

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION AND
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, October 31, 2016
1:40 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

BILL 160329 - An ordinance renaming and designating Daisy Field as "David Montgomery Field"...

BILL 160611 - An ordinance officially naming and designating the park and playground area located on 61st Street and Baltimore Avenue, in the City of Philadelphia as "Robert Wilson III Park."

RESOLUTION 160163 - Resolution authorizing Council's Committee on Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs to investigate and hold hearings on the preservation and expansion of the City's public art...

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
3 afternoon, everyone. This hearing is now
4 called to order. This is a public
5 hearing of the City Council Committee on
6 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.
7 The purpose of this public hearing is to
8 hear testimony on Bill No. 160329 and
9 160611 and Resolution No. 160163.

10 I want to recognize the
11 presence of a quorum of Committee
12 members, and those in attendance are
13 Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr., Councilman
14 David Oh, Councilman Derek Green, and I
15 also want to acknowledge Councilwoman
16 Jannie Blackwell here for the Committee
17 hearing.

18 I would just like to let people
19 know that there will be -- we'll be
20 taking testimony on two bills, and then
21 we're going to recess to the public
22 meeting and, after that, resume our
23 public hearing on Resolution No. 160163.
24 So, again, we're going to hear the first
25 two bills, 160329 and 160611, which

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 should be relatively brief, and then we
3 will go into a public hearing on
4 Resolution No. 160163.

5 I want to ask if any of the
6 Committee members have any opening
7 remarks.

8 Councilman Jones.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes. Bill
10 No. 160329 is the renaming of Daisy Field
11 to Dave Montgomery's Field. We just feel
12 that in Parks and Rec we have an
13 opportunity to name after people who have
14 made significant contributions, not only
15 to neighborhoods but to the City of
16 Philadelphia, and Mr. Montgomery fits
17 that criteria.

18 We have two support letters,
19 and we'll probably hear testimony, but we
20 have the Phillies organization, which is
21 supportive of the name change, and the
22 Wissahickon Athletic Association also
23 submitted a letter supporting the name
24 change.

25 Before any consideration of

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 name changes or field changes, both
3 Mr. Montgomery and the Phillies
4 organization have been throughout the
5 City of Philadelphia supportive of Parks
6 and Rec. So it is like a distinct honor
7 to be able to name this field and for
8 many, many generations to come have it be
9 named Montgomery Field.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
11 you very much, Councilman.

12 And so I want to have the Clerk
13 read the title of Bill No. 160329.

14 THE CLERK: Bill No. 160329,
15 renaming and designating Daisy Field as
16 "David Montgomery Field" in the City of
17 Philadelphia.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And can we
19 have the Clerk call the first witnesses
20 to testify.

21 THE CLERK: Aparna Palantino,
22 Deputy Commissioner of Capital
23 Infrastructure and Natural Lands,
24 Philadelphia Department of Parks and
25 Recreation.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 (Witness approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
5 afternoon.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PALANTINO:
7 Good afternoon, Council.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Please
9 state your name for the record and begin
10 your testimony.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PALANTINO:
12 Aparna Palantino, Deputy Commissioner of
13 Parks and Recreation.

14 Good afternoon, Chairwoman
15 Cindy Bass and Committee members. My
16 name is Aparna Palantino and I'm the
17 Deputy Commissioner of Capital
18 Infrastructure and Natural Lands with the
19 Department of Parks and Recreation. I
20 appear before you today on behalf of the
21 Department concerning Bill No. 160329
22 sponsored by Councilman Curtis Jones.
23 This bill officially renames Daisy Field
24 as the David Montgomery Field.

25 Mr. David Montgomery is the

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 Chairman, minority owner, and former
3 President of the Philadelphia Phillies.
4 He epitomizes Parks and Recreation's
5 mission of helping Philadelphia's
6 children and other residents grow by
7 connecting them to the natural world, to
8 each other, and to fun, physical, and
9 social opportunities. Therefore, on
10 behalf of the Department, I support this
11 bill to rename the field in honor of
12 Mr. Montgomery.

13 Thank you. I'd be happy to
14 take any questions you might have.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Any
16 questions from the panel?

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Just one
18 question. We tried to research Daisy
19 Field's origin and no one could tell us
20 why, except maybe daisies grew there. Do
21 you happen to know?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PALANTINO:
23 We do not. We have been researching. We
24 actually have a new architectural
25 historian that just joined us today who

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 is studying history in college. So we
3 are going to task him with this effort.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
5 Madam Chair.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
7 very much.

8 And I thank you for being here
9 and for your testimony.

10 Is there anyone else who would
11 like to testify on behalf of this bill?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
14 you very much.

15 And can we have -- let me just
16 ask formally if there was anyone else
17 here to testify on behalf of this bill?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. The
20 Clerk will now read the title of Bill No.
21 160611.

22 THE CLERK: Bill No. 160611,
23 officially naming and designating the
24 park and playground area located on 61st
25 Street and Baltimore Avenue, in the City

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 of Philadelphia as "Robert Wilson III
3 Park."

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And can we
5 have you call the first witness to
6 testify.

7 THE CLERK: Aparna Palantino.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Who was the
9 last witness to testify.

10 Please state your name for the
11 record and begin your testimony.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PALANTINO:
13 Aparna Palantino, Deputy Commissioner,
14 Parks and Recreation.

15 Good afternoon, Chairwoman
16 Cindy Bass and Committee members. My
17 name is Aparna Palantino and I'm the
18 Deputy Commissioner of Capital
19 Infrastructure and Natural Lands with the
20 Department of Parks and Recreation. I
21 appear before you today on behalf of the
22 Department concerning Bill No. 160611
23 sponsored by Councilwoman Jannie
24 Blackwell. This bill officially names
25 and designates the park and playground

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 area located on 61st Street and Baltimore
3 Avenue as the "Robert Wilson III Park."

4 Philadelphia Police Sergeant
5 Robert Wilson III sacrificed his own life
6 to protect innocent civilians, and his
7 sacrifice in the line of duty was both an
8 act of bravery and courage. Therefore,
9 on behalf of the Department, I am honored
10 to support this bill.

11 Thank you. I would be glad to
12 answer any questions you may have.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
14 very much.

15 And question from Councilwoman
16 Blackwell.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you. I just want to certainly thank the
19 Committee and ask for their support.
20 This is the case where the officer was
21 going in to buy his son a gift. Such a
22 sad occurrence, but we are just so
23 pleased that 61st and Baltimore, his
24 whole family and the whole community,
25 Senator Williams is involved in this one

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 as well, and we're just overjoyed that we
3 reached this day and that the Committee
4 will consider this.

5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

7 I know so many of us remember that
8 terrible day when we lost Officer Wilson
9 at a GameStop where he was purchasing a
10 birthday gift for his son, and I think
11 this is a wonderful way to memorialize
12 him. So thank you so much, Councilwoman,
13 for bringing this forward.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Are there
17 any other questions, comments from the
18 panel?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Is there
21 anyone else here to testify on behalf of
22 Bill No. 160611?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And in that
25 case, that concludes the public hearing

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 on Bill Nos. 160329 and 160611 and we'll
3 now go into a public meeting to consider
4 the action to be taken on both bills.

5 Now I want to recognize
6 Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr. for a
7 motion on Bill No. 160329.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair. I make a motion on Bill No.
10 160611, that it be moved --

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: 29.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: 29 first?
13 160329 be moved from this Committee with
14 a favorable recommendation and I further
15 move that the rules of Council be
16 suspended to allow this bill to be read
17 at our next session of Council.

18 (Duly seconded.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's been
20 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
21 160329 be reported from this Committee
22 with a favorable recommendation and
23 further moved that the rules of Council
24 be suspended to permit first reading of
25 this bill at the next session of Council.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 All in favor signify by saying
3 aye.

4 (Aye.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Any
6 opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The ayes
9 have it and the motion carries, and Bill
10 No. 160329 will be reported from this
11 Committee with a favorable recommendation
12 with a request that the rules of Council
13 be suspended to permit first reading at
14 the next session of Council.

15 I want to recognize
16 Councilmember Jones for a motion on Bill
17 No. 160611.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
19 again, Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
20 160611 be moved from this Committee with
21 a favorable recommendation and I further
22 move that the rules of Council be
23 suspended to allow first reading of this
24 bill at our next session of Council.

25 (Duly seconded.)

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's been
3 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
4 160611 be reported from this Committee
5 with a favorable recommendation and
6 further moved that the rules of Council
7 be suspended to permit first reading of
8 this bill at the next session of Council.

9 All those in favor of this
10 motion will signify by saying aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Anyone
13 opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The ayes
16 have it and the motion carries, and Bill
17 No. 160611 will be reported from this
18 Committee with a favorable recommendation
19 with a request that the rules of Council
20 be suspended to permit first reading at
21 the next session of Council.

22 That concludes our public
23 meeting and we will now resume our public
24 hearing for Resolution No. 160163, and
25 will the Clerk please read the title of

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 the resolution.

3 THE CLERK: Resolution 160163,
4 authorizing Council's Committee on Parks,
5 Recreation, and Cultural Affairs to
6 investigate and hold hearings on the
7 preservation and expansion of the City's
8 public art, including its voluminous
9 collection of outdoor murals, mosaics,
10 and sculptures.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
12 And can we have you call the name of the
13 first witness to testify.

14 THE CLERK: Margo Berg and
15 Kelly Lee.
16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
19 afternoon.

20 (Good afternoon.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Please
22 state your name for the record and begin
23 with your testimony.

24 MS. LEE: Kelly Lee.

25 MS. BERG: Margo Berg.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: You may
3 begin.

4 MS. LEE: Good afternoon,
5 Chairwoman Bass and members of the City
6 Council Committee on Parks, Recreation
7 and Cultural Affairs. My name is Kelly
8 Lee. I'm the Chief Cultural Officer for
9 the City of Philadelphia and Director of
10 the Office of Arts, Culture and the
11 Creative Economy. With me today is Margo
12 Berg, the City's Public Art Director.
13 She oversees all City-related public art
14 activities, including commissioning new
15 permanent public art through the City's
16 Percent for Art requirement, managing the
17 collection, and overseeing the public art
18 preservation activities for the City.
19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify
20 before you today.

21 Our office supports and
22 promotes arts, culture, and the creative
23 industries; develops partnerships that
24 ensure that culture and creativity are
25 essential components of Philadelphia's

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 community revitalization, education,
3 tourism, and economic development
4 strategies. Primarily we link
5 Philadelphians to cultural resources and
6 opportunities. Our goal is to ensure
7 that Philadelphians, particularly our
8 youth, have access to high-quality
9 cultural experiences in arts education
10 and that artists, cultural organizations,
11 and creative businesses have access to
12 the resources they need. We manage and
13 oversee the City's art programs and serve
14 as the primary point of municipal contact
15 for organizations, businesses, artists,
16 and creative entrepreneurs.

