 us anything, but they can go and pay
4 their attorneys \$6,500 to talk about our
5 jobs and how they want to revise our
6 classifications and how they want to
7 abolish our positions, but they can't
8 come and talk to us. And this is the
9 very same language, the very same
10 language, that they have entered into
11 their bogus contracts that they want, for
12 us to work across agencies, and they want
13 to meet and discuss the revision of our
14 job classifications. They don't want to
15 agree, as our current language says, but
16 they want to meet and discuss and say,
17 okay, this is how it's going to be, and
18 they want us to sign on the dotted line
19 and say this is your contract. For what?
20 We have no guarantee from them. We have
21 nothing in writing. We have no
22 explanation, and the fact of the matter
23 is, they're not even truthful with us.
24 They sit down at the table and they claim
25 to have no knowledge about

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2 reorganization, but yet we get
3 documentation to show that there have
4 been meetings, meetings that they've paid
5 their attorneys to partake in to talk
6 about reorganization, job abolishment and
7 job reclassifications. And along all of
8 that, we still do not have a contract.

9 Yes, we've had talks since our
10 last session. We've had talks. Nothing
11 came out of them. Absolutely nothing.
12 We've had five sessions with OHCD, we've
13 had two sessions with PHDC, and we've had
14 one session with the Redevelopment
15 Authority. We still don't have a
16 contract, and they can't give us a
17 legitimate reason why, other than the
18 fact that they want us to agree to work
19 across agencies and agree to meet and
20 discuss on issues that has always been
21 agreed upon since the existing of this
22 union. That is what the union is built
23 on, agreeing, negotiating. This has
24 nothing to do with meet and discuss.
25 There's no need for a union if we're

17 You look across the country.
18 Ford, one of the companies that have been
19 around for years, 30,000 people, they're
20 cutting based on job security, health
21 insurance, issues that are important to
22 us, issues that we're fighting for, but
23 yet they're not willing to give us any of
24 that.

25 I will say here today on behalf

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2 of the membership of Local 1971 we're
3 going to continue in our plight, because
4 we know we're fighting for the right
5 reason. We will not give up. We will
6 not, absolutely, positively not, give in
7 to this reorganization with our hands
8 folded and not know what's going on. We
9 deserve and we demand an explanation as
10 to where we stand in this process.

11 We have also obtained
12 information as late as yesterday where
13 they have already put into place moving
14 individuals from two of the agencies into
15 this OHNP. One is one of Council's pet
16 peeves, and that's VPRC, and the other is
17 dealing with our development.

18 That's information that we've
19 got. No, we don't have proof like we do
20 the meetings on reclassification and job
21 abolishment, but we're working on
22 obtaining that.

23 But they're working right
24 underneath of us and have total disregard
25 for Labor, the union, these employees, us

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2 on our backs, that make these agencies be
3 exactly what they are. We make their
4 goals every year, every single year. We
5 meet their goals. And still looking for
6 more money, these department heads, and
7 can't get it. So we can justify our
8 existence. They will want to cut us, but
9 the job level is not decreasing.
10 Production is still there. It's
11 increasing. How do they even --

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. PANKEY: How do they even
14 begin to sit here and say to you or to
15 Council or to anyone that we are going to
16 increase the level of production with
17 less people? How? It's unheard of.

18 We, again, are requesting your
19 assistance in obtaining information that
20 we believe we are rightfully entitled to,
21 and we also are looking for assistance in
22 having and obtaining a fair and equitable
23 contract.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you, Ms. Pankey.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you.

5 We'd like to ask the Chief of
6 Staff, Ms. Wilkerson, and Cathy Califano
7 to come back to the witness table,
8 please.

9 MS. PANKEY: Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Madam
11 Chair --

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you. Thank you all for being here as
14 well.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Madam
16 Chair, Council lady, I do have a
17 question, please.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm
19 sorry. Councilwoman Brown.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
21 afternoon. Thank you for your testimony.

22 Did either of you participate
23 in the series of preliminary prep
24 meetings that led to the ultimate
25 preparation for a report?

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2 MS. PANKEY: No one, to my
3 knowledge, of the union at all
4 participated. Yes, there was some truth
5 in the testimony that was given by Cathy
6 Califano and Joyce Wilkerson when they
7 stated that they formed these committees.
8 Yes, that came about in February of 2005.
9 When they last met with us, they said
10 they were going to form these committees.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: February
12 2005?

