COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, April 20, 2009, 10:24 a.m.

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Res. 090226 - Approval of revised Five-Year Financial Plan covering FY 2010 through 2014.

Bill 090212 - FY '10-'15 Capital Program.

Bill 090213 - FY '10 Capital Budget.

Bill 090214 - FY '10 Operating Budget.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Anna C. Verna, Chair
Jannie C. Blackwell
Darrell L. Clarke
Wilson W. Goode, Jr.
Bill Green
William K. Greenlee
Curtis Jones, Jr.
Jack Kelly
James F. Kenney
Joan L. Krajewski
Donna Reed Miller
Brian J. O'Neill
Blondell Reynolds-Brown
Frank Rizzo
Marian B. Tasco

- - -

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning, everyone. This is a continued public hearing off the Committee of the Whole.

The first department to testify is the Fire Department. Commissioner, good morning. Would you please approach the witness table.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

COMMISSIONER AYRES:

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good morning, Council President Verna and also members of Council. I am Everett Gillison, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, and it's a pleasure to be with you this morning.

My office focuses on one of the Mayor's four defined goals: To enhance public safety and help Philadelphia become the safest largest city in the country.

The operational activities of the Police Department, the Fire

Department, and the Philadelphia prison system are an integral part the effort to help achieve our goal of enhancing public safety throughout our city.

Following my opening remarks, you will hear from the respective commissioners from each of those departments today. They will describe their considerable efforts to help us meet our goal to improve safety against the backdrop of the unprecedented financial challenges that confront our city and the nation as a whole.

We have been presented with the considerable challenge of preserving or improving public safety while, at the same time, decreasing budgetary expenditures from Fiscal Year '09 and Fiscal Year '10. This task is very difficult since the overwhelming portion of the Police and Fire budgets consist of Class 100 expenditures.

This means the only way to significantly impact these budgets, when compared to Fiscal Year '09 obligations, is to decrease significantly the salary and expenditures for these two departments. We have been able to do that by leaving vacant positions unfilled, better managing overtime, and redeploying personnel.

The results we have achieved are considerable and have resulted in lowering the Class 100 expenditures for these departments: Fire has achieved a net decrease of a little more than $4.8 million; and Police, a net decrease of approximately $13.5 million.

We have been able to do this by carefully analyzing our existing and future staffing needs and making some very difficult decisions as to how to achieve the necessary reductions while, at the same time, moving ahead in making our city a safer place.

When combining additional proposed cuts in Class 200, 300, 400 expenditures, with the above-described cuts in the Class 100 requests, the overall reductions from Fiscal Year '09 obligations to the Fiscal Year '10 budget request are: 2.8 percent for Fire and 2.7 percent for Police.

The Prison budget for Fiscal Year '10 is 2 percent higher than the Fiscal Year '09 obligation due to an increase in prison population of approximately 4.9 percent thus far in Fiscal Year '09. Despite modest cuts in the Prison Class 100 request, this reduction was more than offset by the increased need for Class 200 and 300 funding to meet the needs of the expanding prison population.

While no one wants to implement it, responsible leadership must plan, so if further cuts were to come to Police and Fire budget through the initiation of Plan B, service impacts would be severe. Any additional significant cuts would have to be made in the present Class 100 request.

For Police, this means the

layoff of 256 sworn personnel. This, combined with the normal attrition of an additional 190 persons, would result in a total loss of 446 Police personnel in Fiscal '10. With the sworn hiring fees in effect, the impact would reach over into Fiscal Year 2011 and could result in a sworn strength reduction of almost 10 percent.

To meet the Class 100 cuts for Fire, this would mean closing facilities; a closing of three engine companies, two ladder companies, and three medic companies is being projected at this time if this would have to come in. And I always want to emphasize that this is what none of us want to do.

This would eliminate 112 uniform field positions and would require the complete closing of some fire stations and facilities. And, again, I emphasize this is not what we want to do.

Depending on the rate of attrition, Fire layoffs and demotions could also be necessary. So if further budget reductions are required and Plan B implemented, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to avoid some decrease in the level of service provided in the area of public safety.

We have worked very hard to formulate a budget request for Fiscal Year '10 that results in the needed decrease in the overall financial obligation of the City while, at the same time, does not compromise our current level of public safety or deter us from our ultimate goal of making Philadelphia the safest largest city in the nation.

I thank you for the opportunity for this opening statement and opportunity to testify today. And, obviously, I'll be here all day; these are my departments, and we're going to be able to testify and give you the information that you need to make the decisions that you have coming forward.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank

you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

Commissioner, welcome.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Kindly identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Good morning, Council President Verna and members of the committee. I am Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers. With me is: Deputy Commissioner Harrogate, Deputy Commissioner for Operations; Deputy Commissioner John Devlin, Deputy Commissioner for Technical Services; and Deputy Commissioner Dave Beatrice, Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services. It is our pleasure to testify before the committee.

The mission of the Fire Department is to deliver efficient and effective emergency services for the purpose of minimizing the loss of life or property of the citizens and visitors of Philadelphia. We do this by providing fire-suppression services, hazardous material incident mitigation services, comprehensive fire prevention programs, fire-investigation services, and the delivery of high-quality pre-hospital emergency medical care and transportation on a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week basis. Our goal is to make Philadelphia one of the safest cities in the country in terms of those services.

This operating budget request totals $196,378,684. In Class 100, there is a net decrease after offsetting the funding added for pay raises by the savings obtained by the deactivation of five engine companies and two ladder companies in January of 2009 and by further reducing the number of staff and field positions by 31.

In order to increase the safety of our residents, the Department is committed to achieving the goal that every dwelling has at least one working smoke alarm on each level. As part of our Freedom From Fire Program, we are working with the Citizens for Fire Prevention Committee to obtain funding through various grants and donations to purchase large quantities of ten-year tamper-resistant smoke alarms.

Our members will install these alarms properly in houses where needed. Any extra time to escape that these smoke alarms provide to our residents in houses means the difference between escaping unharmed or suffering severe burns or even death.

Since, on average, 70 percent of all annual fire deaths occur in private residences without working smoke alarms, saturating high-risk areas with smoke alarms and educational materials should substantially reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries.

It needs to be noted that if

further major budget reductions are necessary, the Department would be faced with implementing Budget Plan B. The effects on the levels of service that the Fire Department currently provides would be significant and painful.

For example, an additional budget reduction in the area of $10 million would necessitate the deactivation of three engine companies, two ladder companies, and three medic units. That would:

Eliminate an additional 112 uniform field positions.

Some fires stations and facilities would close completely.

Depending on the rate of attrition, firefighters would need to be laid off and officers to be demoted.

The ability to provide required training classes, fire prevention, and our outreach programs would be severely impacted.

The ability to respond to major

events and still provide adequate emergency-service coverage to the rest of the City would be severely reduced.

With these reductions, response times are likely to increase. We are utilizing GIS (Geographic Information Services), time-modeling software to identify companies that can be deactivated with minimal operational impact and still provide a level of service sufficient to protect the public, our citizens, and meet the nationally-recognized standards.

In addition to my testimony is attached -- in addition to my testimony is attached attachments that provide some preliminary information on the process to select the companies and stations to be closed.

That concludes my testimony.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank this Council for its continued support of the members of the Philadelphia Fire Department. I speak not only for myself but for all of the members of the Fire Department in saying that your support is, and has been, much appreciated.

I will now be glad to answers any questions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

How many uniform positions were you budgeted for in Fiscal Year '09?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: In the fall of '09?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: '09.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: 2,469 positions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: How about in the General Fund?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: 2,395.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And can you tell us how many uniform positions you are requesting in FY '10?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: 2,289 positions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry. How many?

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COMMISSIONER AYRES: 2,289 positions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I believe the information that we have is 2,217.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: I am David Beatrice, Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services.

The number in FY '10 for the total operating budget is 2,289; for the General Fund part of it, it's 2,217.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Right. So that represents a reduction of 178 uniform positions, correct?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Correct. That was taken into account. The FY '09 budget was first revised in '09 by 148 for the activations in January 2009. Now we're taking it further 31 positions in '10.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, if Plan B of the contingency budget were to go into effect, it indicates that you will be deactivating

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three engine and two ladder companies as well as three medic units. Can you tell us the locations of these deactivations?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Currently, we are looking at each and every engine company, each and every ladder company, and all 24-hour medic units. We have to look at those and do analysis on those companies to decide which combination would have the minimum impact.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And when do you think that analysis would be completed?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We expect that that analysis could be completed by the end of May.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: How many vacancies do you currently have in your EMS unit?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: In EMS? Currently, we have a total of 52 vacancies.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: 52?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, how many do we have in that unit?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: There's 52 vacancies, and 42 of those vacancies are actually vacancies that are used in our replacement factor. Ten actual seats in the field that are actually --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry, Commissioner. I don't understand that.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Could you be a little more explicit? You said you have 52 vacancies.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. I'm going to --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I don't know what you mean about the 42 vacancies, whatever.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay, I'm going to read it for you.

Okay, we have 10 field vacancies, 42 replacement-factor vacancies.

The replacement-factor vacancies are vacancies that we -- where we hire personnel over the exact amount that's due to work. They actually fill in for people who are off sick, they fill in for people who are on vacation, they fill in for people who have been injured.

And right now, we don't have those replacement factors; we actually use overtime to replace people who are sick injured, et cetera. That's due to the inability to attract as many paramedics as we would like.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, I've been trying to pay very close attention to your response, but to be very candid with you, I still don't understand about the 42.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. There's a total of 240 paramedics, and that's 2 per unit, and they are needed to staff 24 full-time and 12 peak-time units.

Currently, we have 230 paramedics to staff those units. Six other paramedics actually work in administrative duties and special projects.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. I will go back to my question, if you don't mind. You said, currently, we have 52 vacancies.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's correct.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And you said something, which I absolutely did not understand, about 42 of those so-called vacancies.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The 42 --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Would you just explain it in a way that we could all understand it, please.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: When we hire, we have a total number that's required to fill each and every seat of our units that are out there, and that is 24 of the full-time units, and 12 are system or part-time units.

If we just look at that number

by itself, just that number by itself, that's going to be 240 vacancies. I mean, excuse me, 240 positions.

What we have to do is, we have to hire over and above in order to support those people who go off sick, who go off on vacation, who do other things.

And so the number that we have -- that we arrive at is based on a replacement factor of 4.2. So for every four people that we hire -- excuse me 4.8 we hire, if you would say a half of a part of a person, 0.8 people. So 4.8 is the multiplier that we use to get to that number.

And that number now is 52, and 42 of those are replacement factor, 10 are actual vacancies that we have to fill with overtime.

I apologize if it's not clear.

MR. COYNE: Madam Councilperson, the way that I look at it -- and, of course, when I came into this, I was really looking at the jargon, and it kind of threw me. And I said, What's the easiest way to think about this?

And I was able to come up with the fact that if you look at -- instead of talking about replacement factors, we have 52 positions that we can't fill because they're paramedic positions.

In order to staff the numbers of bodies that we need in the field, we use that money for the -- basically, we use 42 of that money in order to staff it with others that are with firefighters. So the replacement factor is an offhand way of just saying that we're using --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The 42 have not been trained, though, to be --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: They're not paramedics; they are EMTs. They are firefighters in a way, I believe. But we have to use the money in order to make sure that we are staffing to the level that we can provide the service to the public.

So there is the technical

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definition of the replacement factor. We try to make sure that we're handling it responsibly, but it's really that we're using the money for the unused positions to staff to the appropriate level.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: On Section 45, Page 56, it does appear that we have budgeted positions of 280 for paramedics.

And also, if you'll bear with me a minute... Also 92 for -- out of firefighter EMTs.

It's confusing to find out just how many we have.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The EMTs -- the EMT budget is for firefighters who staff basic life-support units.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. So you are budgeted for 280, not 240.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The actual budget is 288. There's 280 paramedics budgeted for, plus 8 in the Aviation Fund.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So how many of those are filled?

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COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's -- 236 positions, 236 are actually filled. And it leaves us with the 52 vacancies.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, do you have any indication as to why we have such a large number of vacancies in that particular unit?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The vacancies are due to the national shortage of paramedics. It's a continuing problem. We have been doing different things to try to remedy that, and we're going to continue to hire and put classes into the field.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we presently have a class?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We just graduated a class March 13th. We graduated 13 members. They are currently preparing to staff those units. We have 20 on the list right now.

And, hopefully, by the end of the fiscal year maybe -- by the end of the fiscal year, we'll have a class going through, hopefully, of about 15.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's good to hear.

How does the salary level of paramedics and EMTs compare with what other jurisdictions are paying?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I think I have a schedule. I have a chart that kind of shows that for you.

In Philadelphia, the paramedics earn $40,036 annually. That does not include any overtime that they work.

In Washington, D.C., their paramedics earn $48,732.

In Baltimore, paramedics earn $33,433.

In Houston, Texas, paramedics earn $38,537.