17 Our programs -- and we have
18 packets for you that gives an overview of
19 all of our programs -- increase
20 educational outcomes and improve economic
21 opportunity and champion our civic
22 assets. But in summary, in the past
23 year, we have worked with 123 cultural
24 organizations and 750 community and youth
25 artists in exhibitions. We have hired 78

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 artists and performers and have hosted 30
3 performances in neighborhoods throughout
4 the City of Philadelphia. But today we
5 are here to provide our testimony on our
6 two program areas that pertain to
7 Resolution 160163 - the City's
8 Conservation and Collection Management
9 Program and the City's Percent for Art
10 Program.

11 Our city is known throughout
12 the world for the high quality, extensive
13 variety, and sheer number of pieces of
14 permanent public art on view throughout
15 the City. The majority of the public art
16 that you see, over 1,000 pieces, is owned
17 by the City of Philadelphia. This
18 includes outdoor sculptures and monuments
19 as well as interior pieces in our public
20 facilities. Our city's reputation as one
21 of the great public art cities in the
22 world, with more public art than any
23 other city in America, is important --
24 public art is an important and vibrant
25 component of the City's history, its

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 character, its neighborhoods, and it's
3 one of the things that attracts people to
4 visit and makes Philadelphia such a
5 wonderful place to live.

6 And now I would like to turn
7 the microphone over to Margo Berg, our
8 Public Art Director, who will provide
9 some specifics around the City's public
10 art program.

11 MS. BERG: Thank you.

12 Many of these works were gifts
13 to the people of Philadelphia to beautify
14 our city, like Robert Indiana's iconic
15 LOVE sculpture, or to commemorate
16 important events, like the Monument to
17 Six Million Jewish Martyrs on 16th and
18 the Parkway, or to celebrate the lives of
19 remarkable individuals, like the Octavius
20 V. Catto memorial being installed on the
21 southwest apron of City Hall currently.
22 Many were also commissioned by the City
23 through our Percent for Art Program.

24 As you may know, Philadelphia
25 was the first city in the nation to enact

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 in 1959 a law requiring that one percent
3 of a project's construction budget be
4 devoted to site-specific public art. Two
5 separate municipal programs were
6 established: the Redevelopment
7 Authority's program, which requires that
8 private developers of PRA land must
9 devote one percent of the project cost to
10 public art, and the City's program, which
11 our office oversees and which requires
12 that up to one percent of the City
13 capital project with a budget over a
14 million dollars be devoted to
15 site-specific public art.

16 Since 1959, the City's program
17 has commissioned over 300 works of art in
18 public spaces throughout all areas of the
19 City. Approximately three to six Percent
20 for Art projects are initiated each year
21 currently, engaging artists from
22 Philadelphia and across the nation in
23 these competitions. Examples of some
24 completed Percent for Art projects are in
25 your packet.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 As stewards of this pioneering
3 program and this world-class collection
4 of public art, our office is responsible
5 for the care and oversight of the
6 collection. We work to maintain and
7 preserve these valuable assets that
8 belong to the people of Philadelphia and
9 that are important to the quality of life
10 here. Visitors and new residents often
11 report that Philadelphia's world-class
12 collection is one of the positive
13 features of the City that influenced
14 their decision to come here.

15 The challenge is that airborne
16 chemical pollutants, like acid rain, and
17 vandalism damage these irreplaceable
18 assets. Because of prevailing wind
19 patterns, Pennsylvania receives some of
20 the highest amounts of acidic
21 precipitation in the nation. The goal of
22 the work that we do is to prevent or slow
23 the deterioration and improve the
24 aesthetic appearance of the artworks.

25 For more than 25 years, the

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 City has worked to preserve dozens of
3 historically and artistically significant
4 works of art. In 1996, the City
5 performed a professional inventory and
6 condition assessment of outdoor public
7 art. Since then, we have worked to
8 address critical needs of the collection,
9 prioritized by safety, severity of the
10 condition, historic value, and cost.
11 Currently, we perform an average of two
12 to three preservation projects per year
13 funded through a variety of sources. A
14 small number of projects are funded
15 through the City's Capital Budget where
16 it meets capital eligibility guidelines
17 and some work happens as part of a larger
18 City capital project. Vandalism and
19 general maintenance are funded through a
20 small allocation of operating funds for
21 our office.

22 In 2015 and 2016, the office
23 was awarded the Preservation Alliance for
24 Greater Philadelphia's Grand Jury Award
25 for the restoration of the Playing Angels

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 on Kelly Drive and for the restoration
3 and installation of Walker Hancock's Air
4 sculpture on the Schuylkill Banks.

5 Philadelphia's public art is
6 one of our most significant public
7 assets. As our collection grows, the
8 need to preserve these works becomes more
9 urgent. We are pleased that City Council
10 is exploring ways to fund this
11 challenging and important work.

12 Thank you again for this
13 opportunity to testify on this matter,
14 and thank you to Chairwoman Bass and the
15 Committee for convening this hearing. We
16 are happy to answer any questions that
17 you might have. Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
19 Thank you very much for your very
20 insightful testimony. I did have a
21 couple of questions for you. And, number
22 one, I want to thank you for the work
23 that you do on behalf of art in
24 Philadelphia and the challenge that we
25 have. We have so much work that needs to

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 be done in all of our communities, and
3 public art, it's not the same as, let's
4 say, some of the hotter issues. We just
5 did a hearing earlier today on lead paint
6 and lead poisoning -- or we did a press
7 conference, excuse me, on lead paint and
8 poisoning, and there's so many other
9 very, very important issues of the day,
10 but we need to make sure that our public
11 art, our inventory, that we pay attention
12 to it.

13 And so I noticed that you said
14 we do two to three restorations per year,
15 and I wanted to know if you could give us
16 some sort of an idea of what does that
17 mean in the universe of our public art
18 inventory. How much do we need to do?
19 How much realistically given the other
20 challenges that we have, how much should
21 we be expecting to do? Can we do more,
22 and are there things that we could do
23 outside of the financial realm that would
24 be helpful to preserving public art?

25 MS. BERG: I mean, we should be

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 doing multiple projects per year. It
3 would be very helpful if we did an
4 additional condition assessment of the
5 entire collection since it's been a
6 number of years. The challenge is that
7 these things are not inexpensive, and
8 most things are not capital eligible. So
9 it's really a matter -- I mean, we would
10 be happy to sort of brainstorm about
11 other ways that funding could become
12 available for this. We apply for private
13 grants. Again, we use operating and
14 capital funds. We partner with other
15 departments and we partner with
16 communities a lot of the time who have a
17 public piece in their neighborhood that
18 are interested in preserving it, and if
19 we do not have it in our budget, we work
20 with that community to make sure that the
21 piece is restored and restore it properly
22 to the City standards, but we work with
23 them to accomplish that.

24 MS. LEE: Also in your packet,
25 just to give you a sense of sort of the

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 range of costs, the range of conservation
3 costs can be anywhere between \$1,500 and
4 a million dollars, which is one of the
5 reasons why there are so few every year.
6 And the range of everyday maintenance
7 costs, graffiti removal, et cetera, can
8 range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: When we
10 talk about -- that's a big range, 1,500
11 to a million, a huge range.

12 MS. LEE: And the scale of our
13 public art ranges from small pieces to
14 big monuments. That's the reason why
15 it's so broad.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.
17 Absolutely. But on average, if you would
18 look at if we do two to three
19 restorations per year, what are we
20 spending per year on restorations? Are
21 we spending over a million dollars per
22 year? Are we spending -- can you give us
23 some sort of a range of what we spent
24 last year, what we spent in previous
25 years?

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 MS. BERG: Again, it varies.

3 This coming -- starting this fall, we
4 have a capital-eligible sort of
5 safety-related project that we'll be
6 doing in front of Memorial Hall. The two
7 winged horses, the Pegasus figures, need
8 to be removed. They have armature
9 deterioration issues internally, and it's
10 not clear how well they're attached to
11 the pedestals that they're on. That's
12 going to be approximately a \$600,000 to
13 \$700,000 job. If we were doing a small
14 just sort of standing figure of a person
15 that doesn't require scaffolding or
16 lifts -- the equipment is a lot of the
17 cost sometimes of some of these projects.
18 A small standing figure might be a \$5,000
19 to \$10,000 job.

20 So last year we spent maybe
21 20,000 of operating dollars on
22 conservation projects or a combination of
23 operating and private dollars to make
24 projects happen.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: What kind

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 of budget do we have for that kind of --
3 for restoration?

4 MS. BERG: Our office receives
5 \$40,000 annually, and it's for both
6 conservation work that's not capital
7 eligible and also the administration of
8 the City's Percent for Art Program. So
9 because we have to run competitions for
10 every program, every project, there are
11 some costs associated with that. So it's
12 really to cover both programs.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.
14 Thank you.

15 And can you tell me how
16 projects in terms of restoration, how are
17 they prioritized? Because a lot of --
18 usually in most of our neighborhoods our
19 public art are our public murals.
20 They're on the side of buildings.
21 They're incredibly diverse and beautiful
22 in the look and what they communicate and
23 how they represent that community, but
24 how do we prioritize a project to say
25 this project in North Philadelphia is

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 something that we're going to prioritize
3 over this project in South Philadelphia?
4 How do we make those sort of decisions?
5 Is it based on the condition of the
6 artwork? Are there other factors that
7 are determined or added into that? Does
8 it matter the location in terms of if
9 it's next to a vacant lot or if it's
10 facing a school or on a recreation
11 building? How are those kinds of
12 decisions made?

13 MS. BERG: Well, so our office
14 is responsible for the sculptures and
15 things sort of outside of the mural type
16 of artwork, and we prioritize things
17 based on condition, based on whether
18 there's potentially private funding to be
19 leveraged, and community interest in the
20 work being done or if there's a special
21 event coming. I know -- or if it's a
22 safety issue, so condition, severity of
23 the condition. And Jane Golden will be
24 able to speak more to the murals aspect.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 Great.

3 And I want to acknowledge
4 Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr. who had some
5 questions. Also I want to also
6 acknowledge that we've been joined by
7 Councilmember Taubenberger.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair, and thank you for bringing
10 to light this important art component to
11 the quality of life in our city.
12 Seriously, we don't give enough credit to
13 what art does for the soul or for the
14 beautification and enrichment of our
15 city. So thank you.

16 A couple of questions, and I
17 kind of remember the fine art requirement
18 when it came. I think one of the first
19 pieces of art was the Clothespin that
20 they used that on. It took me a very
21 long time to figure out that they were
22 kissing. Is that true?

23 MS. BERG: There are multiple
24 ways of looking at that work. That's
25 definitely one of the interpretations.

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.

2 That one was commissioned by the
3 Redevelopment Authority's Percent for Art
4 Program, yes, in 1976.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: So kissing
6 is my interpretation.

7 MS. BERG: Yours and many
8 others, yes.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: 1776.

10 MS. BERG: '76, right.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is that what
12 it is too?

13 MS. BERG: As I said, there are
14 multiple readings.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: So when does
16 it kick in -- what threshold does that
17 kick in?

18 MS. BERG: So the City's
19 Percent for Art Program, which is the one
20 that we manage, any capital project over
21 a million dollars triggers the Percent
22 for Art ordinance.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: The one
24 percent? What is it now?

25 MS. BERG: The ordinance reads

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 not to exceed one percent, the original
3 ordinance --

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Not to
5 exceed?