13 MS. PANKEY: 2005. That's the
14 last time they met with us. It's been
15 one year. The last time they met with
16 us, we were here in City Hall. They
17 talked about entering the Phase 2 and
18 that they were going to be developing
19 committees. They stated that it was on a
20 voluntary basis, and they had handed
21 out -- gave out handouts and asked for
22 individuals to participate.

23 When it came down to it, there
24 were certain individuals that they were
25 really looking for, and some of the

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2 members of Local 1971 were solicited. It
3 wasn't all voluntary. There were a
4 handful of members of Local 1971 who did
5 join, but later dropped out because they
6 realized what it was about. It wasn't
7 about their input and making this a
8 smooth transition. It was about taking
9 their knowledge, finding out what we do
10 to incorporate it in what they want to do
11 and not include us.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. PANKEY: And when our
14 members found that out, some of them,
15 when they found that out, they got off
16 the committee. They got off the
17 committee.

18 So they're not really looking
19 for our input. They're looking for our
20 knowledge, how we make it happen for the
21 RDA, for OHCD and for PHDC. They're not
22 interested in us. They're not interested
23 in our ability. They're interested in
24 our knowledge.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Hindsight

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2 is always 20/20.

3 In your perspective, what would
4 have been a better, smarter, more
5 appropriate way to approach this?

6 MS. PANKEY: It is an opinion
7 to me, first of all, honesty and
8 straightforwardness. Come forward and
9 tell us -- the same thing you're trying
10 to obtain here. Tell us what you're
11 about and where you want to go and how
12 your intentions are of getting there.
13 Again, we've never ever, ever -- they can
14 never demonstrate where we have ever
15 stated that we were against this process.
16 We have always wanted to be a part of and
17 be included in this process. They have
18 always kept us -- been evasive with us
19 with this process. And in doing that, we
20 had nothing else to be speculative about
21 what's going on and be standoffish and
22 not want to participate.

23 What I'm stating to you here
24 is, and in answering your question is,
25 come to us and tell us what your

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2 intentions are. Show us what you have
3 come about is going to be the better way
4 of serving the City. Tell us where you
5 want to go, and let us help and assist in
6 getting there. We understand technology
7 change. We understand all of that. We
8 understand all of that. But this is
9 going about not including us, and we're
10 not in agreement with that and we're not
11 in acceptance of that. And to this day,
12 they still haven't come to us, even when
13 you asked them what is going to be the
14 next step in dealing with rolling this
15 out. Where we we? At the bottom. At
16 the bottom. At the very bottom. We're
17 going to talk to this person, we're going
18 to talk to that person, we're going to
19 talk to that person, then we'll talk to
20 Labor.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Have any
22 interim reports been shared with you or
23 the heads of departments, written
24 reports, based on the committee hearings
25 and the like?

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2 MS. PANKEY: Any reports that
3 we have gotten is because we have come
4 upon them ourself. They have never
5 addressed anything to me. Never anything
6 to me and never anything to the prior
7 leadership, to my knowledge. We have
8 obtained it not because they've given it
9 to us. The last thing that they shared
10 with us in open session was when they had
11 the town meeting back in February 2005.
12 That was here in City Hall. We have not
13 gotten anything in writing, absolutely
14 nothing in writing.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: When you
16 say "we," that is all of the housing
17 agencies?

18 MS. PANKEY: That is the
19 leadership of Local 1971, nor the
20 members.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right.

22 MS. PANKEY: They have not
23 addressed anything to Labor as it
24 pertains to where we stand. What they've
25 given to the housing heads, I don't know.

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2 If they've given them anything, they
3 certainly haven't shared it with us.
4 They certainly have not shared it with
5 us.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And just
7 for my own understanding, the component
8 of AFSCME you represent is the...?
9 Finish that sentence for me.

10 MS. PANKEY: We represent
11 AFSCME District Council 33, Local 1971,
12 which represents the Philadelphia Housing
13 Development Corporation, the
14 Redevelopment Authority of the City of
15 Philadelphia and the Office of Housing
16 and Community Development, which is
17 approximately 204 members today.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very well.
19 Thank you very, very much for your
20 testimony. It's quite informative.

21 MS. PANKEY: Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you, Madam President.

24 Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

25 MS. PANKEY: Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

4 Ms. Wilkerson.

5 Ms. Wilkerson, it was stated by
6 yourself or Kevin Hanna at our first
7 meeting that no housing reorganization
8 would take place without full
9 notification, full inclusion by this
10 Housing Committee. It was stated in a
11 public meeting. I won't forget it
12 because it's very, very important.