So we're pretty much in the middle of a range.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I see that there are a number of Councilmembers that want to be recognized, so I'll do what everybody else does and I'll come back on the second round.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I didn't hear your bell, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes. Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Good morning, Commissioner, and the rest of the deputy mayors.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You know, I'm sitting here, thinking about last year's budget process. I think if I went back and got last year's testimony and conversation, it kind of sounds the same. We weren't dealing with these big financial crisis last budget, and we were talking about shortages of paramedics, and we tried to appeal to you to go outside and find them if you couldn't find 'em here locally.

But it pretty much mirrors a year ago, before we had significant problems. Am I correct that we're in kind of the same ballpark as we were a year ago?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yeah. The shortage has not been relieved across the country, so we still have the same situation.

However, we have done various things as asked by Council and as agreed to during those sessions. We've done various things.

One of the things that we talked about was the recruitment, and we have a brochure that we've prepared that goes out to not just Pennsylvania but to other jurisdictions around the country.

Also, we have a battalion chief who we have assigned to go out to different schools. They go to the schools, they talk to the enrollees, and they encourage them over the course of their schooling to come to Philadelphia. We have been successful. We have had many who are on the list currently and who we've graduated -- the last two classes, about 25 paramedics, and they've actually come onboard.

As a matter of fact, one of the persons that you gave me down in New Jersey, he was in the paper, he works for us now.

So we've gone out and we've done those things as asked.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's good.

So am I hearing -- maybe you can bring me current. If today, a young man or woman from Bucks or Montgomery County or New Jersey wanted to work for you as a paramedic, would -- what is the issue today with the residency requirement?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The residency requirement was relaxed. There is no residency requirement to get onto the list now. They still have a six-month period to move in.

Also, one of the things that we've done, and we have that in place already, was through Personnel making sure that we have continuous enrollment.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: One of the points I think that is still a concern of many applicants is, are they treated as experienced paramedics when they come here, or are they starting at ground zero?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: They're treated as paramedics who come into the Philadelphia Fire Department system, and they receive the Philadelphia Fire Department training.

And whether you're a new paramedic that just came out of a school and Einstein or some other school, or if you're an experienced paramedic who came to us from Nebraska, you get the same experience.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Is it necessary, Commissioner, to reinvent the wheel to have them go through a -- if they're experienced and have been on the street for ten years, don't you kind of think that they know what they're doing, and that could be abbreviated, the training for those? I'm not suggesting that they don't need to understand the policies of the Philadelphia Fire Department, but saving a life in Nebraska is about the same as saving one in Philadelphia. So could the process be shortened?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, one of things that we want to be sure of is that we have the same professional, high-quality work from each and every paramedic that goes through the doors at the Academy. And that process is not only to ensure that they know rules, regulations, the different things that they'll experience on the streets of Philadelphia.

Many of them may not have had a save but only have been a paramedic. When you come into Philadelphia, you're going to see all of the distasteful, the ugly things, and we want folks to be prepared, but we also want them to have the bedside manner and all of those things that's necessary to give top-quality service to our citizens. And that's what we do.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Good.

Commissioner, you were a battalion chief, right?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: One of your proposals is to eliminate a position that's, I believe, an aide to the battalion chief?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir, a battalion chief aide.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Describe the duties of a battalion chief aide.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: A battalion chief aide has various duties, among them to be the communications point for the --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Back up.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: -- battalion chief aide.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Back up. Start where the bell rings.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Start where the bell rings? They get into the car and they drive the battalion chief to the fire ground or to the event where they have to go to, whatever it is, emergency event.

What they do is, they focus and they drive and make sure that the chief gets there. When they get there, they assist the chief and establish the command at the fire ground. They immediately start to -- or continue to monitor the radio system. And they do any other things that the battalion chief may request.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Did your aide make you more effective, efficient, and safer?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So I think what I'm hearing is that it's an important position in the Fire Department, because when -- the reason I wanted you to go back when the bell rings, I think a battalion chief is doing a lot of mental stuff.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And are we talking about the battalion chief driving himself to the scene of a fire?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. And when we eliminate those positions, the chief would focus on driving him or herself to the fire.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, it doesn't sound to me like a really good idea, because if a battalion chief, in my eyes, is focusing, A, maybe helping the driver to negotiate through traffic -- you're talking about the average response time for battalion chief, five minutes?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Somewhat.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. I think that battalion chief could use that time to prepare himself to be the manager at the fire scene rather than worrying driving a emergency vehicle with lights and sirens through traffic; wouldn't you think?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, I understand what you're saying, that if you're driving a vehicle, you need to be focused on getting the vehicle from Point

A to Point B; that would be your task, and I would suggest that that's the goal, to make sure that you get there.

The one thing that we are looking at is a communications company where, when that battalion chief gets on the scene, they would engage the communications company and have the other functions supplied at the same.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, if there's a way -- you know, I've been around the block a couple of times and don't pretend to know what you do, but all I can tell you is, I've heard a lot about this aide being eliminated, that it may be not a good idea because, because other fire companies throughout the nation have eliminated that aide, and I think that you know that that aide has been restored.

Because that battalion chief -- and you were one -- knows that when you're racing with lights and sirens, a battalion chief driving a fire vehicle, in my opinion, would be thinking about what they're going to do, what they're not going to do. And I think that's a good investment in Fire Department money to keep the aide for the battalion chief.

So that's just this councilman appealing to you based on the fact that I've had a lot of conversations. But, you know, it's common sense, common sense. A high level manager that's about to battle a fire needs that time to prepare himself, and that aide is a very relevant part of that process.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We'll look at it.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Greenlee.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, everyone.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good morning.

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COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: First of all, Commissioner, I just want to thank you for your help in things I've been involved with and probably with all Councilmembers in your department, distributing smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors at various events we have. So thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just to follow up a little bit on Councilman Rizzo's questions. Just so I'm clear here, I know in your written statement, you say "the equivalent of 22 battalion chief aide," and then you have in parentheses "firefighter positions." That's all the battalion chief aides are going; is that basically what that means or --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No. What it means is that during the day, we would ensure that battalion chiefs' aides were working and that position was intact.

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COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: In the evening, those aides would actually not -- the battalion would not have the availability of those aides, and they would be working in a company.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: At nighttimes.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: At nighttime.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. What's the reason for that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The reason is purely economical.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. So you have -- they're working -- that person would be only doing it half the time; other times, they would be doing something else. Is that basically what we're talking about?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. Again, I don't know everything and what that means, but I would agree basically with Councilman Rizzo that it does seem to raise some concerns. Obviously, you know more about that than I do, but, you know, I understand the concerns he raised.

Let me ask a general question. I know the President asked about positions unfilled in the EMS Unit. How many positions in the total Fire Department are there unfilled positions? How many?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. For 52 for firefighter -- excuse me, for paramedics.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And 35 on firefighters, 35 vacancies currently.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. That's it in the whole department?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. Is that an unusual -- I know you said about the problems particularly in EMS. Is that an unusually high number for firefighters?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, not for firefighters. Actually, what happened is, with the January 5th deactivations, those firefighters and companies that were deactivated actually went to fill vacancies in other companies and reduce the overtime that we were spending.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm. Okay. Thanks.

On Page 2, you talk about, in your written testimony, about removing from the FY '10 budget a little over a million dollars for a one-time purchase of flashlight, personal escape rope for each member. It says "per the labor contract award," so you're not going to be providing that.

Could you tell me what kind of problems that causes both as far as the labor rules contract and --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, sir. Actually, it is going to be provided.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: But we won't have to provide it twice. So that's why it was removed, so that we're actually

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providing that.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Oh, you don't have to provide it twice, I'm sorry. I got lost there, okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So once it's done, it's not something that has to be replaced over and over. It's in service, so we can take it out of the budget.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Oh, okay, all right. So you did it in '09 so you don't have to --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Correct.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay, I'm sorry. I just got confused by the way that was written. Okay, thanks.

All right, the EMS issue. I know you said, like, for example, when you had the cutback in some of ladders, you said that -- I'm pretty sure I'm stating this right, that you felt comfortable doing that 'cause the number of fires have gone dawn but that there are -- a lot of the responses are to emergency services.

Has emergency services gone up over the last couple of years, about stayed the same? What would that be?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: EMS?

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. EMS did rise over the last year. The previous fiscal year, we actually had a a small reduction, maybe a couple of hundred runs. Insignificant.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: But last year, it did go up. It was at 217,000 as far as incidents.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So it climbed.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Any --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It was at 215 the previous fiscal year.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Any rough idea why that would be? I mean, has there ever been any analysis as far as why that goes up? Are people just aware to call more, or there's incidents that bring that on? Do you have any thought on that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yeah. Most of those calls were for basic life-support services. That's the area of advanced life support versus basic life support, and that is where we see the uptick in the numbers.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm. Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Folks are using the emergency room to get checked out --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: -- because of health-care issues and problems.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm. Lastly, you say your goal --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Excuse me, I'm sorry. I just want to piggyback on something you said.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Sure.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We know that there has been an increase, but hasn't the fee of transportation also been increased to a thousand dollars a run?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's being prepared now. We're looking at the increase, which we're putting -- we put in the budget to offset some of the companies that we're going to be closing.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So of that thousand dollars per run, how much revenue does the City get from that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We expect to bring in about $5 million additional, $5 million additional from that increase. It's in basic life support as well as advanced life support.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Oh, Commissioner, hold on a minute. So according to the information that's been provided to us, it indicates that emergency medical services, 36.9. So it's an increase of 6.2 million.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Madam Chair, could you just --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: This

is the Five-Year Plan?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: On what page are you referring to?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: If you look at the Mayor's Operating Budget Summary, it's Page 13. I'm sorry. It's this book, the Mayor's Operating --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Hold on. If could I just ask Steve.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You could have my book for a minute.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: The budget director is here.

(Witness comes forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry, Councilman. I just wanted to --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's okay.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I didn't want to forget that.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's okay.

MR. AGOSTINO: Good morning, Madam President.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

MR. AGOSTINO: Steve Agostini, Budget Director.

Yes, you're right. On Page 13, it does show from the current estimate a $6.2 million increase. However, on the appendix to Plan A that is in the Five-Year Plan, what we had anticipated as a gap closing amount from the fees that you had requested was 5 million.

So what I will do is go back to the office and try to explain what that 1.2 million is. I believe that is for part of the fees that were already implemented this year, but let me go back and get an explanation for you when we come back for the discrepancy of the 1.2 million.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you so much.

MR. AGOSTINO: You're welcome.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Greenlee.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I just have one more question, Madam President, if I may. Thank you.

On Page 4, Commissioner, of your testimony, you talk about the -- what your goal is for response time. And you talk about the national standard of nine minutes. Whereabouts are you now on that, would you say, on average?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: On response time, we're about 76 percent of that.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's in the --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So 76 percent of the time, you're within nine minutes. What kind of things would you do to bring it up? I mean, what kinds of things do you see doing?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Some of the things that we would need to do is, one, look at our dispatch system and look at the ability to have a GPS, AVL, and a better organized dispatch system as related to priority dispatch. It will bring some improvement.

But the major improvement to actually meet that mark would be putting more medic units into the system.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. That's what I was going to say, probably the pure number of people, right?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: All right. Okay, thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Madam President.

Deputy Mayor, Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioner, good morning.

I kind of go back to my days of sitting on that side of the table, when I was going after my particular budget, and remembering how sometimes you had to put forth the information that you didn't always want to and ask for things or not ask for things based on budgetary constraints that you really wanted.

Let me, in that frame of mind, ask you this question: If there were no budget crisis, would you be considering closing firehouses and laying people off at this point?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Quite frankly -- Everett Gillison, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety.

Councilman Jones, the answer to that question is really twofold. One, we don't want to close fire stations; that's why it's in Plan B. And we don't think that we'll have to close fire stations. We are committed to making sure, much like we did with the previous matter, that we didn't lay off not one firefighter because of our commitment to jobs and our commitment to making sure that the people are safe.

The budget reality is that we

have to, but if there was no crisis out there, obviously, we would not be considering closing the stations. We would be considering, however, rebalancing the City, because it hasn't been done in years.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Now, Deputy Mayor Gillison, I'm the elected official here and politician now, and I want you to answer the question.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: If we had no budget crisis at this point, or if there was a magic part of Stimulus money that came from Washington, would we be talking about closing firehouses, Commissioner, as we speak?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: If funding was there, we wouldn't be talking about closing firehouses.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Now, my second -- if that being the case, why wouldn't we be talking about rebalancing? Because we have a pretty good system this place, right?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We have a good system, we have one of the best systems, we have one of the best fire systems in place. What we do have to do is --

COUNCILMAN JONES: I got that part. I -- believe me, you're beating me over the head with Plan B. I just want to talk about if there were no need to cut 20 percent.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I --

COUNCILMAN JONES: We wouldn't be tinkering with one of the best fire-response systems, correct?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, I would --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Is that a yes or no?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I would say the answer is both because we do have to tinker with it. The reason is, is because we have to anticipate things that we have not been able to get to, which is population shifts.

We've got to get with where we're building now, what's the age of the areas. And we have to deal with that. And in some places where we currently have fire stations, we may not need them, but we have to find out where we're going.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So the answer really is: Yes, we do have to tinker with it to see where we need to be in the 21st century.

COUNCILMAN JONES: You got to understand that Charlie McPherson is fierce with that time clock.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Okay.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So shorter is better, all right?