6 MS. BERG: Not to exceed one
7 percent from 1959. In practice, it's
8 always one percent with the City.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: And so what
10 is considered art?

11 MS. BERG: Well, it can be many
12 things. For our purposes it has to be
13 capital eligible. So it has to be
14 something that's permanent on the site.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Five-year
16 life or more?

17 MS. BERG: Our works tend to be
18 50 years or more. The capital
19 guidelines, I think they have to have a
20 five-year lifespan. And so it's anything
21 from mosaics, sculptures. Murals can be,
22 as long it's part of a larger capital
23 project. It's suspended pieces. You
24 know, there are a number of things.
25 Light works. It's a pretty broad

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2 definition at this point.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: So do all or
4 most entities that get this assistance
5 comply with what the City is saying do?

6 MS. BERG: Well, again, this is
7 the City compelling itself. So when,
8 say, the Department of Public Property
9 plans a new fire station, it sets aside
10 one percent of the overall projected
11 cost, and then they meet with our office
12 and we begin that project. So it's the
13 City compelling itself, and the City --
14 all the departments are very much in line
15 that that's the regulation.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: So as we
17 approach Rebuild and this massive amount
18 of infusion under this Committee and the
19 Chairwoman, are we going to -- have we
20 planned out how we will comply with our
21 own regulation?

22 MS. BERG: We've had initial
23 conversations about it. We are at the
24 table for those talks about the project.
25 There will be multiple sites that may

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2 trigger the ordinance. It may not make
3 sense to do -- we're going to strategize
4 and see what are the neighborhoods that
5 are most in need of new commissioned
6 artwork. It will be sort of along the
7 lines with the rest of the evaluating
8 criteria of Rebuild.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'm sure
10 every District Councilperson will have
11 some opinion about that.

12 MS. BERG: Yes. We'll be
13 pooling funds so that we're not doing a
14 tiny project here and a tiny one there,
15 but have sort of a larger pot of funds to
16 do a project at a site where it makes
17 most sense for the Council district and
18 the neighborhood.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: So
20 definitely we want to know if we're
21 pooling money and not everybody is
22 getting it.

23 So I've had the benefit, Madam
24 Chair, of having recently seen two pieces
25 of mural work done by the Mural Arts

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2 Program, one in Wissahickon and then one
3 in the heart of 55th and Harlan, right
4 off of Lansdowne Avenue. Both were
5 transformative. The Wissahickon train
6 stop, thousands and thousands of riders
7 go by there and see that transformation,
8 and it's almost like a beacon to the
9 neighborhood that investment is going
10 there, that somebody cares, that it's not
11 graffiti strewn. It is well lit and
12 highlighted.

13 The second place literally was
14 a vacant lot where a lot of bad things
15 happened, really bad things, and with the
16 Water Department's help, the Mural Arts
17 Program, and two fabulous artists, they
18 put mosaic tile up, and literally the way
19 they did it -- and I encourage all my
20 colleagues, particularly the at-large
21 ones, to come check it out -- the light
22 hit it and it just lit up the
23 intersection, and the Water Department
24 provided a rain garden. It literally
25 looked like a place where you would have

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2 weddings. Any time they made a sewer
3 sexy, that's pretty hot.

4 MS. BERG: That's saying a lot.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sexy sewers.

6 And so what I'm encouraging us
7 to do is to look at it in a more
8 out-of-the-box -- I hate that term, but
9 out-of-the-box way to see how we can
10 inculcate what they do and for all of the
11 social reasons but more also for the art
12 qualification, and if we do, it will
13 probably have a really good synergistic
14 effect on being able to have even the
15 smaller places comply. Because
16 obviously -- I don't know what the
17 statues cost these days, but I would
18 probably pound for pound, penny for penny
19 look at murals as an option.

20 MS. BERG: Yeah, absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
22 Madam Chair.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
24 very much, Councilman Jones, and I like
25 the idea of making -- you can make

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2 anything exciting, we'll put it that way,
3 including sewers.

4 But I had a question also
5 around the variety of public art that we
6 have in our neighborhoods and I wanted to
7 know if the Administration had any
8 thoughts about how to increase the
9 diversity and variety of pieces of art in
10 different neighborhoods. I think in
11 Center City you have much more different
12 types of artwork. You have sculpture.
13 You have all sorts of things. You have
14 the light fixtures that we have going up
15 Broad Street, which are considered, I
16 believe, public art. You have the
17 Clothespin. You have sculptures. You
18 have statues. You have all sorts of
19 things. Not so much in our
20 neighborhoods. How do we increase that?
21 Is there a plan or a thought about
22 increasing that? Because primarily in
23 our neighborhoods, the art component is
24 murals, which is fantastic and fabulous,
25 but how do we also add some other pieces

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2 to that as well?

3 MS. LEE: Most of our programs
4 and the Percent for Art Programs and the
5 public art has to do with -- it's around
6 City-owned assets. So when there's a new
7 capital project in communities, in
8 neighborhoods, that is what generates the
9 public art in that neighborhood.

10 One of the things that we're
11 working on specifically is not so much
12 the public art, but how do we increase
13 more performance-based art and culture in
14 communities and bring it into
15 neighborhoods instead of having it all in
16 Center City. But unfortunately for the
17 public art, it's driven around the sort
18 of capital-eligible guidelines and also
19 is tied to City-owned public assets.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, I was
21 just going to say to that end, if you
22 want to increase sort of like the
23 performance art activities in our
24 communities, one of the things that I
25 found very helpful, we do a number of

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2 different music events throughout the
3 course of the summer in my district and
4 we do Jazz in the Park and Oldies in the
5 Park. At one location we do a series
6 called Music in the Park, which is at
7 Stenton Playground, which has a built-in
8 sort of stage and amphitheater, like a
9 naturally occurring amphitheater. So I
10 would encourage you to advocate for more
11 of that as we undergo Rebuild. That's
12 something that we'll be looking at and
13 we'll be pushing the Administration for,
14 but obviously as part of the body that's
15 going to have a handle or a say in these
16 matters, it would be great if you all did
17 the same.

18 MS. LEE: Those are part of the
19 discussions of how do we include arts
20 education and performances as well as it
21 pertains to Rebuild, not just the public
22 art but also the performance arts as
23 well.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Exactly.
25 Exactly. Okay.

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2 And are there any other
3 questions from the panel?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. And
6 I think -- I'm sorry. I did have one
7 last question. When you all are
8 selecting artists to work with to develop
9 a piece, is there a priority for
10 Philadelphia or regional artists? I know
11 you said you do international artists,
12 you do local artists, but I'm just
13 curious as to the Philadelphia art
14 community and how they are included in
15 the fold. Is there a priority? And at
16 the same time, you also want to get some
17 nationally or internationally renowned
18 artist if you can, but I just wanted to
19 know what the procedure was there.

20 MS. BERG: So it depends on the
21 project. So we vary projects for what
22 makes sense for the budget size and the
23 community that the project is going to
24 occur in. So a lot of our projects are
25 at -- I mean, one is an older adult

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2 center and there'll be a recreation
3 center, and the budgets might be \$25,000
4 to \$40,000, and what makes the most sense
5 is to have a local artist come and work
6 there. So a lot of our projects are kind
7 of geared towards that local artist. And
8 then some of them are larger budget
9 projects and they're at like the
10 Philadelphia International Airport, let's
11 say, where there's more of an
12 international community traveling
13 through, and those will always be open
14 more to a national group of artists, but
15 local artists are always included in that
16 as well. The most recent one we just
17 commissioned at the airport did go to a
18 local artist.

19 I mean, often the local artists
20 tend to -- they don't have the cost of
21 flying in and out and all those other
22 things, so their budgets are sort of
23 better for the project that we're doing.
24 So it varies on the project.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

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2 I'm sorry. Councilman

3 Taubenberger has a question.

4 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
5 you, Madam Chair. I just actually
6 thought of a question, and it basically
7 has to do with particularly local
8 artists, but it could be international
9 artists too. Is there a directory that
10 you have maybe posted online on who the
11 artists actually have been that are in
12 Philadelphia? Because I would think
13 that's something to really promote.
14 Particularly if I were an artist and you
15 chose me, I would want the world to know,
16 you know, and I can't blame anyone for
17 that. I mean, is that available where we
18 can celebrate these people and get to
19 know them?

20 MS. BERG: So the people that
21 we commission?

22 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Yes.

23 MS. BERG: Well, they're all
24 advertised and promoted on the City's
25 website and through social media. We do

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2 press releases for each of our projects.

3 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: But
4 do you have like a list like --

5 MS. BERG: We keep an inventory
6 of everything.

7 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Yeah,
8 an inventory that has a little bio on the
9 artist.

10 MS. BERG: It doesn't at this
11 point. It's sort of a simple -- it's
12 more about the artwork and the year and
13 the materials and sort of that kind of
14 thing, but we certainly could expand it
15 over time to do that.

16 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: If it
17 could be done, if it's appropriate.

18 MS. BERG: It's a great idea.

19 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:
20 Because I think it's a big deal and it's
21 something that we really need to promote
22 more, that so-and-so is now an artist
23 that has work the world can look at.

24 MS. BERG: I think that's
25 great.

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2 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: They
3 like to be recognized as well. Most of
4 them do anyway.

5 MS. BERG: That's a good idea.

6 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
7 you.

8 Madam Chair, that's all.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: You're very
10 welcome. Thank you.

11 Thank you so much -- oh, I'm
12 sorry. One other question.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Who did the
14 dominos on MSB?

15 MS. BERG: That's a team of
16 artists - Petropoulis, White and there's
17 one other artist whose name I'm
18 forgetting. Martinez. Martinez,
19 Petropoulis, and White. It was in the
20 1990s and it was a Percent for Art
21 project that was done when the MSB
22 underwent a major renovation. Those
23 pieces are very difficult to maintain, as
24 I'm sure you've noticed, because they
25 receive a lot of skateboarding and other

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2 types of beating.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Any thought
4 of moving them?

5 MS. BERG: It's extremely
6 expensive to move them. If anything were
7 to happen to that plaza, say if it were
8 redesigned in to be, say, grass or
9 something else and it was no longer
10 suitable, we would work to find a
11 different home for them depending on the
12 cost. Again, there's a cost associated
13 with everything.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: I respect
15 the artists, you know. They do things I
16 can't do, but you said it's in the eye of
17 the beholder.

18 Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 MS. BERG: Yes.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Councilman
21 Jones loves those pieces.

22 Well, thank you so much for
23 your testimony today.

24 MS. BERG: Thank you.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Are you

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2 going to hang around a little bit in case
3 there are additional questions?

4 MS. LEE: Yes.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Very good.

6 Thank you.

7 (Thank you.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And can we
9 have the Clerk call up the next witness
10 to testify.

11 THE CLERK: Jane Golden,
12 Executive Director, Mural Arts Program,
13 City of Philadelphia.

14 (Witness approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

17 MS. GOLDEN: Good afternoon.
18 We're going to show some images as I
19 talk, because I think I'll run out of
20 time if I try to do it sequentially. And
21 we have packets for you. Of course we
22 like to come with things.

23 Okay. We'll just wait until we
24 bring up the first image.

25 We have some before and after's

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2 so that you can see the dramatic effect
3 of preservation.