13 You heard the President say
14 that they've already moved members of
15 VPRC. I will not call Mr. Coates to the
16 stand. I wouldn't do that. But we were
17 promised, it was stated on the record --
18 I have my records. I will produce it if
19 you'd like. We were told nobody would be
20 moved until all of this process was
21 completed. So we're asking you, have
22 there been any changes? Have people been
23 moved? Has anything happened other than
24 whatever discussions you have privately
25 had with whomever you've had them and

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2 thoughts.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: How
4 long ago?

5 MS. CALIFANO: I'll have to go
6 back and look at the date of those
7 interviews. Last year sometime.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Last
9 year. So it was probably in '05 or '04?

10 MS. CALIFANO: In '05. I will
11 confirm the dates of those.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And I
13 still don't understand. If you assume it
14 was such a great reorganization effort --
15 as you know, Lucien Blackwell started the
16 homeless program in our City. I don't
17 understand why if this is so great, that
18 you would decide to only talk to people
19 off the record or privately and not
20 include people who have considered
21 themselves your partners and who have
22 tried to do everything they can in this
23 Administration to move a positive housing
24 agenda forward.

25 Let me ask you about this new

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2 IT system, your new technology system.

3 What do you perceive that overall

4 including? Just give us an overview of

5 what that will be.

6 MS. WILKERSON: With the NTI

7 bond proceeds, the City has supported two

8 major initiatives. One is the Uniform

9 Land Records Information System. The

10 City -- because of the way IT grew up in

11 the City, there were no standard

12 procedures, no standard architecture.

13 There were no consistent standards across

14 the various City organizations. And so,

15 for example, in BRT, they identified

16 properties in one way. They had a GIS

17 system. There were altogether probably

18 five different GIS systems, land-based

19 mapping systems, across the City. And

20 the way you entered "street," the way you

21 designated "avenue" were all different.

22 That's got like a 9,000-foot look at it.

23 So one of the things we've done

24 with the NTI dollars is clean that up so

25 that across the City, we have information

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2 about property that can be shared across
3 departments, so that when you go online
4 and you ask for 100 South Broad Street,
5 S-T-R-E-E-T, you'll automatically pull up
6 information about 100 South Broad S-T
7 period. So that was a very tedious
8 process that was funded out of NTI that
9 really gives us the ability to draw
10 information together across the City.

11 The second project that we're
12 working on is what we call the Bill
13 Project, and what that does is attempt to
14 take the land acquisition/disposition
15 process that is currently supported
16 formally with notecards and apply
17 technology to that, and also draw upon
18 the work that we did with the Uniform
19 Land Record System, so that now we'll be
20 rolling it out within the government
21 within the next month or two. People
22 will be able to go online, put in an
23 address on a property and draw up all the
24 relevant information held across the City
25 about that property. So you'll be able

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2 to know about L&I code violations.
3 You'll be able to know whether there are
4 tax delinquencies outstanding, be able to
5 pull up property descriptions. We've
6 digitized a lot of the information that
7 the Department of Records has. That
8 information will be available.

9 So it's the kind of things
10 that, as recently probably as last year
11 or last month, that you would have to
12 send somebody over to the Department of
13 Records or have somebody fax you a
14 document. It would automatically be
15 populated within the IT that we've
16 developed.

17 The project workflow at the RDA
18 will also be supported by the technology.
19 The long-term plan is to support the
20 process of both VPRC and the other
21 organizations, the
22 acquisition/disposition, with the same
23 workflow system that we've created.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: What
25 will be the central point of entry for

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2 property information as well as
3 development ideas for Council offices?

4 MS. WILKERSON: There will be a
5 lot of different points at which
6 information can be entered. Department
7 of Records, for example, is always
8 entering information about land
9 transactions. The BRT is entering
10 information about value of property and
11 assessment information.

12 So there will be a lot of
13 different places where information will
14 be entered into the data warehouse. The
15 proposal is to have the CIO for this, the
16 Chief Information Officer for this
17 system, in the Office of Housing. There
18 would be a reporting relationship out to
19 MOIS. So the business side, the business
20 issues, what can the system do, what kind
21 of tracking, how is the
22 acquisition/disposition process, what's
23 it going to look like, all those would be
24 handled through the CIO at the Office of
25 Housing. The more technical issues would

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2 be managed out of MOIS.

3 And then Council offices -- the
4 proposal is that Council offices would
5 have access to all the information
6 they're entitled to. You can't get some
7 of the tax information because the law
8 prohibits that, but in terms of being
9 able to go online, pull up, for example,
10 everything that's in the City inventory,
11 everything that's owned by any particular
12 individual, whether there are outstanding
13 L&I violations, all of that information
14 would be available to Councilmembers.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: You
16 mentioned that you would submit
17 information to us with regard to who was
18 involved in this pre-selection process
19 and who is on this team?