Having said those two things, I remember the Mayor, in the budget address, saying to us that Police and Fire would be held harmless. Why are we today talking about Fire being reduced again?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We're only

talking about Fire being reduced in the areas if Plan B comes out. Fire is going to have to be tinkered with --

COUNCILMAN JONES: But what I heard my mayor say was that in this fiscal year, there would be no tampering with Police and Fire 'cause I remember, I was at the press conference.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So why are we here talking about it now?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Because we have to plan in the event that we don't get the revenue that's needed in order to fund the budget. We have to tell you, I think, consistently so you'll understand what it means if don't get the revenue.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, we are a little thickheaded here in Council; you've made that clear.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: But we're going to be as bulldog-stubborn about the things we care about, and we care about fire safety.

And I'm going to ask you this: From this time last year, how many engine companies have been closed and how many positions eliminated from this time last year?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Five engine companies, two ladder companies, and 148 positions.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So 148 positions. This time next year, under Plan B --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Under Plan B.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Because I go with President Verna's math. I just want -- not 0.2, not 0.8. How many positions are we looking at eliminating over the next fiscal year?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Under Plan B?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Under Plan B.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: 138.

COUNCILMAN JONES: In addition

to --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: 112.

COUNCILMAN JONES: In addition to?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: In addition to.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So I go back to my original question. We have the best fire-response system anywhere, and we're talking about reducing it close to 300 positions in one fiscal year, and we don't think that that's going to have an effect on public safety?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Councilman, I think that the -- the difference that I would state to your question is, the answer is: Yes, it would, but we don't have to go there if Plan A is adopted.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Oh, okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So, therefore, to me, it's -- if we get to Plan B, we're all in a position that we don't want to be, but we have to plan.

COUNCILMAN JONES: All right. I'm going to remain optimistic that we won't have to touch this.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Now, as we start talking about public safety, has the pain -- and this is a word that has become universally understood by all members of government now. Has the pain been equally distributed among the public safety departments? Or, based on what I'm reading, has it been disproportionately applied to the Fire Department?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It's been targeted, so I don't -- and I would not say "disproportionately," but I would say it's been targeted in areas to make sure that we keep a level of safety for the City.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'll repeat the question differently, Deputy Mayor. If we look at prisons, are they hiring?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Prisons

has hired in order to --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes or no.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes. Has Police received any layoffs or closing of stations?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No. No, they have not.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. But Fire has. That would make them not equal.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That's why they were targeted --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Not equally.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I will wait for the next round, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Can you tell me, under Plan B,

what will close? What are you closing under Plan B?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Three engine companies and two ladder companies.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Which engine companies --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And three medic units.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Which engine companies, which ladder companies, which medic units?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We are evaluating all companies in the Fire Department. We have not made that decision.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: When you make that decision, please provide it to the Chair, because, before I vote on a contingency, I want to know what it is you're proposing to close.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Secondly, if you turn to the chart that the Council President was talking to you about,

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Section 45, Page 56, I'm very confused by it.

You mentioned that there are 42 firefighter EMTs kind of serving as paramedics? When I -- is that right or wrong?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: The 42 are paramedic positions. They would be used -- we need 240 paramedics to man the system 24/7. The 42 would be above that number so while any of the 240 were off, you would have that person working there on straight time. If they're not there, we bring in a paramedic on overtime.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I still don't understand -- just look at the increment run January '09 and explain to me, of the 211 fire paramedic -- fire service paramedics, are some of those that we're paying for under that category, EMTs?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: No. They're all paramedics.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So

then I look at firefighter EMTs, and it says three.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Right. The firefighters are not detailed strictly to a BLS medic unit. If you look back in the firefighting section...

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Section, uh...

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Page 12, Section 45?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Right. Thank you.

There's 1338 firefighters --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: -- in the budget.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: We have 1440 on the (indiscernible) run.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: So just based on that analysis, you're over -- they would cover the 92 vacancies back on

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Page 56.

The other way of doing it, we could charge 92, taking 'em out of Division 1 and listing them in 5.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, where are they working?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: They're working at the fire stations. Every day, they would get detailed into a BLS unit, but they're assigned to an engine company or a ladder as opposed to a medic unit.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: These firefighter EMTs?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Right.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Then they go out with the medic unit when there's a -- because that day you need --

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Right. They usually have a four-day tour.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So of the 1440, 42 people are --

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: I would say -- no. Out of the 1440, hundreds of them are EMTs. And they work on a rotating basis --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: -- so it's not these 42 or these 92. It's out of these hundreds on a rotating basis you would fill in.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you're not talking about 42 people; you're talking about, like, 42 men a day doing this out of the hundreds.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: The 42 --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But a different 42 every day.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: The 42 are on the paramedic side, paramedics.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, I thought you said there were --

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: There are 92 EMT budgeted positions in Division 1 --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right, but the testimony was there were 42 EMTs filling in for paramedics.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: No. It was 42 vacant budget paramedic positions.

We fill them in with paramedics, is our first choice.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But that's your first choice.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: And it usually works out that way. We bring another paramedic in on overtime.

If something is happens right away, it might be a chance it would be a firefighter, but you would still have a paramedic on the ALS unit and still remain in the ALS unit.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you'll have one paramedic but maybe not two.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: In some situations. Our choice is to have two.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, I guess what we're trying to get to is how often that happens, because there was -- I'm not making this up.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: We take very good notes.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Mm-hmm.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: The testimony was: 42 EMS serve as paramedics.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Only in emergencies, only in emergencies.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The way we staff --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I mean, I'm just curious.

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It can happen in emergencies.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It can happen in emergencies, but the way we staff is, we try to staff our paramedic units with two paramedics. We can't staff with one paramedic and one emergency medical technician. If the staffing levels of paramedics went that low, we would staff that way.

But it does not always happen. It's not something that's very frequent.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, how often -- all right. Just provide -- I don't want to waste time on this. Provide to the Chair exactly how often that happens and how it works.

Now, you look at -- you've got -- it looks like to me like for the increment run, you're under general -- sorry, Section 45, Page 56, you've really got 237 people.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And you're asking us to budget for 394 people.

So my question is: How many of these positions, given your previous testimony that a new class of 15 may start in July, how many of these positions are you actually going to be able to fill in FY '10?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We expect to put on a class that the vacancies are at 52, as we stated.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: That's for paramedics. You've also got 92 firefighter-EMTs at $5 million. How many of these positions, 394, are you going to fill during FY '10?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: There are not 92 vacancies in the firefighters. You have to offset it by the number we are over in Division 1. So right now, if you do that, we would have 35 -- 35 firefighter vacancies, 52 paramedic vacancies. We hope to bring in 15 to lower the 52 down. That would be your number.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: In FY '10?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: In FY '10.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So why are we budgeting for 52?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: 52 would provide the --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah, but we're not going to hire them.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: But that -- your choice would be either budget for 52, take them out of the budget, and then you would have to increase the amount of overtime required. It's an offset. You do it one way or the other. You have the replacement factor or --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Let's do some honest accounting. I mean, you're paying the overtime now.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Which comes out of the money budgeted for the 52. You could look at it that way, either way.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, let's look at the way it actually happens instead of a fantasy.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: We're being hopeful.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So what your -- your testimony is that we can cut 37 budgeted paramedic positions because they're not going to be hired in FY '10.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: If you place that money in the overtime category.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So let's go -- Madam President, can I just follow this line just with respect to overtime?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please do.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can you show me where the overtime is in the budget detail?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: On Page 57.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: You have uniform overtime, $4,258,000.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So this doesn't -- where is the comparison for -- this is just -- I don't see for budgeted -- you don't have any overtime budgeted?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: It's right on that page.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah, I see annual salary, July 1, 2009.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Down at the bottom, it's -- you can see a comparison of different years.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Oh, I'm sorry, okay. Give me a second here.

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So in FY '08, overtime was 3955. You had more vacancies than you have today; is that correct?

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: We have more vacancies...

COUNCILMAN GREEN: In paramedics and firefighter-EMTs.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Okay. I'd have to double-check it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And so now, it -- you're asking for more than you had in FY '08 and FY '10 in overtime.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: We're asking for less than we estimate in FY '09.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Sure, but in the FY '09 rebalancing, the whole purpose of eliminating the engine companies was to bring us $8 million in overtime savings.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: But not in this division. This is in the EMS Division.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: This is just overtime for EMS. Okay, okay, got it.

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DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: And as you can see, we're going down in '10 from '09. If we did it the other way, take out the budgeted positions, then our request for overtime would more match the '09 number.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So that's $900,000 more.

DEP. COMM. BEATRICE: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, there's room there for a a couple million dollars of savings.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, gentlemen.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good morning.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: In the

backdrop of the discussion around the closings and the -- well, first of all, let me say thank you because your department has always been --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman, I don't think the stenographer can hear you.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Surely.

Your department has always been responsive to the eight-week citizen forum that we have, and I appreciate the presence there and the information you provide.

As a result of those forums where I learned and heard from seniors, particularly seniors in high-rise buildings --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- their unreadiness and fear of not being taken care of in the midst of the worst crisis that we could image.

So my first question is: How often are fire drills held in

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senior-citizen buildings where they're high-rise buildings and where you have disabled senior citizens? What's the Department's policy?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The Fire Prevention Division has a high-rise team, and they actually go in and they set up with each individual building what the escape plan is, the evacuation plan is. And also during that time, it is set how many evacuation drills will be had.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So it could be situational.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So it's the responsibility of the district fire departments to confer with those heads of those senior-citizen buildings to ensure that that happens.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: They work in conjunction with Fire Prevention Division teams.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So they all

collaborate together, they work together, they go in and make sure there's evacuation plans for each and every building and that there are drills.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And what type of accountability is in place to ensure that that is actually happening? What kind of checkpoint measures are in place to ensure -- 'cause these are the actual complaints that I've received from the senior citizens who are quite afraid and have complained, quote, we haven't had a fire drill in X-number of months.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, the first thing that should happen is, that complaint should -- they should voice that complaint to the Fire Department.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Put it in writing, register it in writing, and send it to you.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Exactly. Get it to the Fire Prevention Division. And what we would do is go out to that building or to that agency and find out exactly what's going on. And we would make sure that is done.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What type of training or retraining happens in terms of readiness of the worst kind of disaster we could have?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: One of things we have, we have Ready One Pennsylvania, Ready One PA, which is operated through our emergency -- Office of Emergency Management. And we have a system that's set up to actually notify different buildings, the residents, of what's happening, what they could actually do to prepare themselves.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And that's a ongoing function by our Office of Emergency Management.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How often is that tested?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: How often --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How often

is that system tested?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I couldn't tell you that, how often it's tested.

One of the things that's happening now, as we're building out in Ready PA, Notify PA, all of the things that we're doing to get that done, we're pushing that forward. So I couldn't give you that exact information.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: But it's a work in progress.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It is a work in progress.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What kind of dots are connected to 3-1-1?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I beg your pardon?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What type of dots connected to 3-1-1?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It is connected as far as calling 3-1-1 to find out a bout Ready Notify, Ready PA, or anything in the Fire Department, all a citizen needs to do is dial 3-1-1, and we

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have, if you will, questions that are already programmed into 3-1-1 to get them to the information that they need.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. You talk about saturating high-risk areas with smoke alarms. How does that happen? Discuss that briefly -- 'cause the clock is always ticking -- how that happens.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: One of the things that we've done in the Philadelphia Fire Department is to continue to identify areas by census tract --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: -- where there are high amounts of fires.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Where are your communities that are below the poverty level, at or below.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And we target those areas to make sure that smoke-alarm education is given out in those areas.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What linkages exists with PHA?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: A very close linkage with PHA. We've done programs with PHA. Currently, we are doing a program with PHA.

And as far as sprinkler systems in homes, we've given out all types of education and information with PHA. We work very closely with them.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What is this hazmat response exercise?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Hazmat response is hazardous materials --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Oh, okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: -- is what it references.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Oh, okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And those exercises are done on an annual basis so that not only the citizens and the businesses are prepared, but also our firefighters and police officers are prepared to support any type of a accidental or a man-made event.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for your breakdown with regards to professional services. We don't have to go through that, 'cause it's plain and understandable.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So let me just underscore my number-one concern, and that is: Ensuring that seniors that are in high-rises, that are disabled, particularly those who are deaf, 'cause I was at a meeting of nothing but deaf citizens, and this was the number-one issue they had concerns about.

So in the next round, I need to hear specifically what are the measures taken to assist those who can't see and those who are deaf.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. We will talk about it.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. And thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're

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welcome.

Commissioner, would you please provide us with a three-year comparison for EMS that shows the built positions and the overtime for FY '08, FY '09, and FY '10. I assume you do not have that information at hand now.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: (Shakes head.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All right. Would you please provide that information in writing. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: At this time, the Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, Commissioner and company.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good morning.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Good morning, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I too want to thank you for always being there and being readily available for questions or projects. You've been so very helpful.

I want to ask you just a couple questions regarding the police stations -- the firehouses, I'm sorry.

You know, the average citizen just sees a firehouse, and they just think it's a firehouse. I mean -- and that if a fire breaks out, that firehouse is who comes out to put your fire out. And, you know, I always thought that. And this morning, I was talking to one of my staff people on the way in, and they certainly thought that.