4 So good afternoon. My name is
5 Jane Golden. I'm the Executive Director
6 of the City of Philadelphia's Mural Arts
7 Program. Thank you so much for the
8 opportunity to testify, and thank you to
9 Councilwoman Cindy Bass and Legislative
10 Aide Angela Bowie for sponsoring this
11 hearing.

12 As the largest community-based
13 public art initiative of its kind in the
14 country, Mural Arts unites artists and
15 communities through a collaborative
16 catalytic process that transforms public
17 space and individual lives. Since our
18 beginnings in 1997 when we formally
19 became the Mural Arts Program, we've
20 engaged over 100,000 Philadelphia
21 residents, including more than 35,000
22 youth, more than 5,000 individuals
23 impacted by the justice system, and
24 thousands of people with behavioral
25 health challenges.

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2 At the end of the day, though,
3 the collection is a primary concern. The
4 murals have power and importance, and we
5 see the evidence of this when citizens
6 clamor to protect the work. The range of
7 emotions when a mural goes away is
8 intense and palpable.

9 Art does not last forever. The
10 time inevitably comes when its original
11 glory begins to fade. We cannot take
12 this for granted. If we were the
13 Philadelphia Museum of Art or the Barnes
14 Museum, there would be no choice or
15 conversation. We would protect our
16 collection.

17 And we do what we can. Every
18 year, 30 to 40 murals are restored, and
19 we're creating new policies for what
20 murals should be preserved.

21 Preservation work is important.
22 Why is that? Philadelphia is known
23 internationally as the City of Murals.
24 Our tour program hosts 15,000 visitors a
25 year, and last year we received 280

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2 million press impressions globally.
3 That's one year. That's a lot. It's
4 exciting.

5 We support artists. Yay,
6 artists. Mural Arts invests over \$2
7 million annually in artist wages and
8 employs over 200 artists every year.
9 It's fantastic. Making Philadelphia a
10 truly unique place to live and work.

11 More importantly, and this
12 makes my heart sing, our collection is
13 the autobiography of this city. We've
14 done almost 4,000 murals since 1984 when
15 we were the Anti-Graffiti Network, and I
16 always thank former Mayor Wilson Goode
17 and Tim Spencer. This includes indoor
18 and outdoor work, large and small, but
19 together they comprise a visual map of
20 the human experiences of citizens across
21 the City.

22 A city is ever changing as
23 neighborhoods shift and development
24 occurs. We could be like LA in the mid
25 '90s when landmark murals were torn down

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2 or were covered with graffiti. But I say
3 as Philadelphia evolves and we lose works
4 of art to development and time, we need
5 to be careful. Murals about neighborhood
6 heroes and civic leaders should not be
7 lost. I posit that with each Herman
8 Wrice, each John Coltrane, each Mario
9 Lanza that goes away, we lose a part of
10 our heart and soul of this city, this
11 wonderful, diverse-rich city.

12 Arts and culture organizations
13 require strong public support to be
14 sustainable, and the City has long been a
15 steward of many organizations. I am
16 keenly aware how invaluable the City's
17 funds have been to Mural Arts, and I am
18 deeply grateful. And Philadelphia's
19 financial support in the arts is an
20 important investment in the future of our
21 city. I am here to testify that this has
22 been a wise investment. It has paid rich
23 dividends, and it will continue to do so
24 in the years ahead. But I urge you to
25 please think about the issue of

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2 preservation and to help us think about
3 how we can best raise and maintain
4 funding for the preservation of public
5 art, for this is art that lifts our
6 hearts and nourishes our soul. It is art
7 that matters.

8 Art ignites change. I have to
9 say that all the time, because I believe
10 it.

11 I'm happy to respond to any
12 questions that you have, and I thank you
13 from the bottom of my heart for the
14 opportunity to testify.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I thank
16 you, Jane, because your enthusiasm is
17 just contagious and it's clear that you
18 love what you are doing, you love
19 improving our neighborhoods and making a
20 real difference. So I just really want
21 to thank you for that. And you've just
22 been such a pleasure to work with
23 throughout the years. You and all of
24 your staff at Mural Arts really do make a
25 difference.

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2 I remember when you were doing
3 the Love Letters project along the
4 Market-Frankford El in West Philadelphia,
5 where if you ride along the El line, once
6 it becomes elevated, you basically see a
7 story from the roofs, from the rooftops.
8 So it's not just sort of like a tarred
9 rooftop or a black rooftop or graffiti.
10 It's actually a story as you make your
11 way along Market Street and down to 69th
12 Street, but the vision --

13 MS. GOLDEN: Right. Thank you.
14 And with that, we did a book. We opened
15 up a sign shop. We employed people from
16 the neighborhood. It was like
17 multi-faceted. And it's the gift that
18 keeps giving. Those tours sell out to
19 this day. It was supposed to be
20 temporary, but the people in West Philly
21 were like, Make it permanent. So we keep
22 restoring, restoring and then creating
23 new ones too.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: You're
25 fabulous. Thank you.

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2 MS. GOLDEN: Thank you. I get
3 so excited.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I love what
5 you do. I really, really love what you
6 do, and I just want to thank you.

7 And I want to ask you a
8 question. You said that you do about how
9 many restorations per year?

10 MS. GOLDEN: We do about --
11 it's about 30 to 40 restorations. So
12 some of the restorations are small. You
13 know, they're like, you know, just a
14 couple thousand dollars, because we have
15 to do some just scraping and touchups.
16 And then others are more major. Because,
17 remember, when we were the Anti-Graffiti
18 Network and even early Mural Arts, we did
19 not use mural paint nor did we seal,
20 because the sealers were rather toxic.
21 We've become much smarter at picking
22 sites and much better as it relates to
23 materials. In fact, Cassie Myers, who
24 you'll hear from today, who is a
25 preservationist, conservationist, she has

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2 been a great advisor to us about
3 materials. And so we've created a
4 committee. We're really hungry to learn
5 more. We really are making a major push
6 towards preservation, because we feel
7 like this collection really just shines a
8 light on the wonder of our city.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.
10 Absolutely.

11 How many murals do we have in
12 the City of Philadelphia right now? I
13 know you said we're the international
14 leader.

15 MS. GOLDEN: Well, we have
16 created, documented, 4,000 since 1984.
17 The extant collection is several thousand
18 that we have now, because, remember,
19 every year we're losing some to
20 development and to time, but then we're
21 creating new ones all the time.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So you
23 would say over 4,000 right now?

24 MS. GOLDEN: I would say -- no.
25 I would say probably less than that. I'd

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2 probably say about 3,000 that we have,
3 yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

5 MS. GOLDEN: A little over
6 3,000 actually, because we have a
7 tremendous collection of indoor work as
8 well.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So you
10 would say that we've lost about 1,000
11 murals or more?

12 MS. GOLDEN: Over the years we
13 have lost, yes. And as much as we're
14 vigilant about creating them, it is very
15 heartbreaking, because often we'll just
16 see that a mural is gone, and it's like
17 shocking.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So a
19 building will go up and you're like,
20 Where's that mural that we put up?

21 MS. GOLDEN: That's right. Or
22 communities call us. That's what happens
23 all over the City, is that people call us
24 and they go, What happened?

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. So

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2 basically a developer will come and put
3 up a building. Or do you have a problem
4 with folks painting over the mural or --

5 MS. GOLDEN: No. It's really
6 just a building gets torn down or someone
7 builds in front of a mural.

8 Now, I will say that some
9 developers -- I hope some day it would
10 be -- I would love it to see everybody
11 does this -- will call us and say, In a
12 year we're going to be building at the
13 corner of 2nd and Thompson. And that
14 would give us -- you could tell the
15 artist. You could inform the community.
16 It's really just a courtesy. And then,
17 you know, then we can meet with the
18 community and people say, Look, this is a
19 landmark mural. Then we're going to be
20 on a mission to recreate it. That's how
21 we're recreating John Coltrane. That's
22 how we recreated Herman Wrice. Tim
23 Spencer is next up at bat. I mean, we
24 have a whole list. Women and Jazz should
25 be recreated. Absolutely.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

3 Well, one of the things that I think we
4 should do is -- it's great when you have
5 a developer who steps up and says, This
6 is a beautiful piece of artwork that the
7 City of Philadelphia paid for and we're
8 going to put up a building here and we're
9 going to either recreate it or replace it
10 or do something to maintain that public
11 art in this neighborhood. And so one of
12 the things that we're intending to do is
13 to offer a piece of legislation that
14 would require that before a developer can
15 build, that there needs to be some sort
16 of agreement or if for some logistical
17 reason it's not possible to replace the
18 mural at that location, that there could
19 be reimbursement to Mural Arts so that
20 you can place some artwork elsewhere to
21 be able to see that we don't lose any
22 pieces, that we only gain.

23 MS. GOLDEN: That's right.

24 That would be fantastic, and that will
25 make artists -- I'll speak on behalf of

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2 artists who are here. That will make
3 artists very happy, because it's just --
4 I mean, imagine the shock when you lose a
5 work of art. It's so startling, and it's
6 not fair to people who have contributed
7 to our city. And I think what we need to
8 do is understand that these are assets.
9 I mean, Margo and Kelly spoke eloquently
10 about public art. I mean, public art has
11 really -- I mean, when I go places around
12 the country and the world, people talk
13 about our collection, and it's exciting
14 and we should protect it.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.
16 Thank you very much. I know that
17 Councilman Oh has a question. I'm sorry.
18 Councilman Taubenberger, were you first?

19 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
20 believe I was. I'll be brief.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Be my guest.

22 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I'll
23 be -- once in a while --

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: We all work
25 together.

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2 Councilman Taubenberger.

3 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
4 you very much.

5 And, Jane, thank you for
6 everything you've done. You really come
7 here -- if I could give -- maybe I
8 will -- a citation for someone who comes
9 here with the most enthusiasm, you win
10 it, hands down, really. You have passion
11 for what you do. It's noted by at least
12 this Councilman. I think all -- I mean,
13 you just heard what Madam Chair said. So
14 I think it's known throughout this
15 Council how much you're revered and also
16 your passion.

17 MS. GOLDEN: Thank you very
18 much.

19 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I do
20 have -- and one last note on this, Madam
21 Chair. If you're looking at that
22 legislation, I would be honored to be a
23 co-sponsor.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.
25 Thank you. Thank you, Councilman.

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2 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:

3 You're welcome.

4 The question I had, you're
5 doing, you said, about 30 to 40
6 restorations a year.

7 MS. GOLDEN: Correct.

8 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: What
9 is the cost for that, approximately?

10 MS. GOLDEN: Well, we have in
11 our budget \$150,000, and we just make it
12 work. We stretch every dollar as far --

13 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:
14 That's for restorations?

15 MS. GOLDEN: Yes, for
16 restorations. And we stretch every
17 dollar as far as it can go, and we have
18 one -- and we look for funding. But we
19 have one funder who supports a
20 restoration every year. The problem is,
21 people really like funding new work or
22 our programmatic work, which of course is
23 hugely important.

24 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Well,
25 it is exciting, but on the other hand,

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2 restoration is needed.