20 MS. WILKERSON: Yes.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So at
22 this point, can you give us the status of
23 where all of that is, where it is with
24 your negotiations with the Mayor and what
25 the next steps are?

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2 MS. WILKERSON: We are briefing
3 individual Councilmembers. We will take
4 that feedback back to the Mayor. We
5 expect to finish the conversations with
6 Councilmembers the first part of next
7 week. We'll take that back to the Mayor.
8 He'll decide whether or not -- where he
9 is with the proposal, and then we would
10 take it around and talk with others about
11 it.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So are
13 you saying that all of those with whom
14 you feel you need to negotiate has
15 happened and now you're with
16 Councilmembers and we're the last step in
17 the process?

18 MS. WILKERSON: No. No. We
19 have solicited input from a lot of
20 people, as Cathy talked about. We have
21 generated a model, and the Mayor has
22 asked us to solicit input from
23 Councilmembers about the model, and then
24 we will take that back to him. We'll
25 again talk with the housing agencies. We

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2 have not had the conversations with Labor
3 that we're required to have before this
4 could be implemented. So there will be
5 additional conversations with the unions
6 before anything is final.

7 The other piece that -- at some
8 point, we will come to the City Council
9 with a budget, with a CDBG budget, and I
10 think we'll have an opportunity to talk
11 about the reorganization yet again in the
12 funding context, and we'll be forced to
13 make decisions about what is it we're
14 prepared to fund, how much administration
15 of housing agencies we're prepared to
16 fund, what housing programs we'll cut, if
17 we choose to support a less efficient
18 housing organization.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I will
20 tell you that as one who chairs that
21 hearing, that I don't see anything but a
22 rocky road. All of us live in an
23 environment where we deal with cuts. We
24 all have to live within our homes. We
25 have to live with a stable income but of

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2 rising costs for your gas bill, for
3 your -- even though we haven't raised
4 taxes, they always go up. Water goes up.
5 And we live with those things and somehow
6 try to survive.

7 So we understand that those
8 things happen, but people have a right to
9 feel confident that we are working in
10 their best interest, and nobody feels
11 comfortable that you're working in their
12 best interest when they're not included
13 in the conversation, and that has
14 consistently been our concern. That's
15 consistently how we feel about it. It's
16 not fair that the unions have not been
17 able to get a contract.

18 I still have Ms. Pankey's
19 testimony with me from our last meeting.
20 I refer to it so I'm clear on their roles
21 and the employee roles for the various
22 housing organizations and their request.
23 They're talking about 2.2 percent and
24 \$750, et cetera. I keep that handy so
25 that we're ready to enter into a

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2 discussion whenever it is required or
3 helpful. But we really, really feel it's
4 just unfair.

5 I don't like to fight with the
6 Administration. I don't like to fight,
7 period. I do it if I have to, but it's
8 not our goal to fight, but it is our goal
9 to try to do, to the best of our ability,
10 the job that people have entrusted to us.
11 And I believe in God. I have to try to
12 do the right thing by people, and I feel
13 even after all of these meetings, I feel
14 this is not the way we should go. As I
15 told the Mayor, the housing agencies, the
16 employees of our City, the Mayor's
17 friends, as well as his foes, do not
18 agree with this reorganization plan.

19 And so what we're going to do
20 is ask again, Ms. Wilkerson, that you
21 intercede to make sure the unions are met
22 with. The unions have a right to expect
23 a contract. They shouldn't feel so
24 frustrated, as we do, that people are
25 talking around them and organizing around

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2 them and that they're victims of the very
3 City for whom they work and struggle and
4 strive every day. It's not fair. It's
5 not fair and it's not right.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So
8 having said that, I know that the people
9 who were here left because there's
10 another union briefing across the hall on
11 this LNG plant and what we should do and
12 all of that, but let me say that we are
13 requesting and we're again asking the
14 Administration to meet with the union.
15 We'll ask the union to come again to give
16 us an update as to where you are on the
17 union contracts, and we will recess this
18 hearing until March 2nd, Thursday, March
19 2nd at 1 o'clock when we will raise the
20 same questions again.

21 Thank you all very much, and
22 God bless you.

23 (Applause.)

24 (Committee on Housing,
25 Neighborhood Development and the Homeless

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2 adjourned at 2:35 p.m.)
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MICHELE L. MURPHY

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RPR-Notary Public

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