Can you tell me, what does a average firehouse have? Because when you start to break it down in a engine company and a ladder company, I just thought that any firehouse could come out and put a fire out. Is that true?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's true. You have firehouses that have single engines, firehouses now that have single ladders. We have firehouses that are double -- have a engine and a ladder.

Some firehouses have medic units. Some firehouses have a battalion chief. Some firehouses even have a division chief, but there are only two of those.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So what does a firehouse need to be? I mean, what does it need to have in order to put a fire out? Does it need --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: A firehouse --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: It needs a ladder, it needs a engine?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No. The action doesn't take place at the firehouse.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The action takes place at the emergency.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: And at the

emergency, we supply the engines and the ladders and the rescue units to supply that service to the citizens in need.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So the most important thing to look at is the event, where's it happening, the fact that you get a engine, a ladder, a medic unit, a battalion chief to make sure that that incident is taken care of.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And so, in some cases, the engine or the ladder may come from a different firehouse?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That is correct.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. But as long as it ends up on the scene, correct?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That is correct.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. Well, it gets more confusing, especially with a double ladder or a single ladder or whatever it is that you said. But I guess the most important part is what ends up being at the scene of the fire.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That is correct.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All the equipment that's needed, okay.

Okay. Can you provide the Chair with a list of firehouses and actually state whether that particular house has a engine or a ladder.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Now, if you have a firehouse that doesn't have a engine or a ladder, then what does that firehouse do? Or do you have any like that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, have a -- our firehouses have engines and ladders, chiefs and medic units.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So every firehouse has one or the other.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, some have both, actually.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yeah, I

understand that. But it has to have one or the other.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's correct.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And let me hurry up. I have a couple more questions.

Are Philadelphia citizens or visitors entitled to an ambulance service?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, we provide ambulance service to citizens, to visitors, to all here.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But the key word here is "entitled." Are they entitled to an ambulance?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, if you call 3-1-1.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No, no, no.

Councilwoman, good morning. Everett Gillison, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety.

Focusing as a lawyer on what you're saying, I think your question is:

Is there a legal right to an ambulance?

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And the answer to that is no.

However, we have made a commitment to provide the best service in this city. And so, we provide the service, but there is no entitlement to a ambulance; there's no Constitutional right to it.

But we provide the service.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So how many calls -- how many calls do you get per day? Do you keep that kind of information of how many calls you get per day for ambulance?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. We do track it.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And can we get that information?

Plus do you have people that abuse calling you? I mean, we have -- sometimes we have people that call my office every day, particularly at certain times of the day. Maybe they've gotten up and decided to feel pretty good, and they just call you up, I mean, just for no particular reason or for reasons.

Do you have people that, like, for example, maybe call you instead of calling a taxicab to get to the doctor, or whatnot? And if you do, then what are you doing to cut down on those calls? 'Cause I'm sure that that --

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Or runs. Do you actually do a run there? I'm sure that costs money.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. We have quality control, where we have a look at a system. If we see a certain number of calls, we'll check to find out if that's a person with a chronic illness, who periodically have to have a medic unit.

Or we'll have a situation where -- one's being investigated now --

where a person is irate with some other person, and they call in false alarms.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We examine that, we go after it, work with police. And, hopefully, this other person's going to be getting arrested shortly.

But we have all types of situations like that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. But at least it sounds like you're aware of them, and it's not something that you constantly run out to and it becomes a little bit cost-effective.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's something that we would like to have out of the system, so we monitor it.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman, your time is up.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right. I forgot.

Thank you .

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank

you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I would just like to go back and follow up on a point that we discussed earlier. Even though fire services, emergency services are exempt from the new cellphone legislation about talking on a handheld unit, that we all agree that talking on a phone, radio, and driving for a for a long period of time is not a good thing, we'd agree to that, right?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So I just want you to keep that in mind in your decision-making process on the chief's aides. Even though they're exempt, that that is -- that could be a problem, driving, talking, doing all those things.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We'll consider that, sir.

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COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You talked about the recruiting chief that you have, the recruiting chief that goes -- the battalion chief that's recruiting paramedics?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yeah. He monitors the recruitment. And he does a lot more than that, trust me.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. Well, I'm focused on that piece.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you provide -- and I don't want to beat it to death, I don't want to go back too far, but could you send the schedule for, let's say, mid-2008, for the year, of places that that recruiting has occurred. And I'd like to see where he's planning to go so that, in my work, I can communicate to people that there will be a recruiting seminar for paramedics at a particular location.

But I'd be interested to see where that has already occurred and, going forward, where it's going to occur.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. We'll send you that over.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Good. To the Chair.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you again, Madam President.

If we were looking at a 24-hour clock -- and this is partially expanding upon Councilwoman Miller's question -- when are you most busy for fires? Is there a pattern of when calls occur? Either for EMS -- separate EMS and then separate fire calls.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: For EMS, we're most busy from 8 to 8 in the evening. And some days between 8 and 11:01 in the morning, especially weekends. Our busiest days are Thursday, Friday, Saturday night.

For fires, we're -- we get quite a bit fires -- quite a few of our fires in the -- at night.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So from 11 -- is it true that from 11 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., most fire deaths occur?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: 11 p.m. to 7 p.m.?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We get a majority of fire deaths nationally -- I think that's a national stat. But sometimes it varies, it varies. We have had multiple deaths in the afternoon and in the evening.

COUNCILMAN JONES: But statistically, is there a pattern that suggests --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's correct, statistically.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And so, is there a plan being put forth by your department as to on EMS calls and to -- is there a plan by which that you deactivate certain EMS units during certain times of day? And what do you base that on?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, there is. It's called System Status Units. And what we base that on is measuring and identifying the largest volumes of calls. We identify those time periods, and that's where we concentrate our resources.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And it's my understanding that there is a study also that may be used to redeploy EMS units as to deal with volumes of calls during particular times a day?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yeah. We constantly monitor that, we monitor it. And whenever there's a change required, we'll make the change.

COUNCILMAN JONES: In light of the fact that a lot of people -- and we're losing -- and I would hope that you use this stat as well, that we're losing a lot of our hospitals; in particular, emergency rooms; in particular, certain parts of City are experiencing that. Selfishly, in the 4th District I have one hospital; it's Roxborough Hospital.

So as you start to deploy and redeploy these EMS, sometimes it is the only expedient way for a person suffering from a heart attack to get Point A to Point B, which is a hospital.

And are you taking that into account as you start to formulate a master plan for redeploying these units?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Absolutely that's a part of our master planning.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So I should not expect anything being reduced in certain parts of my district based on the fact that we have a farther way to go and less hospitals than other districts, correct?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We will look at each and every criteria.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I was trying to get you on the record, but you're good. All right. Okay. But you'll look at it and take that into account.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Absolutely, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.

Another question. And this is somewhat of a capital question, but while I have you, is it not true that diesel fuel is pretty hazardous to our health?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Diesel fuel is hazardous.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Is it also true that most of our trucks are diesel?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Let me correct that. The diesel fuel emissions, I believe, is what we're talking about --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Correct, correct.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: -- just for the record.

Yes, they're hazardous, and our trucks do use diesel fuel.

COUNCILMAN JONES: How are we doing with providing proper ventilation in some of those firehouses?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We're doing

good. Two things that -- two programs that we currently implementing.

One is the addition of a emission-cleaning tool or a instrument that's being placed on each and every one of the pumpers and the ladders to reduce the diesel fuel emissions. And, two, the point source capture systems that's being put into each and every fire station currently.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What are the health impacts of exposure to diesel fuel by way of lung ailments? Are you familiar with any of them?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. They are various. And studies show that breathing diesel fuel has a impact on your health.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And are firemen disproportionately impacted by those emissions and those a result --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, I think that --

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- as opposed

to other departments?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Any workers that's exposed to diesel fuel would be more impacted. It's like if you don't work in a environment where there's diesel fuel emissions, you will be less impacted.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. I'm telling you, you guys -- you have been hanging around with Councilmembers way too long. You answer questions artfully.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: What I'm getting to is: I want to know how we are going and how we are progressing with providing those ventilation systems inside fire stations where our brave firefighters, on the way to save someone else's life, are being -- putting their lives at risk by inhaling these diesel emissions.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We have Phase I and Phase II of the installation project that's currently ongoing. We expect Phase I and II to be completed by

June 30th. The program is currently being crashed, the project is being crashed to provide installations in all stations hopefully by June 30th.

Outside of that, the August -- mid-August is the long-term goal for completion of the entire project.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I understand also you have a pretty good health insurance policy, and a lot of your guys actually get some of the best health care around of other -- compared to what we in Council may get; is that true?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's true.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And we want you to have it because you face greater risks. I don't have to inhale diesel fuel every day, and so we're glad that you have it.

And as we start to talk about '10, '20, and '30, it should never include things like that, your health benefits.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you,

sir.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Other than go back and forth on this, if you could provide the following to the Chair for inclusion in testimony, and assume that it will become a part of the record and that it's the same as your testimony before Council:

For FY '09, please provide the cost, including fringe, for all unfilled paramedic and EMT positions.

Please also provide the cost of covering the work that was to be performed by these positions through overtime.

And please provide the same analysis for FY '10 based on current vacancies in these positions and your estimations regarding the number of these vacancies that you will fill during the current year.

And, finally, explain with roughly the same number of people why overtime is going to increase in Fiscal '08 versus Fiscal 2010 in the Emergency Medical Services Division.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can you tell me, does -- is there a -- does collective bargaining or anything like that cover the number of battalion chiefs and captains we have, or is that at the discretion of the Department?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's a management right. We look at the budget and we supply the resources that we get.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So can you explain to me what a battalion chief does very quickly.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Very quickly? A battalion chief is responsible for a geographical area. He or she actually has several firehouses that are directly under their command. They are responsible for them administratively as well as responsible for the training and all of the other things that go on within that, their own fire safety district.

They're responsible for ensuring that inspections are made, hydrant, building, other inspections.

They're responsible for ensuring that the staffing levels are adequate so that when the doors open at 8 o'clock, 6 o'clock at night, all of the members, the men and women, are prepared to go into service and to work.

They also are responsible for critiques. They have a job, they'll come back, they'll look at the job, make sure that there's a process improvement in place.

They're responsible for making sure that they give them their performance rating, things like that.

And they are responsible for going on the fire ground at an event, whether it's hazardous materials, whether it's a house fire, a building fire, a high-rise fire, excavation of someone entrapped. Whatever it is, they take command of that scene until relieved of that command, and they ensure that all of the resources are pointed towards, one, a schedule outcome, protection of life, protection of property, protection of the environment.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So what would be the impact -- how many -- so how many stations does the average battalion chief cover? And I assume there are equal numbers in each shift during the day of battalion chiefs or --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, not equal. They vary with various firehouses. It could be from five firehouses to six firehouses.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So if we eliminated, let's say, ten battalion chief positions, how would that impact --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I

apologize. Could you repeat your question.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: If we eliminated ten battalion chief positions, how would that impact, you know, service to citizens who are in need of EMT personnel or a fire engine or a ladder company coming to their house?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We would not be looking at eliminating ten battalion chief positions.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I didn't ask you if you were looking at it; I asked what the impact would be.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The impact of relieving ten battalion chief -- of reducing ten battalion chief positions would be enormous on the Philadelphia Fire Department.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Why?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Because I just explained what you need from each one, and you would not have the command function that you need.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: How many fires are there at a time in the City?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, it varies.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Sometimes it's no fires at all.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right. How many fires on average at a time?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Excuse me, sir.

(Commissioner Ayres confers with staff off the record).

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Please?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: How many fires on average at a time?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: On average at a time?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah. I mean, what's the most number of fires that you've ever had at one time?

(Timer bell rings.)

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I'd have to look that up.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So basically -- we'll come back to this, but the battalion chiefs that work during the day have an administrative role, and the battalion chiefs that work in the evening pretty much have a role of covering fires; is that -- or do they also have an administrative role?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: They do administrative work as well. They do some of things we talked about -- training, ensuring that -- planning is a very big function for battalion chiefs.

It's just one of the things that you need. You need battalion chiefs. It's a reason for having that job function there. It's a job function that's critical to fire service delivery in any municipality or township.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Do we have more or less battalion chiefs per number of stations and firefighters than our peer cities?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We have

probably close to the same.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And you have looked at that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, I would look at it, I could look at it. I have not examined each and every one of our peer cities.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I would say that it's comparable.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you don't think the Fire Department's top-heavy.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Absolutely not.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I think citizens would like to see more money for firefighters.

But we'll come back to this line of questioning, Madam President. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you Madam President.

Commissioner, at the tail-end of the Street Administration, you, Brian McBride, and Mayor Street himself went on a tour of a number of firehouses relative to capital-improvement issues, including the issue that Councilman Jones raised relative to emissions, diesel emissions.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes Councilman.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Could you give us an idea as to what progress has been made on those station improvements and what are the ongoing plans to keep the station houses liveable?