3 MS. GOLDEN: That's exactly
4 right. Right. Because when people look
5 at that work of art, it's not -- I'm like
6 all for art for art's sake, but it's like
7 I think of all the young people that
8 worked on it or people in prison or
9 people coming home from prison or in the
10 behavioral health system. We just
11 dedicated a mural the other day created
12 by people at Kirkbride, and it's
13 stunning. It's glass and sound and
14 paint. But, you know, so it's sort of a
15 multi-layered approach.

16 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Okay.
17 That answers my question.

18 MS. GOLDEN: But we do try to
19 stretch the funding very far.

20 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I can
21 see that. I can see your passion that
22 you'll make this work, but it's just good
23 for the public to know what the price is.
24 Nothing comes -- you can't live off of
25 love. I mean, although you push it to

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2 the limit, which is a great thing, and
3 also works of art I think are so very
4 important on telling the story of
5 Philadelphia, and you tell it well.

6 MS. GOLDEN: Absolutely. Thank
7 you.

8 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: We
9 want you to continue to tell it.

10 MS. GOLDEN: Thank you very
11 much.

12 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
13 you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
15 Councilman.

16 And one of the things I also
17 want to let my colleagues know in
18 particular about is a program that Mural
19 Arts runs called Restorative Justice. I
20 hope you'll talk about that a little bit
21 as well. And she has taken myself and
22 also Councilman Bobby Henon up to
23 Graterford to meet with the lifers, who
24 have been so instrumental in helping to
25 build these murals. And one of the

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2 things that really struck me is that when
3 we went to the -- I told Jane the first
4 time I went, I said, Jane, that is so
5 hard, I'm never doing this again. You
6 know, the trip is just emotionally
7 draining, but certainly worth it and
8 certainly allows exposure and an
9 opportunity to engage with folks who also
10 have a story to tell, and we need to
11 listen and hear those stories, because
12 one of the things that really struck me
13 by the inmates is their sense of urgency
14 around how do we stop the flow of young
15 particularly African American and Latino
16 young men from coming here to Graterford
17 and joining us as lifers. How do we,
18 from where we are, stop that.

19 And so you just do so much good
20 work on so many different levels.

21 MS. GOLDEN: Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And I
23 wanted to mention that when you mentioned
24 the work that's being done within the
25 Prison System, and hopefully we'll be

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2 going up soon and having an opportunity
3 to take our colleagues so that they'll
4 have an opportunity to have that
5 experience for themselves. I think it's
6 very, very important.

7 Councilman Oh.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
9 much, Chairwoman.

10 So my questions are similar to
11 those of Councilman Taubenberger. In
12 terms of funding mechanisms and funding,
13 what are best practices? Is there
14 another city that you could point to that
15 has a really excellent program of
16 preservation and restoration or is this
17 kind of new territory?

18 MS. GOLDEN: I will defer to, I
19 think -- Cassie, will you be covering
20 that in your remarks?

21 So another witness will be
22 bringing that into the conversation. I
23 will say that the mural programs I know
24 about struggle with the same issue. I
25 mean, certainly what I said about Los

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2 Angeles, it was chilling to me to get
3 calls from the LA Times and have them
4 say, Do you know that these murals have
5 gone away. I mean, murals that were
6 covered with graffiti, that the graffiti
7 abatement teams painted out and the LA
8 Times reporter -- and I was interviewed
9 maybe four, five times by the Times, and
10 they said, you know, It's just we were
11 told to call Philadelphia. Because
12 people in government are working like
13 sort of against each other instead of
14 with each other. And so when I started
15 in Los Angeles, LA was the center of the
16 universe as it related to murals. They
17 were not good murals. They were
18 extraordinary works of art. And so many
19 of them are gone, and I see how it can
20 happen, like a generation of art can be
21 lost. And like when I started to really
22 get it, I thought to myself, I am so
23 determined this can never happen in
24 Philadelphia. We just cannot as a city
25 let that happen.

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2 COUNCILMAN OH: So my concern
3 is that while we're talking here, it's on
4 the forefront of our minds, but as soon
5 as we leave here, there's schools,
6 there's murders, there's all kinds of
7 issues arising. What are you looking
8 for? Because I think you're the best
9 person to say this. But what would you
10 really want from City Council in terms of
11 funding or some legislation or some kind
12 of vehicle to get the funds that you're
13 looking for?

14 MS. GOLDEN: Well, I want to
15 say, first of all, I'm just very
16 grateful, because I think this is a
17 wonderful start. I would love -- of
18 course I would love to see our budget
19 increase so that we could have -- and
20 this is not hundreds of thousands of
21 dollars that we need. I mean, I think
22 another hundred thousand dollars would be
23 great and would go a long way to creating
24 a sustainable preservation program. And
25 the way we use City money is, we would

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2 leverage it with private money. So if
3 the City said, We're going to step up
4 this year -- there was the article in the
5 Inquirer. I would want to work with
6 Kelly and Margo, and the City is going to
7 put this much in the pot, then we could
8 create a campaign and say to everyone,
9 Look what the City has. So for part of
10 your donation to Mural Arts could be
11 earmarked for preservation or we have --
12 I mean, I think that it shows the City is
13 invested, and you take that investment
14 and you can build on it.

15 The Ford Foundation funded us
16 for 12 years, quite frankly. They loved
17 our work, but they loved the fact that
18 we're a public-private partnership.

19 So I think that that would be
20 important as a start. And eventually --
21 look, it would be my dream to have a cash
22 reserve or an endowment where we would
23 have money, but it's just fundraising,
24 and we fundraise in a relentless fashion.
25 It's hard and, Councilman, as we were

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2 talking, it's just people want to fund
3 other things in our portfolio rather than
4 preservation. So that's why for the City
5 to step up is profound, and we can build
6 on that.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. So
8 you're looking for \$100,000?

9 MS. GOLDEN: I think my
10 colleague can correct me if I'm wrong,
11 but we've done sort of an analysis of it
12 and we think an additional hundred
13 thousand for the size of the collection,
14 the need that we have and you add that to
15 what we already have, we think that we
16 would be fine. And we're also working
17 on, like Margo, creating -- we started a
18 database that is an assessment of the
19 condition of all the murals in the City,
20 and we need to build that out as well.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

22 MS. GOLDEN: We were also
23 thinking about the long-term future of
24 Murals Arts.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes. I

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2 appreciate the specific number. It's not
3 really that big, but let me ask you this,
4 and this is just kind of an off-the-cuff
5 question. So when I see, for example,
6 the bridges, the bridges, right, and I
7 figure, for example, the state or
8 someone, the Federal Highway -- they're
9 paying to paint the bridges or anything
10 like that, is there any opportunity to
11 get a program where instead of just kind
12 of painting the bridges green, you could
13 have artists paint them and there's some
14 difference in funding or is there --

15 MS. GOLDEN: Yes. I think
16 that's a fantastic question. It would be
17 my dream to have an infrastructure
18 program statewide, nationally. Let's
19 bring back the WPA and have artists be at
20 the table when we're thinking about these
21 things. Yes, absolutely. Is there a way
22 to build that into the budget? I think
23 that we can be creative about this.
24 Yeah. I actually think that's really
25 important.

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2 I also want to go back to a
3 point that you said about, well, we're
4 going to leave the hearings and there are
5 all these other issues that a city has.
6 But a city -- we know this. A city has
7 to multi-task. It shouldn't be an
8 either/or situation, we have art or we
9 have good schools. We need both, and
10 guess what? There are times when they
11 come together. Ask the 2,000 kids in our
12 Art Education Program, the thousands of
13 people in our Restorative Justice Program
14 or the Behavioral Health Program. For
15 them, art saves lives, right? That's
16 profound.

17 So beautiful art does not
18 negate something that is programmatic and
19 important. We can do both as a city and
20 we could have beautiful sculpture too,
21 because that's who we are. If we aspire
22 to be a global city, then let's aspire to
23 be a global city.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you. I
25 couldn't agree with you less, right? All

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2 right. Thank you very much.

3 Thank you, Chairwoman.

4 Did I say less as opposed to I

5 couldn't agree with you more? Sorry

6 about that. Sorry. Long day.

7 MS. GOLDEN: I got it.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: I apologize.

9 MS. GOLDEN: Councilwoman Bass,

10 I just want to say that we are thinking

11 too beyond the mural increasingly more

12 so. We're doing more work that is

13 sculptural, mosaic, glass, I mean,

14 three-dimensional. We're doing a series

15 of frescos in Tacony. I mean, it's

16 really been -- like the last five years

17 we have just been growing at the speed of

18 light, and really we're called the Mural

19 Arts Program, but it's really about

20 community-based public art. Next fall I

21 shared with you about Monument Lab where

22 there's going to be an opera, there's

23 going to be a performance. We're working

24 with Louie Massiah from Scribe. I mean,

25 really I just look at the great sort of

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2 assets of artists in the City and we want
3 to tap into that energy and put art to
4 work on behalf of neighborhoods and
5 communities everywhere.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
7 you, Jane. I mean, you've just done --
8 like I said, you do so much, and I really
9 want to recognize that you do it on a
10 shoestring budget. Your budget really
11 should be much higher, in my opinion,
12 because you really do work with the
13 dollars that you have. You don't waste
14 anything. You make everything work. You
15 know how to leverage. You know how to
16 multiply the taxpayer dollars that you
17 receive. And so that makes you, as far
18 as I'm concerned, one of the best
19 organized departments in the City of
20 Philadelphia, and I just can't thank you
21 enough for the work that you do.

22 MS. GOLDEN: Well, thank you
23 very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. GOLDEN: That's wonderful.

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2 We're very proud to work for the City.

3 We're thankful to Mayor Kenney, to the

4 Administration, and to City Council

5 really. Your support means so much.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

7 Councilman Green.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,

9 Madam Chair.

10 Unfortunately, I have to go to

11 another appointment. I just wanted to

12 echo the comments made by all the

13 Councilmembers. I've seen the work that

14 the Mural Arts Program has done over the

15 years. It's phenomenal. When you see

16 this bringing art and culture to our

17 entire city from every part of the City,

18 there are murals that reflect the

19 diversity of our city and it brings

20 beauty to our city in a way that you

21 don't see.

22 So I just want to thank you for

23 all your work.

24 MS. GOLDEN: Thank you very

25 much.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Jane.

4 And can we have the Clerk call
5 the next panel of witnesses.

6 THE CLERK: Richard Haas.

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 THE CLERK: Richard Haas,
10 Willis Humphrey --

11 MR. HAAS: Yes. I'm Richard
12 Haas, an artist, and I have the
13 misfortune of following Jane Golden,
14 which is the most impossible task anyone
15 could be asked to do. But anyway, I also
16 have some familiarity with being on the
17 other side, as I was once in the Art
18 Commission of New York City under Ed
19 Koch. So I know both sides of the aisle
20 a little bit.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Mr. Haas,
22 before you begin your testimony, would
23 you mind if we have the Clerk call up two
24 other panelists so that we can move
25 testimony along just a little faster. Is

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2 that okay with you?

3 MR. HAAS: Sure.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Can
5 we have the Clerk call the three names in
6 total.

7 THE CLERK: Richard Haas,
8 Willis Humphrey, Morris Jones.

9 (Witnesses approached witness
10 table.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. And,
12 Mr. Haas, if we can have you again state
13 your name for the record and begin your
14 testimony.

15 MR. HAAS: Okay. I'm Richard
16 Haas, artist.

17 Anyway, after 40 years plus as
18 a public artist and one who has completed
19 over 60 outdoor murals around the country
20 and world, as well as many indoor murals
21 and as the person who has been fortunate
22 or unfortunate enough to have seen the
23 loss of over half of those during my
24 lifetime as an artist, I think this
25 subject is rather important to me.

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2 It's true that you can't save
3 everything. Everything is not
4 salvageable, but the problem often is
5 that the loss of them is so arbitrary and
6 has very little to do with the quality
7 and the importance of what is lost.

8 When I did my research for my
9 most recent mural, which is shown here on
10 North 3rd in Old City, I was even struck
11 by how in 300 years Philadelphia has lost
12 so many treasures that were really, you
13 know, things that should never have been
14 lost.

15 We need not dwell on the
16 reasons for all these losses, but the
17 problem is the remaining fabric of the
18 City tells you what was lost as much as
19 what has been saved.

20 I was also fortunate that some
21 two and a half, three years ago through
22 Jane Golden's organization and through
23 the owner of the building, they were able
24 to restore this mural on 23rd and
25 Chestnut, which I think Jane would say is

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2 one of the things that inspired the Mural
3 Arts Program in Philadelphia that
4 happened much later. Anyway, that mural
5 has been beautifully restored. And if
6 you can see the other two images of it.
7 And that was one that told a lot about
8 the history of your city as well.

9 I've seen the destruction of my
10 work, as so many works have been, in many
11 other cities, including my hometown,
12 which is Yonkers. This mural, which was
13 landmarked, uniquely landmarked, a year
14 and a half ago, this is what it looks
15 like today, a pile of rubble. So that is
16 a city that does not have, I think, the
17 importance and concern that Philadelphia
18 has about preservation.

19 However, other cities have been
20 very instrumental. In Cincinnati, if I
21 could show the next murals, this mural
22 was completely restored by the City of
23 Cincinnati as well as the owners and the
24 original people who commissioned the
25 building as an homage to that city, the

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2 homage to Cincinnati.

3 And then, finally -- that's the
4 way it looked, by the way.

5 In Fort Worth, this mural was
6 done about 1984. It's called the Homage
7 to the Chisholm Trail, if I could show
8 the last slide I'm showing. This is what
9 happened here. They made a hundred
10 million dollar park in front of it with
11 dancing waters and it's now the center of
12 the City of Fort Worth. So some cities
13 care about their murals in a very big
14 way. Others, unfortunately, turn them
15 into piles of rubble. And I certainly
16 hope that Philadelphia, which has one of
17 the greatest heritages of public art
18 anywhere in the country, will never end
19 up with too many piles of rubble.

20 Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

22 Thank you for your testimony.

23 And if we could have the next
24 witness state your name for the record
25 and begin your testimony.

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2 MR. HUMPHREY: My name is
3 Willis Humphrey. I'm a resident of
4 Philadelphia, an artist, and a muralist
5 with Philadelphia Mural Arts.

6 I have a unique view on the
7 benefits of preservation and support of
8 murals and public art. Murals are
9 intimately connected to and affect
10 communities in which they reside.

11 A few years ago I was fortunate
12 enough, although the circumstances were
13 unfortunate, to work on the mural that
14 goes along the fence line of Allegheny
15 and Germantown where a mother, her two
16 young daughters, and her son were killed,
17 a hit and run, but the community since
18 then on a consistent basis has restored
19 that lot. They make sure that it's
20 clean. They put wreaths up. So it's a
21 support and an example of how the
22 community values these public artworks
23 and murals and also that they need to be
24 maintained.

25 Most of the murals that I

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2 painted, such as the one at the King
3 Center on 22nd and Dauphin or Happy
4 Hollow Recreation Center, work with the
5 Restorative Justice Program that you
6 mentioned. So not only do these murals
7 show beautiful pictures; they are also --
8 it's the process and who is involved with
9 creating these murals. So to lose them,
10 it also kind of says something about how
11 we feel about those who have put in work
12 to create them.

13 And most notably, I'd like to
14 mention the mural I just did at Wister
15 Playground, and this was an example of
16 how Parks and Recreation, in coordinates
17 with Mural Arts, restored not only the
18 walls with the mural, but also restored
19 the entire playground. So this had
20 immense impact to the community and
21 transformed that space totally.

22 So what I'd like to say in
23 closing is that I'd like to emphasize
24 that murals are important and meaningful
25 to the City of Philadelphia as a whole

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2 and, more specifically, to the
3 communities in which they are placed. If
4 we feel public art is important enough to
5 be funded, then it is equally important
6 that it be maintained. Neglecting to
7 maintain our public art is also in a way
8 neglecting the communities where these
9 works reside. For this reason, I
10 wholeheartedly advocate for the City to
11 serve as stewards of the public art in
12 Philadelphia and support the creation,
13 upkeep, and restoration of our public
14 art.

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

17 Thank you so much for your testimony.

18 Please state your name for the
19 record.

20 MR. JONES: My name is Morris
21 Jones. I'm an artist, a fine artist. I
22 started off doing sculpturing. I'm a
23 mold-maker, and I cast bronze metal.
24 That was my educational training.

25 I started at a program -- an

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2 organization called the Chew/Cheltenham
3 Improvement Association about 15 years
4 ago. Most of the murals that were done
5 in that organization were done by youths
6 from 13 to 15 years old up there. Most
7 of the murals are destroyed. We didn't
8 have a restoration process. The money
9 came from community organizations, local
10 businesses, and sometimes out of the --
11 money out of the adults' pockets.

12 What we did was, we tried to
13 concentrate on community infrastructure.
14 We basically built community
15 organizations, and through these
16 community organizations, we tried to
17 establish an art component to it. We
18 didn't have the money for the
19 restoration, so all the murals were
20 destroyed. I'm now basically working
21 with Mastery Schools. These kids are 13
22 and 14-year-olds. I let them get
23 involved in the total process. All I do
24 is, I just sit back and I direct, and I
25 let the leadership come through and

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2 creativity come through. Through that
3 organization -- excuse me; Mastery School
4 right there, I just let the kids express
5 themselves. I just sit back. I really
6 don't -- I just advise and let them just
7 do all the creative training and all the
8 creative work that they want to do.

9 I just did a mural of Muhammad
10 Ali. Well, basically the children did
11 the mural of Muhammad Ali, and like I
12 said, all I did was just direct it. I
13 always wanted to kind of put Ali on a
14 mural. So I let them do the total design
15 and I just got up on the ladder. We had
16 just ladders and maybe one scaffold given
17 to us from our community. And they had a
18 contest to do the design for the mural,
19 and I just threw Muhammad Ali in there
20 because I always wanted to have Muhammad
21 Ali on a wall two years ago.

22 Unfortunately, we just don't
23 have the money to restore these murals,
24 and the murals that they did basically
25 got destroyed. So it's kind of a sad

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2 ending, but that's the problem that we're
3 having with not having money to restore
4 the murals.

5 That's about all I have to say.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
7 you so much for all of your work, and I
8 wanted to just mention the mural, for
9 those folks who don't know, the first
10 mural that Morris was referring to had
11 David P. Richardson in it, who was a late
12 State Representative who impacted just so
13 many lives, and for you to do this work
14 that brings to the forefront so many
15 folks that need to still be recognized,
16 that they had a lasting impact in our
17 communities, I just wanted to thank you
18 for that and for all the work that you
19 continue to do.

20 I know Morris and he's such a
21 community person and so out there and
22 available.

23 Whenever there's a
24 beautification project or a clean-up or
25 what-have-you, you're there, and so I

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2 just really wanted to publicly say thank
3 you for all that you've done.

4 MR. JONES: Thank you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Also to
6 Mr. Humphrey and Wister Playground and
7 the beautiful job that you did at Wister,
8 which is another recreation center in
9 Germantown. It's a gem. It needed a
10 little sprucing up, fixing up, and we
11 went in this summer and we put in some
12 new fitness equipment for adults, we put
13 in new basketball courts, we put in new
14 fencing and lighting, and all of it came
15 together with your mural. You brought it
16 all together, because otherwise they
17 would have really been separate
18 components. And the beauty of the
19 colorful artwork and the new equipment
20 really worked well together. And so I
21 just really, again, want to publicly
22 thank you for the work that you did on
23 that project.

24 MR. HUMPHREY: I appreciate
25 that. Thank you.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.

3 And to Mr. Haas as well, the
4 work that you did, and I was particularly
5 inspired by what you showed us in terms
6 of the work that was done. I think you
7 said was it Houston or Austin in Texas
8 where they took a mural and actually sort
9 of built a spray ground and a park around
10 it, and that really is inspiring and
11 shows with a mural like that shown here
12 on the screen, it really does allow folks
13 who have the vision to do more than just,
14 oh, here's a piece of artwork on the
15 wall. Let's make it a gathering spot,
16 let's make it a place where people want
17 to come, people want to be a destination
18 and do something with that.

19 MR. HAAS: Well, that was a
20 parking lot for 30 years.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It was a
22 parking lot?

23 MR. HAAS: Yeah. And there
24 were probably four or five attempts to
25 tear that building down, the only one

1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 left on the block, but then wisely they
3 decided to build two matching buildings
4 facing each other in that area and turn
5 the entire center -- it's really the
6 center of Fort Worth now.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Oh, wow.
8 It looks great. It looks really nice.
9 And so I thank you also for the work that
10 you all have done.

11 And collectively I just think
12 there's so much we can get done with the
13 support and with the vision that artists
14 like yourselves have. And so, again,
15 many, many thanks for all that you've
16 done.

17 Are there any questions?
18 Councilman Taubenberger?

19 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: No.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
21 so much for being here today.

22 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Other
23 than just thanking them for taking time
24 out of their busy day.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And can we

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2 have the Clerk call up the next three
3 witnesses to testify.

4 THE CLERK: Kate Jacobi, Mural
5 Arts Program; Catherine Myers; and
6 Michelle Ortiz.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
10 afternoon, ladies.

11 MS. JACOBI: Good afternoon.
12 How are you?

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I'm very
14 well. Thank you. Thank you for being
15 here.

16 MS. JACOBI: My name is Kate
17 Jacobi. I am the Project Manager of
18 Mural Preservation and Community Murals
19 at Mural Arts. So my role is actually
20 dual purposes, in that I work on new
21 murals as well as go back and manage the
22 restorations. And I'm the only one at
23 the office that really does the
24 restorations, so I get the unique
25 pleasure of going back and reengaging

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2 with the community, which is a really
3 important part of our work, because as
4 Jane has mentioned, everyone really likes
5 the new murals, but when I get to go back
6 and tell people we get to restore that
7 mural and work with the artist and
8 reengage the community members, there's a
9 new restored kind of connection that
10 happens. And sometimes it's been maybe
11 10, 15 years since we've worked with that
12 particular community. Sometimes it's
13 maybe just a few years if something has
14 happened to the wall or the building, but
15 in either case, it's really an
16 interesting opportunity to see how much
17 our murals mean to people. And sometimes
18 it doesn't always end in a happy story,
19 where sometimes we lose them to
20 development. Sometimes we have to retire
21 them with dignity because they're beyond
22 restoration. Potentially the costs are
23 too far out of our budget limitations or
24 it may be slated for future development.