Some of the sites we have seen, as you know, were deplorable conditions -- bad windows, we had mice in some and some (indiscernible). Can you give me a status report on what was accomplished and what our plans are for keeping these places liveable work environments?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. With

the budget that was available and the prioritized list that was established with Public Property, we went into the stations that were the worst and started to try to make improvements. As you know, some of 'em are electrical improvements, some are just basic structure because of the older firehouses, some roofs, heaters, things like that.

We took care of the life-safety issues first in those firehouses that we went into.

We've received money from PICA to go forward and also money that's budgeted in Capital to continue to move forward to fix and repair those stations that we can.

And also in a longer look, hopefully, at some point, we'll be able to have a master plan where we look at even building other fire administration stations. But we've moved ahead and we've got some of those firehouses in --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Are you in

consultation with the Capital Office, or are you doing it internally? Or what's the -- you're trying to address the issues talked about at the end of the Street Administration, but how about, going forward, what are the plans to continue maintenance?

'Cause, you know, the difference between this work environment and every other in the City is that is actually a house where people live, as you know.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And, you know, some of the conditions that we saw were not house-worthy.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We are in consultation with Capital and with Property. And one of the things that we're doing is, we've prioritized that list and looked at those things that we'll be able to get over the next five fiscal years.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: If it's not too inconvenient -- and I know you get a lot of requests for information, but if you could give me an update on the places that we looked at, what was done, and what the plan is for the future.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you very much.

Just a word of compliment to the Department, both the Fire Department and the Police Department. Yesterday, I participated in a 10-K race for the Donor Dash, which we had honored in Council on Thursday. At the end of that race, sadly, we lost a 19-year-old young man from a high school in South Philadelphia.

Your people were on the scene immediately, were acting in an extremely professional, courteous, and very understanding manner. It was sad that we lost a child, but it had nothing to do at all with your people's ability and activity, along with the Police Department that was there to offer actually comfort and help to all of these children who were there, witnessing the loss of their friend.

So, in addition to the professionalism that your paramedics and battalion chiefs -- actually, a battalion chief who was on the scene, who was very, very helpful, so there are duties that battalion chiefs perform, and he was performing well yesterday. Along with that, the Police Department were very helpful in moving young people to the hospital and getting family members -- I mean, it was just a tragic situation that was unavoidable, something that was God's will.

But I just wanted to compliment both departments on their courteous and compassionate and professional way in which they handled the situation.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It was one

of the saddest reports that I read, was the fight for this young man.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It was a bad day, but you guys helped make it as less bad as possible. Thank you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: My time's not up. I just have one other -- is my time up?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Oh, okay. Thank you.

We've had discussion in the past in here relative to ear protection, hearing protection for firefighters.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I know that many firefighters, because of the proximity that they sit in the cab of their equipment to the sirens, that, you know, deafness is an ongoing issue.

I know we've had discussion in the past that this ear protection or hearing protection was kind of something we should be negotiating or arbitrating. And I found problems with that in the past because, again, we wouldn't arbitrate the use of a helmet 'cause it's safe. Why we would be arbitrating the use of hearing protection.

And is there some way we can kind of look at those areas? In this very difficult financial time, these kinds of items do go a long way in helping to show that the government is concerned about their workers.

And where are we with the ear protection?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Currently, we have four pumpers that we just purchased. They are outfitted with the fill-com hearing-protection systems. We are piloting that program. Two have been delivered, and we're expecting two more deliveries.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Are we just looking at the acquiring of that equipment as a result of new apparatus purchases?

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Or is there some way we can retrofit existing engine and ladder companies?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We're looking at the retrofit, and it's going to be about 5,000 per truck, but we are actually looking at not only bringing the new ones in as they come, but to retrofit back.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It's an understandable expenditure relative to the person's health going forward. And I'd appreciate it if you could continue to try to expedite or accelerate that equipment purchase.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you very much.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

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I'd like to revisit and probe a a little bit more about special provisions or standard operating procedures involving seniors and those who are visually- or hearing-impaired.

What is the standard operating procedure for drills for where we have senior citizens?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Uh --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there a written policy that exists?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No. It's from building to building.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It depends on the configuration, it depends on the level of care that's provided.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Whether assisted living versus a senior-citizens apartment, those types of things.

And it's -- again, our institutional teams are going to those buildings and assist them with setting up all of the planning, the evacuation planning, those types of things. Also going in and assisting with the preventive measures.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Side of that equation.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Burn prevention, fire prevention, all of those things.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So let me make sure that heard you.

The level of care drives the number of types that drills happen as such, or the number of times that inspections around drills happen; is that what I'm hearing?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. And where is there a record where you report back, indicating that a drill has taken place in this building for this level of care of seniors, disabled, hearing- and visually-impaired? Where's there a record of that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: What I would have to do is get that from Fire Prevention and make sure that you get that information.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: If you could forward that to the Chair.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I will absolutely make sure that that's forwarded to you.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. 'Cause my thinking is that the onus should not have to be on seniors to reduce the (indiscernible) we haven't had a drill.

If there's a standard operating procedure that there should be a drill every six months or every three months based on the level of care of that building, then that procedure should be in place and well understood not only by folks on your side of the equation but by the building managers of those buildings.

How does one become a fire service representative?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: One of

several ways. The easiest is to go to your local fire station. You can receive a -- an application. They need to be 18 years old, they need to be a Philadelphia resident, and you have to have access to e-mail.

One of the things that happens is, our Fire Prevention Division actually e-mails all of the fire safety representatives, the different activities that's going on in the area, and also the seasonal fire prevention messages to get those things out.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Let's switch back to the visually- and hearing-impaired. I'm just trying to reflect on the session I did with the hearing impaired citizens.

Is there some type of phone or some type of mechanism, some type of equipment that's used for those who are hearing-impaired? And how does that work?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, we just entered into a project with Temple

University. And what we did was, we worked with them with a grant to purchase smoke alarms for hearing-impaired.

And what that does is, when that smoke alarm goes off, there's a radio transmission that goes to a device under the person's pillow. And also, for those that are only hearing-impaired, a strobe light that goes off to help wake them up so that they can escape their home.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Much the same as if a regular smoke alarm goes off. So that's one of the programs that we just entered into with Temple University.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And so, are there linkages with the hearing-impaired community? Are there limits on that? Is that open to any and everybody who has a family member --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's limited because of funding.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: But we have

applied to the national -- excuse me we've applied to the Assistance for Firefighters Grant Program to get monies so that we could supply more of those smoke alarms. They are very, very costly.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: So we're trying to expand the program and, hopefully, at least support some families.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So I will look forward to the report that stipulates how often drills are had in facilities where you have high levels of care for seniors and the disabled and the hearing- and visually-impaired.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you,

Madam President.

I have a couple of more questions.

Commissioner, I'm sure you're aware that there's a lawsuit that may require the Fire Department to provide the services that are being cut. What is the Administration's plan if the lawsuit goes against the City? Do you have a Plan B?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I'm not sure. I'm not sure which lawsuit you're referring to.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, I think the firefighters union has instituted a lawsuit to restore some of the cuts.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That would be a legal matter.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right. The basic answer to that question would be that whatever the direction of the court would be is we would obviously follow.

The majority of the one that is currently before the Supreme Court talks about whether or not we would have to do certain -- take the analysis and kind of redo everything in the beginning rather at the end.

But we are proceeding right now well within what our attorney has told us we can do. So we're going forward.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And my second question -- but I just thought of something too. We had a hearing once about the earplugs that the firefighters use -- do you remember that hearing, Jim? How was that issue settled?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, the issue was settled here in Council. One of the things that we're doing, as you heard from Councilman Kenney, is moving forward to supply the hearing protection for the firefighters.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So it's different from what you were using back then.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Is it

better?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I believe they were talking about the plugs that were utilized previously in the firehouse, and we're moving onto the units that actually cover the whole ear.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, great. All right.

And would you discuss the new hours, the new schedule under the reorganization? And what are the benefits? Do you have any data or research on the physical or psychological effects of this 12-hour, three-days-straight shift?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. The shift change, I believe, you're talking about is the paramedic shift change. That shift change is based on a legal matter, a lawsuit that was filed by the paramedics against the City of Philadelphia and won.

One of the things that we have had to do is to modify the shift in order to avoid the excessive cost for overtime

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that would be incurred in the same schedule. Right now, what we are doing is preparing to make that shift.

And as far as the psychological effects and all of those types of things, we currently run a shift exactly like that in our Fire Communications Center. One of the things that we found is, while it was a change, that it was something that was good for some and not so good for others.

There are issues that are being worked out between the City and the union currently, but the shift is two days on, two days off; three days on, two days off; two days on, and then three days off with every other weekend off.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, that sounds like quite a bit.

So in one month, I notice you can have two weekends off. But every couple of days, your shift changes? And is it 12 hours?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, a steady shift.

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: It's a steady shift?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Day works and night works.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'm sorry. Say that again.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Paramedics will be working steady shifts -- either day work or night work.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And is that just paramedics, not firefighters also?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: No, it's just paramedics.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Just paramedics, okay, okay.

So is the data -- is the effects negative effects or is it -- what's the data cite? What's the research? And if it is bad for some, then are you able to switch them around?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We have a process in place for folks that have hardships to actually look at how to help them resolve those and to give them time to resolve those. The Department and the union's currently working through that process.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, all right.

So there is a possibility that a shift could be modified if you have a hardship.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, all right. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

How many of Philadelphia's fire facilities don't have fire protection systems?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I will have

to check. I know we have smoke alarms in all of our facilities. We're looking at -- that's one of the improvements in the Capital. I'd have to look that up for you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, the answer is 30. And on July 1, 2008, PICA approved money for adding them to 16 facilities. Can you explain why that's not been done?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I couldn't say why it hasn't been done to this date. I will look into that. That's something that's important to me as well.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Well, also, 15 roofs were in need of substantial replacement. How many of those roofs have been repaired?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It is in planning, and I can't tell you exactly how many has been done.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Zero is the answer, because none of the PICA money has been called on.

Can you explain why you have money appropriated for eight months and you're not spending it for things like fire-detection system and roofs for our firefighters?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Commissioner, I'll take that.

Councilman, like everything else, when you have the money, once the money has been approved, you then have to go through the process of actually putting it into place.

I know that on both of those issues, both Capital Improvements and also Public Property have people working to make sure that we comply with the various budgetary necessities of getting the money spent. You have to design it, you have to implement it, and you go forward. Once the -- just Step 1 is the money is appropriated. Step 2 is planning it, and Step 3 would be implementation.

So I believe, if I remember the testimony from Public Property, they indicated, and I believe Gary Knappick would correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that over my desk, I saw that they were in the planning process to spend that money, and I would anticipate it would be spent probably within the next, you know, fiscal year.

But I know that the money is there and I know that we're planning to spend it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: All right. Well, let's talk about potential life-safety electrical corrections such as ground (indiscernible) interrupt, emergency lighting, exit signage, and circuit overload, which were identified as being needed to be done in fire stations.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: All of that is in the planning. And I believe that a couple of those things have actually been let, but I'll have to get back to you which ones and which stations have already been approved, especially the ones on the roofing, 'cause I know that I saw that that was actually being let as well.

I'll provide it to the Chair.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

The money's available. Let's get to work.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Oh, absolutely.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And it's been available for eight months. And it's, you know, maybe I need to send L&I there so that, you know -- I mean, it seems silly, but we shouldn't have potential life-safety electrical corrections needed at our fire facilities.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Point of information, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney for a point of information.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I would appreciate it if we could get from Public Property the process, the legal process, we need to follow in order to appropriate, design, and award bids, 'cause I would like to know the context in which we're talking.

I recognize -- 'cause I was involved in this from the last administration -- the timeliness and critical nature of getting the work done. But I do believe if Public Property could provide us with what the constraints are legally and whether or not eight months is in fact a long period of time when it comes to governmental appropriation, design, and the award of bids.

If they fell down on the job I'd like to know, but I suspect, from my experience here, it's a more lengthy process than any of us like. So I just would like to know, if there's criticism relative to the eight months, just what the context of that criticism is in fact.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam President.

I'll provide a little bit of

context for the Councilman. These defaults and problems were recognized in a 2007 PICA report. And if the City didn't take direction at the time to go bid them out, it's a mistake.

These things cannot survive after they've been in the light of day for two years. So I look forward to seeing what Public Property has to say about this as well.

Madam Chair, I can't recall if my time was up or --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No, it wasn't.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Sorry.

So if you could please just provide the Chair kind of a more detailed written description of the duties of the 48 battalion chiefs just so I can compare that to other cities.

There are 48 battalion chiefs, 292 captains, and it seems, you know --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's only 11 per shift.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: 11 per shift.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's only 11 per shift.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The other positions are in needed administrative positions.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Administrative positions?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And that's something that can't be done by civilians?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We'd have to look at that.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Why don't you look at that and also answer that question.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We will.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

Mr. Gillison mentioned the rebalancing of the Fire Department. That's something that we talked about last year at the budget hearings and something that's been talked about, and I believe there were even some proposals during the Street Administration.

Can you tell me what's been done with respect to rebalancing the system in terms of population shifts and et cetera?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: As far as the fire response and looking at education, we monitor that on a regular basis.