25 So some of the examples I'll

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2 just run through quickly here. Our
3 standard restorations where they've been
4 10, 15 years old and we will restore them
5 completely, like this one over at 17th
6 and Catharine.

7 This one was also Broad over by
8 Temple. So when they're done with
9 tribute murals especially, they're really
10 interesting to kind of reconnect with the
11 family members. So this is Grover
12 Washington. So I was able to kind of
13 connect with his family, and they were so
14 thrilled to hear that we were going to
15 restore that mural, which we did last
16 year. And so it's a nice way to keep in
17 touch with people and let them know that
18 those special people to them are still
19 important and that we are able to kind of
20 keep their legacies alive. A lot of
21 people see murals especially of community
22 members or local heroes as a way, as Jane
23 mentioned, to tell the biography of our
24 city.

25 Other times we have full

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2 restorations such as this one over at --
3 this is Philadelphia Muses at 13th and
4 Locust, and we leverage sometimes private
5 and public dollars where we can kind of
6 go in, and some of these are a little bit
7 more costly because of the logistics, the
8 sheer size of them, the detail in the
9 murals. This was by Meg Saligman. But
10 the parking lot was thrilled when we were
11 going to restore this, even though we
12 took up some of their spots, because this
13 is how they notify people to come park at
14 their lot, is by this particular mural.

15 This one is especially
16 important. We restored this last year
17 and had a combined rededication. This
18 was a very high profile site that had a
19 lot of law complications, but the
20 importance of it was that it was tied to
21 the Philadelphia Stars Major League
22 Baseball Team, which field and stadium
23 was located right at that site across
24 from where the Jackie Robinson statue is.
25 And last year we also restored the Jackie

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2 Robinson mural in North Philly, and every
3 April they have a Jackie Robinson Day.
4 So it brought out like 300 people just to
5 help celebrate and keep alive his legacy.
6 And this past year was also when City
7 Council presented the citation of
8 apology, which was an incredibly
9 important moment.

10 So the beauty of these is that
11 we do get to go back and reengage, and
12 the mural restoration work, we do stretch
13 every dollar as much as we can. But it's
14 not just about having more funding to do
15 them. It's the importance of keeping
16 connections with people. And community
17 members are usually elated when we go
18 back and kind of tell them that we get to
19 restore a mural, because it truly becomes
20 part of the urban fabric of their
21 neighborhood and inevitably the entire
22 city. So it keeps our legacy alive as
23 the City of Murals. If we didn't restore
24 them, I don't know -- it's important to
25 keep.

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2 Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

4 And can we have the next
5 panelist. State your name for the record
6 and begin your testimony, either one.

7 MS. MYERS: Hi. My name is
8 Catherine Myers and I am a conservator of
9 mural paintings and architecture and
10 owner of Myers Conservation, which is a
11 consulting and contracting firm. Through
12 the work in my private practice, the
13 federal government, and institutions
14 concerned with advancing the field of
15 conservation, my career has been
16 dedicated to preserving the built
17 environment as a practitioner, a
18 conservation planner, educator, and
19 policy advisor. Since 2013, the
20 Philadelphia Mural Arts Program has been
21 one of the clients with whom I've worked
22 to help identify preservation needs and
23 advance their efforts to manage their
24 collection.

25 Because the fields of historic

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2 preservation and conservation are not
3 widely understood, a brief explanation is
4 probably warranted.

5 Historic preservation is the
6 overarching endeavor that seeks to
7 preserve, conserve, and protect objects,
8 buildings, landscapes, and artifacts
9 deemed to have value.

10 Conservation, on the other
11 hand, is the profession dedicated to the
12 material care of culture and historic
13 property. Conservators who are trained
14 through graduate training and extensive
15 internships are charged with protecting
16 authenticity as evidence of the historic
17 record and of the artist's hand, as well
18 as resolving change over time. Our work
19 is part science and part curation, in
20 that we make choices about how and what
21 should be conserved. Conservation is a
22 collaborative profession and attempts to
23 look at the many perspectives brought to
24 bear in stewarding cultural and historic
25 objects. Nowhere is the myriad of values

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2 more at play than in public art.

3 From this perspective, I'd like
4 to offer observations I found to be most
5 effective in stewarding public art, and
6 this is from various experiences.

7 One, the care and maintenance
8 of public art is costly and should be
9 appropriately resourced at the time of
10 its creation. Costs for care will
11 usually exceed that of the original
12 commission, especially care for outdoor
13 public art. One can anticipate something
14 like \$1,000 a year per object in care and
15 maintenance.

16 Two, stewards of public art
17 have wisely realized over time that
18 conservation professionals should be
19 involved in decisions about the creation
20 and maintenance of existing art.

21 Three, there's a widely held
22 view in the world of public art that
23 reproducing artists' work is
24 conservation. In fact, it's the
25 antithesis of conservation. That said,

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2 replication is sometimes the right
3 choice. Such a decision, however, should
4 be the result of a thoughtful discussion
5 among a wide range of stakeholders,
6 including preservation professionals.
7 Replication should be led by the artist
8 and in rare cases by their agent.

9 Four, at a material level, art
10 attached to a building impacts the fabric
11 of the building in known and in
12 unanticipated ways. A full understanding
13 of this impact and knowledge of how to
14 mitigate any damage it causes is advised.
15 Residues of adhesive, pins for attaching
16 a sculpture or other materials used
17 should be entirely reversible and
18 entirely removed when the art is removed.

19 Five, some public art is less
20 permanent than others. In the interest
21 of good preservation and collections
22 management, controlling the amount of
23 public art one stewards is only logical.
24 I believe this can be accomplished by
25 allocating resources for care and

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2 maintenance before producing new work.
3 Defining the lifespan at the conception
4 phase is also important and evaluating
5 that lifespan when its time comes and
6 then, finally, in honoring its removal.

7 Six, I believe that there is
8 potential for involving volunteers and
9 expanding programs to also involve care
10 and maintenance.

11 And then there was questions
12 that came up about best practices for
13 dealing with public art, and first I
14 think a distinction needs to be made
15 between community-based art and public
16 art. So community-based art, meaning
17 that it's really grassroots and funding
18 is coming from the community. That
19 generally -- best practices is fairly new
20 ground. Most people are kind of -- most
21 of these programs which came into being
22 in the '80s often have realized that need
23 as an afterthought and are struggling
24 with it. Some are doing it fairly well.
25 They tend to be smaller programs. San

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2 Francisco is doing it well, Cambridge,
3 Massachusetts.

4 Public art, on the other hand,
5 publicly funded with taxpayers' dollars,
6 there are very excellent best practices
7 in place. I used to work for the federal
8 government and we had a Percent for Art
9 Program with 15,000 works of art all over
10 the country. They had an excellent
11 program in place. First of all, a
12 percent of the care and maintenance, the
13 funding for the care and maintenance, was
14 put in place, and any money that was
15 intended to be spent for new art had to
16 first be devoted to the existing
17 collection. They also contracted
18 professionals to carry out a process of
19 assessing the collection and then
20 developing priorities and then executing
21 the treatment. These were outside
22 conservators who had five-year-long
23 contracts with them. And then there are
24 many other Percent for Art Programs and
25 similar public arts programs that are

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2 doing a good job.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
4 very much. Thank you for your testimony.

5 And Ms. Ortiz.

6 MS. ORTIZ: Good afternoon. My
7 name is Michelle Angel Ortiz. I'm really
8 glad to be here and to support the
9 restoration of murals and the public art
10 in our city.

11 I'm a visual artist, skilled
12 muralist, and community arts educator who
13 uses art as a vehicle to represent people
14 and communities whose histories are often
15 lost and co-opted. Through painting,
16 printmaking, communities arts practices,
17 I create safe spaces for dialogue around
18 some of the most profound issues
19 communities and individuals may face. So
20 my work is about telling stories that are
21 rich that transform spaces and becomes a
22 visual affirmation that reveals the
23 strength and the spirit of the community.

24 So for over 15 years, I
25 continue to be an active educator in

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2 using the arts as a tool to create a
3 bridge between the communities that I
4 work with. And as a skilled muralist,
5 I've done over 50 large-scale public
6 artworks, both nationally,
7 internationally. Since 2008, I have led
8 community building and art for social
9 change practices both in Costa Rica and
10 Ecuador independently and also as a
11 United States cultural envoy both in
12 Fiji, Mexico, Argentina, Spain, Honduras,
13 Venezuela. Last year in Cuba I completed
14 the first U.S. state-funded public art
15 project since the reopening of the United
16 States Embassy in Havana.

17 And so I wanted to share that
18 information and then what that means on
19 the local level, as I'm working both in
20 the City and across different countries.
21 What does Philadelphia have in comparison
22 to all the places that I've worked with
23 is the value of public art and the value
24 of how communities are represented
25 through the artwork that we're creating.

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2 Recently, Mayor Kenney did an
3 op-ed in the Philadelphia Inquirer using
4 one of the temporary installations that I
5 did about my project, entitled "Familias
6 Separadas," which is translated to
7 Separated Families. The project that I
8 did, which was partially funded and
9 supported by Mural Arts through the
10 citywide exhibition last year called Open
11 Source, one of the pieces was actually
12 here in City Hall. It was the
13 installation of the temporary image of
14 Maria and her daughter in the center of
15 the compass rose.

16 And what does that mean when we
17 talk about, as Councilman David Oh had
18 spoken about, violence and the issues
19 that we're dealing with that are just
20 really real issues that we're dealing
21 with in our city, but when I'm able to
22 represent the voices of community members
23 through my artwork and honor their
24 stories and present their stories,
25 especially when we're dealing with

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2 communities that are undocumented, that
3 are immigrants, that we're dealing in a
4 very anti-immigrant climate, that they're
5 being criminalized for being immigrants
6 and for crossing the borders and for
7 trying to find a safe space, a safe
8 place, a new future for their children,
9 which is our city. How are we conveying
10 that? How do we begin to bring those
11 stories to life for those communities
12 that feel oppressed, for those
13 communities that continue to be ignored,
14 and also for all of us to find that
15 common thread of those stories, to begin
16 to really break away from the child
17 that's been incarcerated from the woman
18 who is undocumented and crossing those
19 borders? How do we begin to feel and see
20 that human factor in all of us?

21 And I'm totally off script
22 right now, because I am a Philadelphian.
23 I'm born and raised in South Philly. I
24 still live on the same block that I was
25 born and raised in. I'm a child of

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2 immigrants, and I have that experience of
3 being rooted in the City and I have the
4 privilege of being able to work as an
5 artist and work in a community and have
6 organizations like Mural Arts that value
7 the arts in our community and in our
8 city.

9 And so what I have to say is
10 that for every mural, for every public
11 art that is erased, you are also erasing
12 that connection, that experience that
13 artists like myself are trying to build,
14 that time behind the walls. People see
15 the final product, but they don't see all
16 of the change that happens before or how
17 we get to that process. And so what I
18 always say is how do we support that
19 work? How do we continue to value the
20 work that's being put up there that also
21 values the experiences and the stories of
22 the people that are living in our city?