As far as looking forward to a long-range strategic plan and a study that would be needed for that versus analysis, we plan on entering into a contract as we go forward to actually look at that. It takes a longer period of time than just, of course, just an analysis to get that done.

So we're looking at it as part of our strategic planning.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I will add, Councilman, the idea is to take not only the criteria over the last obviously six months to eight months. There has been a need to do the analysis in order to bring us to where we are today for fiscal reasons.

The idea has always been to maintain a level of playing field for safety, but it is long overdue. And I will agree with you that it is long overdue that we have a full strategic analysis and plan for the Fire Department.

We plan on entering into that. I know that I've had discussions not only with the Fire Command, but I've also had discussions with the union about participating in what that plan would look like so that we would be looking together in addressing the strategic plan for Fire.

This is not something that we are talking about that is, you know, something that's going to be done in one or two months. Most places that I've looked at and most of the companies that I've had talks about with from around the country indicate that this is somewhere along the order of a 9- to 18-month processes. And the quicker we can get to it -- and it looks like I'll be able to do something after July 1st, given everything else that I hope will happen between now and July 1st, but we look to hope to have something going out for things sometime after that time.

That's all we can -- that's basically where we are.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So there's money identified in the budget for this study?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I'm trying to see exactly where we are going to be so that I'll be able to deal with that.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there money identified in this budget for that study?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: For the amount of money that we would need, there is no money that we've put aside specifically for that, but I will be working with both Finance and everyone, because we do need to do that, and we may be able to use some grant money 'cause that's something that I want to --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there grant money in this budget for that study?

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No, there's not, not at this time, not at this time.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So it's -- we have to stop talking about it. Let's budget it and let's do the study.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, I agree with you. I think that we are stopping the talk about it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, if there's not money in the budget for it, you're not going to do it.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, Madam President.

I wanted to ask about EMS billing because we are so concerned about our citizens having the service. Is there discussions about the Water Department or PGW doing it as opposed to it being contacted out?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We would like to -- we'd like to have the issue considered because our folks need it and can't afford to pay extensive fees for it.

And let me ask you, has -- how has that EMS service been affected by the 3-1-1 system?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Well, for the most part, as far as our emergency medical system, 3-1-1 has managed to take some of the calls that normally would come into 9-1-1 and then be handed off to one of our departments or to some other agency in the City. And 3-1-1 has allowed some of those calls to come in and reduce the pressure or the call volume on our 9-1-1 operators for EMS as well as -- not for emergencies, but for non-emergency services.

So that's the only way that we've been -- we've seen that as far as an effect.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes. I know that -- with 9-1-1, we knew what these kinds of services were, what would happen. And I wonder if, with this new system, it is supposed to obviously take other calls that are not emergency in nature.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Right.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I mean, I'm sure that's the purpose of it. But I wonder if, in fact, we have any evidence yet that it has done that?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good morning, Councilwoman.

It's very early, but we are still studying all of the things that come in through 3-1-1. I mean, this is April, and the system went into effect as of December 31.

Obviously, once we get the analysis, I'll be glad to forward it to you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you.

Commissioner, I've been with you on many, many mornings, where we've met at the fire stations to go to visit senior homes and to give them these new smoke detectors.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And it's really, really important, as you know, and you always talk about it. Whenever I see you on TV, you talk about those homes that have the smoke detectors and those that do not.

And these new batteries are for -- I have forgotten the length of time they're four.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Ten years.

They're ten-year lithium batteries.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay. So then what will happen then? It will go back out and --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. There's a database that's being collected. We're working collaboratively with the University of Pennsylvania cartographic modeling lab.

One of the things that they're doing is making a record of each and every home that we go into. So now, what will happen is, as we approach that ten-year mark, we'll know where we need to go back, how we need to talk to the community, that specific community, even that specific household, to let them know, make sure you change out or check your ten-year lithium batteries.

So we'll have a record.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes. I know that you continued to do a great job in that area of advocating for smoke detectors and helping anyone who would ask you and your whole team. We are grateful for that.

Finally -- and this goes to our deputy mayor -- the whole issue of a million dollars being removed from the fiscal year budget for flashlights, escape rope and webbing system. Have these -- has this whole issue been dealt with? Whenever there are cuts, we certainly can't afford to lose these vital materials -- flashlights, escape rope, and webbing system.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. That is being taken care of. The flashlights, the webbing, the escape ropes, all of those things are actually being provided -- will be implemented.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And it won't affect any cuts? You'll still be able to do these things?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's aside from any of the other budget items.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you again, Commissioner. Thank you, Deputy Mayor.

Thanks.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney. No?

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I apologize for getting here a little late, but when I got here, Councilman Kenney was asking about the progress of the hearing equipment for firefighters. Could you give me an update on that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. Currently, what we have is: In 2007, we were asked if our apparatus met the NFPA standard for the hearing levels. That was 70 decibels inside the cab, with emergency lights and sirens. And one of the things that we talked about was the compliance that we had with our apparatus since 1991. But we further discussed the fact that we wanted to get the hearing protection.

And right now, we have a pilot where we have four engines that we've purchased that actually have the hearing protection in the -- built into the apparatus. The rest we're looking at retrofitting. It's about $5,000 per truck to get it retrofitted.

So we are in the process of getting that done.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: How many trucks would you be able to do?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We do the trucks as they come in for the new apparatus. That will be ongoing from now on.

I'm not certain how many can be retrofitted, say, per day or per month right now, but it is being looked at.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: What's your best guess as far as completing all of those engines or retrofitting them; do you

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have any idea?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yeah. I can't project the completion of each and every apparatus right now, but I can work that and get that for you.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: So that's an ongoing project?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's an ongoing project.

Two things: Identifying the funding for it to make sure that it gets done, which we've talked about, and then the scheduling, how long --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: How much has been budgeted this year, this coming year?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We would have to get that information. I don't have that, but I will get it back to you.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Would you do that?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I will.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you very much.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

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COUNCILMAN KELLY: Another question I had is, I know Councilman Jones, I think, was asking you about the source capture for diesel exhaust emission systems.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Could you give me an update on that as to...

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. We have three phases of the point source capture project. One phase is completed. We're working at finishing up Phase II. We expect I and II to be done by the 30th of June, with the crashing of the project.

We're actually hoping to finish all three phases by June 30th. But at the outside, it should be mid-August.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Mid-August?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: For completion.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: For completion?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay.

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Another thing I had heard is that in your paramedic vehicles, the ambulances, where people are put there to transfer to a hospital, that there's a sticker on that says, "For information or complaints, dial 3-1-1."

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: What's the purpose of that? What would be the purpose of asking people to start complaining about the service, I guess?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We don't ask people to complain. We make sure that folks have an opportunity to have a number to call about anything. We receive calls about billing, we receive calls about excellent service.

So it's just a collection point or feedback from our citizens that we serve. It is not meant to be anything negative.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yeah. Well, I just -- I don't like the word "complaints" on there. That's the point.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: In other words, if you're asking people to complain, to me, it's promoting complaints rather than just leaving them out of the vehicles.

If people want to complain, they can call -- of course, they can call the fire station, they can call the City Hall operator, they can call 3-1-1. They can call anyone if they want to complain about it, but I just don't see the purpose of having it in the vehicles themselves.

Another question I have: You just mentioned that smoke detectors the last ten years --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Ten-year lithium batteries.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Most of the manufacturers that I know -- I know at one time it was five years. The lifetime of the smoke detector would last about five years. They don't recommend keeping it for that length of time, I don't know, unless these are new.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: These are new.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: That are --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The technology has evolved.

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The technology has evolved.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: The ones that you're getting now are probably the best units or the --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: They have the latest technology. Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: They have it updated? Okay.

All right. I have other questions but I'll wait.

All right. Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you, Commissioner.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, could you describe how the Fire Department works with L&I?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes. We work with L&I on a regular basis.

One of the ways that we work with L&I more frequently is through our Inspection Program. We go out and inspect businesses throughout the entire community, the entire city. And if we find violations, we note the violation and forward it to L&I for processing.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you actually issue violations yourself?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We note the violation and we forward it. It's called "a referral." So we refer the fact that we found a violation to Licenses and Inspections.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Are you authorized to issue a citation?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: I'm not certain. I believe the fire marshal can, a person from the fire marshal's office can issue that citation.

As far as a regular firefighter, I'm not certain. I don't believe so.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: If we authorize you to -- the people who are referring it to issue a citation, wouldn't that save a lot of time and money?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: We'd have to look at the process.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Rather than having two separate people, a firefighter in the first instance noting the problem, sending it to L&I, having --

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It could save some time, I believe so, yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah, 'cause you're doing the same thing.

So how's it going with L&I now that they have no fire -- nobody in their Fire Inspection Department at the moment?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Could you

repeat the question? How is --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: L&I no longer has people who write fire citations. Have been taken out of the budget, inspectors.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Okay. And your question?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: How's it going? Do you follow up to see that the citations are being issued?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes, we do follow up. We have a system that -- we have a system that if the fire violation isn't followed up on, it will remain. We look at it monthly. And any violation that hasn't come back to us from L&I, we'll talk with L&I to find out what happened. That's a part of our system.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So can you -- what system is that?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: The one I just explained. It's in --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: What's the name of the system? Does it have a name?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: It's the

referral system.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The referral system between the Fire Department and L&I.

COMMISSIONER AYRES: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So can you please provide us with, for the last 12 months, the number of referrals from the Fire Department to L&I, and then what the backlog is on a monthly basis in terms of things that haven't been resolved within one month?

COMMISSIONER AYRES: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

Are there any other questions from members of the committee?

(No further questions.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Seeing none, thank you, gentlemen. Thank you very much.

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COMMISSIONER AYRES: Thank you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you, Council President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The committee will stand in recess until 1:30.

Thank you.

(Lunch break taken at 1:15 p.m.)

* * *

(Proceedings resume at 1:56 p.m.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon. The Committee of the Whole is now back in session.

The next department that we'll hear from will be the Prisons.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon.

COMM. GIORLA: Good afternoon.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And welcome. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

COMM. GIORLA: Council President Verna and members of Council. I'm Louis

Giorla, Commissioner of the Prison System. I'm accompanied by several members of the Prison administrative staff. We're here to take care of in regard to our 2010 Operating Budget.

The Philadelphia Prisons mission is:

To provide a secure correctional environment that adequately detains persons accused or convicted of illegal acts;

To provide program, services, and supervision in a lawful, safe, clean humane environment; and

To prepare incarcerated persons for reentry into this society.

In the 2008 Fiscal Year, the Prisons Daily Average Population (ADP) was 9,133. Thus far, for Fiscal Year '09, the ADP is 9,581, an approximate increase of 4.9 percent.

For FY '10 the Prisons Budget is as follows:

In Class 100, Salaries and

Fringe Benefits, $126,158,000.

In Class 200, for Purchase of Services and Contracts, $116,675,000.

In Classes 3 and 400, in Material and Supplies, $4,798,000.

And in Class 500, Contributions, Indemnities and Taxes, approximately $1,201,000.

For a total of $248,635,000.

This request represents a 2 percent increase over the Prisons FY '09 obligations. It includes a proposed reduction in Class 100 of $178,000 realized from overtime savings and redeployment of personnel. An increase is being sought in Class 200 of $6,045,000. PPS obligations in this category consist of food services, medical and mental health treatment of inmates, private inmate housing contracts, and educational as well as vocational training.

An additional $115,000 increase is sought to Class 300 for supplies and materials related to housing the inmate population and maintaining our City-owned jail sites.

The request for additional funds in 2 and 300 Classes are based on a Fiscal 2010 project population increase of nearly 5 percent, or 480 inmates to a daily census of approximately 10,000.

Class 500, which primarily consists of inmate pay for institutional work assignments is essentially unchanged.

During FY '09, the Philadelphia Prison System contracted for more than $82 million in private-service contracts. Of those 38 contracts, 27 million was allocated to minority- and women-owned firms, accounting for 32.8 percent of total contracting.

There is a table below that summarizes the Prisons contracts in minority participation for FY 2008 and 2009. And just to summarize that, you can see that the departmental goal for the Prisons was between 25 and 35 percent minority participation. In FY '08, the minority participation was 26 percent -- or more than 26 percent. In FY '09, it was nearly 33 percent, at 32.88.

The City's Five-Year Plan incorporates projected prison population based on past experience and does not include personnel or other funding reductions.

For FY '10, the Prisons has relinquished 40 unfilled positions, the positions of which 35 are correctional officers, and 5 are support personnel. These position carries duties which would be absorbed by existing staff and the use of technology. Intact are vocational training and soft skills training and support programs for ex-offenders.

Understanding that Mayor Nutter has given fiscal responsibility of first priority in the Philadelphia Plan and acknowledging that Philadelphia's jails have higher per-citizen incarceration rates than most major cities, we are committed to reducing our impact on the budget while upholding our responsibility for contributing to public safety.

In order to do so, we consider it an obligation to develop economical and safe alternatives to incarceration. The Prisons did not sustain budget or personnel reductions during the rebalancing in November of 2008 or in the Five-Year Plan FY 2010 to 14.

Thus far, in 2009, the Prisons, along with the District Attorney's Office, the First Judicial District, and the Defender Association, has and will continue to explore ways to sensibly and safely reduce our jail population.

To date, the place of confinement for nearly 200 inmates -- sentenced inmates has been changed, allowing the Prisons to transfer them to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections supervision. The population reduction resulted in the removal of all Philadelphia inmates from housing in Passaic and Monmouth Counties in New

Jersey and avoiding a cost of nearly $5 million in other jurisdiction housing.

While the aforementioned forecast of a prison population of 10,000 may be anticipated, it will by no means be considered acceptable. The removal of State-sentenced inmates is one of the -- only one of the efforts underway to reduce the population.

The creation of a mental health court to provide intense supervision of mentally ill offenders on probation and parole is underway. The relocation of drug and alcohol treatment evaluators of the Forensic Intensive Recovery (FIR) Program from Center City to the prison complex has just been completed. Having FIR evaluators onsite will shorten the length of time it takes to place offenders in court-ordered community drug treatment.

Initiatives to automate recordkeeping and data transmission from the courts and to the Prisons and from the Prisons to the Defender Association will shorten the length of a stay for a portion of our pretrial population. Also, the anticipated use of video for court appearances in prison facilities will contribute to the security and efficiency in the public safety arena.

The necessity to transport hundreds of defendants to daily court and preliminary hearings throughout the City is costly and risky to the Prisons, the sheriffs, and the police. Although each of these initiatives has the potential to reduce the Prisons average daily population, none has been fully implemented, so their expected success is cautionary at this point. With that in mind, the $10,000 figure is still a potential reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Commissioner.

What is the status of the lawsuit concerning the overcrowding?

COMM. GIORLA: I believe the lawsuit you're referring to is Williams versus the City of Philadelphia? The current status is, the case has not been heard; it's pending certification of the class of claimants, and there are several motions pending before the federal court.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, I hate to ask this question, but I think several of us have heard the same rumor, and that is that you're paying inmates a fee per day if they sign a waiver from the overcrowding situation?

I find that hard to believe, but I think you're going to have to answer that.

COMM. GIORLA: I'm happy to say that I'm glad to answer that, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please do.

COMM. GIORLA: That is a rumor,

and just that.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Great.

COMM. GIORLA: We don't pay inmates for triple-cell housing. We were the subject of a lawsuit about two years ago because of crowded conditions and in our intake operations that held inmates there for upwards of 30 to 48 hours in intake, in holding cells. That situation has been corrected.

There was an award in that case, but we don't routinely pay anyone, and we don't have them sign waivers or take payments for triple cells.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I just thought that should be made a part of the record because --

COMM. GIORLA: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- several of us have heard that, and we wanted to make certain that it was clarified.

COMM. GIORLA: That rumor may have started because in some other jurisdictions -- I know in New York City, some years ago, if inmates weren't processed in 24 hours, they were paid a premium of $100 to $150.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think we're being told that if an inmate sleeps on the floor, he's now being paid a fee per day.

COMM. GIORLA: That's incorrect.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And we thought that that was really stretching it.

COMM. GIORLA: And I'm happy to say that's just a rumor.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, thank you.

Commissioner, why does your department spend 25 percent of its personal services budget on overtime? And wouldn't it be cheaper in the long run to hire additional personnel?

COMM. GIORLA: This is another one I'm happy to answer, Madam President.

Last year --

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're a happy soul, aren't you?

COMM. GIORLA: Yeah, I'm happy today.

Last year, in January of last year, we had a substantial vacancy rate among our correctional officers, our social workers, and our maintenance staff, our City Civil Service maintenance staff.

We've been able to hire over the last year about 110 correctional officers, which has given us a yield, after attrition, of about 94 additional correctional staff. We've been able to hire in the neighborhood of 20 social workers, which has given us approximately 16 more than we had last year.

We haven't been as successful in hiring or recreating maintenance staff, because some of the trades in the community can earn more than a Civil Service employee. And we have approvals from the City to recruit and hire those individuals.

Now, the bulk of our overtime is paid in the correctional classes -- the correctional officer, sergeant, the lieutenant and captain. We've been able to reduce those expenditures through that hiring to where -- I'll give you an example.

In the last pay period, which ended on April 5, 2009, we spent $124,000 less than on overtime than we did last year at this time. So we've been able to reduce the overtime along with making the new hires.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, with the hiring of the additional personnel, then why is your budget obligation for '09 the same as 10? For overtime. For your overtime.

COMM. GIORLA: Our overtime? Because of the fact that we haven't hired to fully staff, we anticipated -- we anticipated the overtime expenditures to be roughly the same.

We've taken steps to reduce our

sick time as well, 'cause that added a big impact. And the hiring has caused a reduction of our sick time, which will contribute to the overtime.

If we continue at this pace and we're able to reduce the overtime, we'll be asking to revise the budget.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. What does the Prisons spend for inmate health services?

(Witness comes forward.)

CHIEF HERDMAN: Good afternoon. I'm Bruce Herdman, Chief of Medical Operations.

The inmates spent $65 million in Fiscal Year '09.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: 65 million in '09?

CHIEF HERDMAN: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And what do we have budgeted for '10?

CHIEF HERDMAN: An increase of 2.1 percent.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: What

health services does a detainee receive?

CHIEF HERDMAN: A detainee or a sentenced individual is eligible for all of the health services that you would receive in the community.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can you tell us what the average stay of the detainee is, Commissioner?

COMM. GIORLA: The average stay of an inmate, we currently don't break that out for detention versus sentenced. We're in the process of conducting a length-of-stay study based on subsets.

But in our population overall, 91 it's days.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can you tell us what percentage of your population are detainees?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes. It's 76 percent, and it varies somewhere between 71 and 79 percent on a daily basis.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Does the Prisons receive any reimbursement for detainee health services?

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CHIEF HERDMAN: Of the total budget, $3 million comes through the Department of Behavioral Health for behavioral-health services.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think that we've been inquiring for many years: Why can't the City receive medical-assistance payments for detainees?

CHIEF HERDMAN: So have we.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, there has to be an answer.

CHIEF HERDMAN: The answer is that the City --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It's every year we ask the same questions and we get the same answers.

CHIEF HERDMAN: The state regulation removes inmates from eligibility the minute they come through the front door.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry. Do you mind repeating?

CHIEF HERDMAN: The State removes inmates from eligibility for medical assistance the minute they come through the front door of the prison.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So it's a state issue?

CHIEF HERDMAN: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are we trying to address that at all?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes. Everett Gillison, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety.

Yes, we have. We've been in negotiations with the State over this very issue. We thought we had a pilot program that we were going to try and do just to show the efficacy of it, especially if we could get a waiver for the first 30 days.

We thought that we would be able to show that because of the inmates coming in and going out, a certain percentage of 'em would -- if they don't lose their benefits from medical assistance, we could get 'em into a program and not necessarily be in a secure bed. We're still negotiating.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I do have a number of questions that I want to ask.

Commissioner, on Page 59-19 of your budget detail, you're requesting $3,750,000 for provisional housing. Where's this housing located?

COMM. GIORLA: Transitional housing?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Provisional housing.

COMM. GIORLA: Provisional housing? Well --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's what it says on Page 52-19.

COMM. GIORLA: These housing areas are areas not in our City-owned facilities. They're made necessary by the current population levels.

Some of them have already been -- we've already withdrawn from. The Passaic County, New Jersey, we've withdrawn inmates from that site. Monmouth County, New Jersey, we've withdrawn inmates from that site.

The other ones listed are either treatment facilities, work-release facilities, or sentence custody facilities within the City.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Where?

COMM. GIORLA: I can run down the list. CEC is a --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: What is provisional housing?

COMM. GIORLA: This housing is based on our population levels. It's outside of our complex at the Prisons in the Northeast.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And I think our question is: Where is the location for the provisional housing for $3,750,000? Section 52.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It's number 290, the last one.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: 52-19.

COMM. GIORLA: Oh, okay. These are contingency dollars for additional housing, depending on whether or not there's a population increase.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So the basic -- let me see if I can help you, Madam Chair.

The -- because of the growth -- and this committee has known, and the Council has known, that over the last number of years, the population has gone up on average 8 percent. We've just had another population last year going up by 4.9 percent.

This line items, the $3.7 million, is put there because we don't have any space up on State Road or within any other facilities. If we have to actually contract with someone, we would need to be able to do that. And, obviously, if the people come, we can't -- you know, we'd have to take them in. The Prisons are not one of the things that we can say, "No, please don't come."

So these dollars are there. And we already have relationships with what you see above. CEC, Lehigh County, Liberty Management at 17th and Cambria, all of those things are there.

And if we needed additional space, we would have to go to not only them but to others that we would be able to say, "We need additional space as a result of the spike. Can you put those beds available?"

So, as I sit here right now, and as the Commissioner sits here, those provisional housing dollars are there so that if we get a spike and we have to provide money for something, we have a line item to draw against.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: At what policy population would you have to start using that?

COMM. GIORLA: At approximately 9700, 9800, in between.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And how many do you have today?

COMM. GIORLA: 9440.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. I know there are several Councilpeople that want to be recognized.

I just have a couple of other questions I would like to ask.

What does it cost to house an inmate in our facilities?

COMM. GIORLA: At the end of FY '08, it was 95.70 a day.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And how much do we spend to house inmates at non-City-owned facilities?

COMM. GIORLA: It depends on the type of facility. If I could draw your attention back to the Page 52-19.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Point of information.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes. The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones for a point of information.

COUNCILMAN JONES: According to the Daily News, today's article about how much does it cost -- "What is the True Cost of a Con?" it says it's $98.49 per day. Did you see the article?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, I did,

Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Do you dispute any of these costs?

COMM. GIORLA: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Do you dispute any of the costs?

COMM. GIORLA: No. I think they're slightly, marginally high, but I think they're relatively correct.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So we're topping in -- closing in on a hundred dollars a day per inmate.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Give or take a couple --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Give or take.

COUNCILMAN JONES: If we don't depreciate equipment or something like that, it's about that.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: For instance, the CEC, the Erie site, the inmates housed there, we pay $62 a day per inmate. In Lehigh County, we pay $90 a day per inmate. At Liberty Management, which is a work-release facility, we pay $35 a day for inmate.

But I wanted to clarify some of those charges. Although they're different, they offer a different range of services. And, for instance, at the Liberty site, at 17th and Cambria, we provide full-time security at that site as well as health services.

So there's a hybrid of services, some that are charged directly by the vendor and some that we provide out of our operating budget.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: With the detainees, how long could they be kept in prison before they can -- before they receive a hearing? What is that --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: There is a rule in the criminal court that talks about -- depending on your charge, you have to -- you're supposed to be tried in

Municipal Court within 120 to 180 days. After that, then you're supposed to be eligible to be released.

Attorneys routinely will go to court as they are going up to that in order to force the case on because they want their client out of jail.

If you have a felony, you have up to 365 days to have your case to be heard before the case is ultimately dismissed under the rules of criminal procedure.

So it just depends on the status that you have, whether it's a municipal court case or a felony case.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Goode.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon, Commissioner. Good afternoon, Deputy Mayor.

COMM. GIORLA: Good afternoon.

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DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: We often ask questions year after year either because those answers have not been given or because we need an update. I think the Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor can pretty much guess what question I'm going to ask about, but I'll start out with reading from the article in the Daily News today.

It says: "Our approach to criminal justice has become so criminally dysfunctional that it may no longer shock to learn that in Philadelphia, we spend twice as much housing each prisoner as we do educating each child."

A separate Daily News article talks about a report from the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board that was released today. This says: "Just 39 percent of City dropouts were employed."

If we can expect that over 60 percent of dropouts will not be employed, shouldn't we, on an annual basis, if not more than an annual basis, be concerned about the dropout rate among our prisoners?

More specifically, how can we ever expect to reduce recidivism or improve our reentry efforts if those efforts don't begin in jail.

And so the question I ask every year is: Of the population, do we know what percentage are high school dropouts?

COMM. GIORLA: We don't keep data on how many are high school dropouts. What we do interview is to try and determine who have high school diplomas or GEDs. It's self-reporting information.

About half of our incoming population claim that they have high school diplomas or GEDs. For sentenced inmates, if they --

COUNCILMAN GOODE: I'm still looking for a clear answer. It's why I ask the question every year. And the question is:

Whatever the population, whether it was last year or next year, whether it's 10,000 next year or whether it was 9,000 last year, do we know or don't we know what percentage are dropouts?

And then the second question is: What are we actively doing about it?

And that question is not just posed to the Prison Commissioner. And I'll say this as a matter of a statement. There are those who believe that a good prison commissioner is probably part warden and part social worker. What I know is that, nationally, there are some that just view themselves as wardens, and there are a few that probably just view themselves as social workers.

But I know our efforts go beyond the prison. But our reentry efforts have to begin in prison.

And so if we know that 60 percent of dropouts will not be employed, why aren't we tracking the number of dropouts in terms of those that are within

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the prison?

COMM. GIORLA: We do -- we do interview the inmates when they come in, as part of the intake process, to determine whether or not -- what their level of educational attainability is or what the level of education they had attained.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: So what percentage are high school dropouts?