23 So we invest in the things that
24 we value, and so what I ask all of you is
25 to really think about it's much more than

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2 a mural, it's much more than a public
3 artwork. It's about the voices and the
4 people that are represented through that
5 artwork that's important.

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

8 Well, thank you. And we certainly get
9 it. We certainly understand that art is
10 transformative and that a piece of art is
11 also a communications tool, and you can
12 use art to communicate a message, discuss
13 an issue, really surround something that
14 might not be -- it might not resonate in
15 traditional form.

16 And so I thank you for using
17 art as a tool for social justice and also
18 organizing and getting communities to
19 rally around a particular issue. And I
20 think that that's something that we don't
21 recognize enough, that that is actually
22 what happens. So, again, many, many
23 thanks to you on that.

24 Also, Ms. Jacobi, I noticed
25 with the packet that we received, I don't

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2 know if other folks got the packet who
3 were here earlier, but I just -- I think
4 it's such a powerful tool to be able to
5 see the before's and the after's, the
6 work that Mural Arts has been able to do
7 in terms of sustaining and preserving
8 these murals, and I just think when you
9 see it on the screen, when you see it in
10 the packet, it really, really resonates.
11 So I would encourage you, as we all look
12 at our coffers, to use that as an
13 opportunity to raise funds, as a
14 fundraising tool, because I think when
15 people see that, it communicates it as
16 well and people will get it.

17 So I just wanted to acknowledge
18 that as well and to encourage you all to
19 use that. I don't know if there's any
20 other place that you all have this at.
21 Is it on your website?

22 MS. JACOBI: We do have the
23 before and after's when we have a project
24 page, for example, like this one.

25 One of the things I also want

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2 to mention, now that this one is up, is
3 we often get called upon to help restore
4 murals that we did not originally do,
5 such as the case with Richard Haas's
6 mural at 2300 Chestnut. This one was at
7 the Village of Arts and Humanities, and
8 with Lily Yeh, we fully re-envisioned
9 that and recreated it, because the wall
10 had so much damage. So like on that
11 particular page, we do have a before and
12 after. And we restored, to the best of
13 our ability, to bring it back to its
14 original integrity this one and the Keith
15 Haring mural at 22nd and Ellsworth, which
16 none of those original murals were done
17 with us, but they kind of get shepherded
18 under our watch now. They kind of get
19 adopted in. And we do use the before and
20 after. Nobody uses them better than
21 Jane. But it is still hard sometimes to
22 get funding for restorations when people
23 really get excited about that new
24 project, but we are doing more each year
25 and it is our hope that each year we can

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2 increase the amount that we restore and
3 that using better products now, different
4 methods actually will prolong the need
5 for restoration, whereas right now we're
6 still dealing with things where we used
7 house paint 15, 20 years ago because we
8 didn't have anything else. So those come
9 up due for restoration a lot quicker than
10 some of the ones we're doing now, which
11 now have a longer lifespan.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, you
13 know what, I think that that's an
14 excellent segue in terms of to Ms. Myers
15 when you talk about how people are
16 excited about new projects, but aren't
17 really thinking about the existing
18 projects that need preservation. And,
19 Ms. Myers, you talked about preserving
20 before commissioning new art. So how do
21 we find that balance? How do we in a
22 time like this with -- a time like every
23 time -- with limited resources? How do
24 we find that balance to be able to
25 preserve and commission new art at the

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2 same time?

3 MS. MYERS: That's the million
4 dollar question. That's a tough
5 question, because obviously -- one thing
6 that's happening in a lot of communities
7 sort of grassroots, they're not
8 necessarily programs, but public art
9 that's occurring around the world, a lot
10 of which is unsanctioned, a lot of it is
11 ephemeral from the beginning, and as a
12 conservator, it's sort of controversial
13 for me to champion ephemeral art, but in
14 fact I do, because then there's a new
15 canvas allowed for artists to produce new
16 work.

17 Certainly there's work that
18 needs to be preserved and saved for
19 various reasons, either because it speaks
20 to a particular historic moment, a
21 person, a population or by a well-known
22 artist. These are exceptional cases.
23 But in a lot of cases there comes to be,
24 in my experience of working with Mural
25 Arts, there comes to be a time when

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2 murals are no longer speaking to the
3 community and maybe they're in such bad
4 condition that they're using a lot of
5 resources to keep them up. In those
6 cases, they could be removed and then
7 there's space for new work.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Replaced,
9 yeah. Okay. Very good.

10 Well, thank you all, ladies,
11 for being here today and for your input
12 and for your contributions to
13 Philadelphia's art community and to
14 everyone who has presented today.
15 Philadelphia is a beautiful, beautiful
16 city and it would not exist without the
17 contributions of so many who have done
18 such beautiful artwork, some on their
19 own, some through programs like Mural
20 Arts and others, but really have made a
21 significant contribution to making
22 Philadelphia an art leader, not just in
23 the country but around the world. People
24 come here to see our art. So, again,
25 many, many thanks to you. And also when

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2 they come here, they spend dollars, they
3 go to restaurants. So there's tax
4 revenue associated with that, for anyone
5 else who may not get that.

6 But, Councilman Taubenberger,
7 did you have any closing remarks?

8 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Just,
9 once again, thank you and, Madam Chair
10 Lady, also to reiterate what you said so
11 elegantly in regards to tax dollars.

12 People come to see the art. They
13 inspire. It educates. It does a whole
14 bunch of things. It entertains. And
15 they're coming here and they want to see
16 it, and they're going to have some dinner
17 and they're probably going to stay in a
18 hotel. So it all helps. It helps us
19 make a better city, a city of world
20 class. In fact, being a World Heritage
21 City in North America, the only one I
22 think at this point or certainly the
23 first one, it's a great thing. You add
24 to it greatly.

25 Thank you.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
3 very much.

4 And is there anyone else here
5 who wanted to testify on this resolution?

6 Yes, ma'am. If you want to
7 step forward and state your name for the
8 record.

9 (Witness approached witness
10 table.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
12 afternoon.

13 MS. BANTEL: Good afternoon.
14 My name is Linda Bantel. I'm a member of
15 the Conservation Advisory Committee, to
16 Margo Berg's program.

17 So good afternoon, Chairwoman
18 Bass and members of City Council that are
19 left as Committee on Parks, Recreation
20 and Cultural Affairs. I welcome this
21 opportunity to speak on behalf of the
22 City's widely acclaimed public sculpture
23 program 200 years in the making.

24 As I said, I am an art
25 historian and former director of the

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2 Museum of the Pennsylvania Academy of the
3 Fine Arts. My first introduction to the
4 City's public sculpture collection was in
5 the mid 1980s when I was invited to serve
6 on a committee to advise the City on the
7 conservation of the William Penn statue
8 atop City Hall. Then in 1995, 21 years
9 ago -- it's hard to believe -- I was
10 appointed as one of several volunteers to
11 sit on the City's Conservation Advisory
12 Committee. The Committee over the years
13 has included artists, art historians,
14 conservators, and architects. It is from
15 that long and rewarding experience that I
16 speak to you today.

17 The City's vast sculptures
18 collection dates back to the early 1800's
19 and numbers over 1,000 works. Its size
20 and artistic quality is unmatched by any
21 city in the nation. It encompasses a
22 broad range of styles and subject matter,
23 from William Penn and all the statues on
24 City Hall, to the Logan Square fountain,
25 to the LOVE sculpture at JFK Plaza, and

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2 numerous sculptures placed in
3 neighborhoods throughout the City.

4 Given the importance of this
5 public collection and the length of time
6 I have been involved with the
7 Conservation Advisory Committee, I am
8 eager to share with you my thoughts about
9 the need to expand and create a dedicated
10 funding source to conserve and maintain
11 the collection and plan appropriately for
12 its future.

13 With chronic limited funding
14 sometimes supplemented by private or
15 other government funds, as you've heard,
16 the City is able to conserve only two or
17 three works a year. Sculpture
18 conservation costs are high. Why?
19 Because metal sculptures are heavy, big,
20 located in difficult sites to access.
21 The City Hall's William Penn is over 500
22 feet in the air. And often have been
23 neglected over the years. And practical
24 or technical considerations can
25 complicate a project. Not infrequently a

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2 repair and maintenance project might need
3 to supplement its core team of trained
4 conservators and technicians with metal
5 workers, stone masons, riggers or other
6 specialists who conduct environmental or
7 engineering studies or, for example,
8 plumbers to redesign and replace corroded
9 pipes under the Logan Square fountain.

10 The Conservation Advisory
11 Committee's approach is too often
12 reactive, as it needs to address first
13 urgent public safety issues or arrest
14 major deterioration. Obviously it would
15 be more effective to be able to calmly
16 plan ahead. To do that, more funds need
17 to be allocated to hire annually enough
18 part-time or seasonal personnel to survey
19 and analyze the current state of
20 conservation of at least a percentage of
21 the 1,000 works in the collection. That
22 way, problems would be noticed before
23 they become urgent, serious, and more
24 expensive to repair.

25 Another pressing need is to

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2 create a dependable funding stream to
3 support an annual maintenance program.
4 If the City invests its precious
5 resources in restoring a public work of
6 art, it needs to maintain it afterwards.
7 You've heard this from everybody. When
8 the City made a major investment in
9 conserving City Hall's William Penn
10 statue 30 years ago, it also made a
11 commitment to periodically undertake
12 conservation treatment to arrest any
13 further deterioration.

14 Philadelphia has been in the
15 forefront of support of public sculpture
16 for over 200 years. While the City's
17 sculpture collection is widely recognized
18 as the first and most prestigious of its
19 kind in the nation, the funds to properly
20 conserve and maintain this public asset
21 have for years been insufficient. It is
22 laudable that Philadelphia City Council
23 recognizes this situation and is taking
24 the lead in evaluating the adequacy of
25 funding to preserve this preeminent

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2 publicly owned sculpture collection, one
3 of the City's great treasures.

4 Thank you for the opportunity
5 to testify on this important matter.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
7 very much for your testimony and for
8 really making sure that folks understand
9 the importance of being able to conserve
10 our public art and how difficult it is,
11 what a challenge it is, but absolutely
12 something that's necessary, particularly
13 with the investment that we've made in
14 it. So thank you so much for being here
15 today.

16 Councilman.

17 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Just
18 thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Is there
20 anyone else here who would like to
21 testify on this resolution?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And seeing
24 that there is none, I want to thank
25 everyone for coming and also for

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1 10/31/16 - PARKS - BILL 160329, ETC.
2 participating in this public hearing, and
3 this Committee will now stand in recess
4 to the call of the Chair.

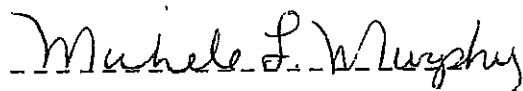
5 Thank you.

6 (Committee on Parks, Recreation
7 and Cultural Affairs concluded at 3:25
8 p.m.)

9 - - -

CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter, and that this is a true and
correct transcript of same.



MICHELE L. MURPHY

RPR-Notary Public

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