COMM. GIORLA: Fifty percent.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay. Deputy Mayor Gillison, beyond that interview process, what sort of an assessment process is actually taking place to reduce recidivism and improve reentry efforts?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We have started a number of different things. One is that we have finally been able to put together a prerelease center up at the prison, which just started just last month.

We are trying now to work with our partners in the criminal justice

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system so that we will be able to almost mandate it so that we will be able to do a true assessment of the individuals much like they have to go through an assessment in order to get ready to come back to society from the State. We're going to try and do the same thing here in the county.

Right now, we're doing it on a volunteer basis, and we don't like the numbers that we're seeing just volunteering. So we want to be able to see that in order -- and work with our partners. In order for people to get ready to come back, we want them to go through the prerelease center.

That has always been a problem because people go through the county system so quickly, we very rarely have that much time to grab a hold of them and to help them reorient and go back to society. They're coming in and they're leaving.

So now we have persons that are

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dedicated at the prison, through the reentry effort, to identify and work with them and also hook them up with what we're trying to do on the outside, which is to get them jobs.

So we're doing two things. Working inside and then --

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Could you describe specifically what is the assessment process and when does it take place?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: There is -- I know that the prisons are putting in the electronic assessment, but they're using -- and Mr. Cuey is actually the one that is doing this inside. They are using a hybrid of the LSIR, which right now is escaping me what it stands for.

But it is a tool that the State uses for assessments that allows you to get a very quick analysis of who the person is who's sitting in front of you and what their deficiencies are. And then we're trying to match that with the various programs that are currently available at the prison.

We're also trying to wait for the opportunity for direct providers to come in to provide additional services at the prison as well.

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So it's a two-pronged matter. And we're taking that assessment tool and expanding it going forward so we can hook people up as they come back from the county.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you. I'll wait for the next go-around.

But just a quick follow-up. The other 50 percent, what are we doing about them not having a high school diploma?

COMM. GIORLA: We have two programs. One's administered by the Philadelphia School District that provides GED training and testing to our juvenile and adult population -- adult basic education, pre-GED, GED testing, and post-GED education.

There also is a -- for those whose educational level doesn't get them into the pre-GED training, we have an independent-study program known as the Plato Programmed Logic that is computer-based. Students can learn at their own pace. Once they complete the program, they're eligible -- or they will be suitable for the pre-GED program.

All three of those have enabled us to increase the number.

We've also become a certified GED testing site and trained for additional GED examiners this year. In Calendar Year 2007, we issued 250 GED certificates at the Prisons. And in Calendar Year 2008, we issued 313. And we hope to exceed that even more this year.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Greenlee.

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COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon.

Actually, the Council President asked a lot of the questions I was going to ask about the population issue, but you talk about, in your testimony, near the end, about the anticipated use of video for court appearances.

COMM. GIORLA: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: How close is that? 'Cause that would seem like it would have a good effect, 'cause you hear a lot of stories, you know, about cases that get continued 'cause there was some mix-up in bringing down a defendant to court. How close are we to that, would you say?

COMM. GIORLA: We are partially operating a video court system at Curran Fromhold.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Some pleas are negotiated. And there detainer's hearings often heard by video at Curran Fromhold.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: We're selecting sites in each other facility so that we don't have to transport inmates so that, you know, they will be available. Sometimes they get stuck in traffic.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Sure.

COMM. GIORLA: And we don't want to add to any delays.

We're hoping to reach a point where, in working in conjunction with the courts, where all the courtrooms at the CJC wired for video, all of the jail facilities located on State Road are wired for video. And, virtually, every court appearance, other than a trial, could be held on video.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm. That's what I was going to say and that's what Mr. Gillison --

COMM. GIORLA: That's what we're trying to do, that's correct.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: There's no

problem, no legal difficulty in doing that?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, right now, we're working on the protocol. We're working on it actively not only with the courts but with the Defender Association and with the District Attorney.

I know that there has heretofore been an objection, but I think we have already overcome that objection. And right now, we are all in CJAB, or the Criminal Justice Advisory Board. We are talking about and actually implementing the protocol.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: There are some criminal procedure rules that say that a defendant has the right to a face-to-face encounter --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I was going to ask about that.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: -- with his accuser. However, since a lot of these cases that we have are hearings, where we're just talking about procedural matters, I know that there is no real objection if we could handle those matters, because a lot of them are to the benefit of the defendant.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So I think we have now reached a compromise there.

What we have to do is work on the technical, and I know that the First Judicial District has been a wonderful partner, saying that they were willing to put dollars, if they can, to help this matter going forward. Justice McCafferey was at a CJAB meeting and suggested that they would help out. And we're trying to meet that same fervor to help us move in this matter.

So this has been one of those success things that people don't know about but we're really working very well together to try to get this accomplished.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That would

sound like it would make a big difference if it works.

Okay. Can I just ask one more thing on the whole issue of what you call provisional housing. Now, that's not the same thing as what we call "halfway houses," is it?

COMM. GIORLA: No, no. The provision is based on our population levels.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right, okay. So this is really people that are in there, they don't go back and forth in the community, right?

COMM. GIORLA: No.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: We have a work-release program where inmates go back and forth in the community.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: But that's not the same.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's not. And the 17th and Cambria site, is that fully -- totally just provisional or is that --

COMM. GIORLA: That's -- we've had that -- been contracted with a landlord there. We provide security and medical services.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: We've been contracted with the landlord there since 2001.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: That's a full-confinement facility. The inmates don't leave.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: And it has a capacity of 240.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Now, as far as halfway houses, has the use of them increased over time? What kind of effect has that had on the population?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Not as much as I would like, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yeah.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I will speak to that.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: The bottom line is, every study and everyone who has been in corrections will tell you that 95 percent of the people are coming back.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And they're coming back to where they left. And unless we can provide programs where they are living, then we're really opening up this vicious cycle, and that's the insanity of this whole thing.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We need more facilities in the community.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I'm aware of the matters that we have where people in the community necessarily have fear.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I think

it's our obligation to speak to that fear and to meet that fear head-on so that we can say that the people who are coming back are people who are their neighbors who just left, and they're coming back anyway. And I'd rather have it in a productive sense rather than in a nonproductive sense.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I hear you. I know that's sometimes a tough argument to make.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It is, but I'm going to keep making it.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And sometimes we're put in the position where we have to argue with people on that.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I'm going to keep making it, believe me.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yeah, I hear you, and that is difficult.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It is literally the 21st century issue that we have to hit. And people have to understand that if you don't want prison budgets that are, you know, off the hook, 10 percent increases every year, we've got to solve the recidivism rate in the community. And that's where it's got to go.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yeah, I hear you. Okay.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Ah, I couldn't have timed that better.

First, let me say and quickly say that ofttimes, this Council is accused of not giving credit where credit is due. I'd like to say, Commissioner, that you've made improvements.

And I hear it in the difference between last year and this year, about things you're taking seriously. I know some of my colleagues' concerns still need to be addressed. But it is encouraging to me to see that you respond to those kinds of questions, and you don't get asked the same question over and over and over again.

And, hopefully, next year, when you come back, you'll make some improvements upon the issue of dropout rates. And so, I wanted to say that to you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: The second thing is -- and anyone at the table can answer this -- if we were to include Police, Prisons, and the justice system in one category, what would that represent by way of the City's budget?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: One quarter.

COUNCILMAN JONES: 24 percent.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: (Nods head.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: 24 percent. So it is logical to say -- and we can count all the paper clips, we can turn in our keys to the car. We can do all kinds -- I'm not.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: We could do all of these things.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: He mentioned it, not me.

COUNCILMAN JONES: But until we address that large part of our budget, we will be constantly spinning our wheels.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: (Nods head.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: In so doing, can you answer the following questions:

What percentage of that 9700 population in prison is there with a $500 or less bail?

COMM. GIORLA: I don't -- I don't know the percentage, but I can give you a number figure. There's about 4 of the 600 with those bails.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So it's more like a thousand.

COMM. GIORLA: In single holds.

COUNCILMAN JONES: It's more like a thousand.

COMM. GIORLA: When you look at those under 10,000 --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: We've looked at under $10,000 bail.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: Single holds, which means that they paid bail, they can get out.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: With non-violent charges --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Right.

COMM. GIORLA: -- that number's about a thousand.

COUNCILMAN JONES: It's about a thousand --

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- inmates that, under some stretch of the imagination, under some type of supervision, under some type of organized effort, would not be charged to our budget of $100 a day. And you said the average stay there is how long?

COMM. GIORLA: It's 91 days.

COUNCILMAN JONES: It's 91 days. And that's $9100 per person on -- and arguably, in some people's account, should not even be there technically 'cause it costs us so much and it takes away from the attention of those people who do need to be there.

So one of the things that we looked at -- and Deputy Mayor Gillison took a ride up to a place called Red Hook in Brooklyn, New York, where they had community courts. And the Council was kind of enough to have hearings here, and we brought that here.

And we have a community court rendition in Center City, but it is not quite the hybrid that would be able to address some of the common, day-to-day, quality-of-life issues in neighborhoods.

So you made the comment, which

opened the door for community courts, which was that if we could avoid them ever going up there in the first place, if we could keep them kids -- give a sense of justice that was local, if we could involve the community in what that justice and what those priorities were. In the case of Red Hook, they went from a high-crime area to two years straight having the largest reduction in crime of any other precinct in Brooklyn, New York.

And you were a part of that presentation.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Absolutely. You're absolutely correct.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So with that being said, under the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee, because it has something to do with prisons, it has something to do with the police, it has something to do with the judges, it has something to do with probation and parole, it has a lot to do with the community in which these crimes are perpetrated and the victims are.

Is there way that we can take a formula and say that at a $100 a day, can we reduce this 40 percent to 50 percent in ways of our -- or impact on our budget and provide a greater quality of true justice, restorative justice, to some people in the communities?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, you know, Councilman and you know my feeling of what I saw, what I went to implement, and the transition to get there.

The answer to your question is: Ultimately, yes. The question is: How do we get from where we are today in declining areas and how do we end up going to get to where we want to be tomorrow?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And that's what we are working out right now.

One of the costs that, as you saw when you looked at that building in Red Hook, is the fact that they had all those supportive services.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: You might want to describe that for the record.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Much like we have here in community court, where the probation, where behavioral health, where psychiatric services, where drug services, the entire gambit of what an individual runs into a problem, the child abuse -- I'm sorry, the child support network that --

COUNCILMAN JONES: The housing court.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Housing court. It was all in one building in one place for an entire community. And that's the model that I would like to see us go to.

I am seeing and hearing that that's where I think different of our partners may want to go with us, because we can't do this as an administration on our own; the First Judicial District has to be along with us, the District Attorney has to be along with us. And I think that we're hearing good things on all of those levels. However --

COUNCILMAN JONES: I think four out of five --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Four out of five.

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- agree that they would have some rendition of community court. That is encouraging to me.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right. So I think that the real issue is, as we are now trying to fashion how do we get from here to there is, how do we bridge that gap. And that's what we're going to have to deal with. And we're going to struggle with that, quite frankly, but we're going to get there.

COUNCILMAN JONES: One of the things that we --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. I will

hold that for my next round, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon to the panel.

Commissioner, the Prisons Budget was not asked to take any reductions; is that right?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, yes, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: If you had to compile a list -- if tomorrow you were asked to reduce it by 10, 20, 30 percent, did you ever create a list in the event that you were ever asked that question?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, we did.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I know you're a good manager, but when I hear the Administration say that certain departments are kind of off-limits, are they saying that there isn't management audits or performance audits or a way to spend that terrific amount of money, just that one number, on medical care, $65 million. Is there a better way?

Or are we just assuming -- and, again, when I hear the word that the Prisons is not asked for budget cuts, are you in a position to reduce your budget by better -- and, again, don't misunderstand me when I say "better management." I'm not talking about you; I'm talking about the entire prison operation being looked at carefully to make sure that we're buying smart, that we're operating smart, that we're purchasing commodities smart.

Is everything -- and, again, that's a very general word. Could more be done, even though you're not asking to take a reduction, to spend what you have a lot -- I was almost going to say something, but I didn't mean that. More efficiently?

COMM. GIORLA: Councilman, every

aspect of our operation, every manager that works with me at the Prisons, we've asked them to take a critical look at their expenses, regardless of what they are and how they're administered.

There are some areas -- and we did have the discussion about the 10, 20, and 30 percent cuts. We established our priorities.

Our first one, of course, is custody because, you know, until the courts say so, we can't let anybody go.

Competing for second and third were food service, medical and mental health services, which we, you know, try to avoid -- you know, try to avoid unnecessary costs.

Third after that was facility maintenance, which is also a priority and something which was documented in the PICA report of 2008, that our facilities are deteriorating just as well as the police districts and some of the other City infrastructure.

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And finally was inmate paramounts and training, educational programs and training.

During past budget cuts, we've done away with our library services, we've done away with our recreation services for the inmates. Those last few services are virtually what we provide; they're a small fraction of our budget.

We've tried whatever initiatives we can. For instance, we've installed new fencing at the Detention Center, which enabled us to close towers and redeploy those personnel.

We've made structural changes on our dormitories at the Detention also, which enabled us to reduce the security on the housing units by an officer each.

Every bit of planning, every bit of -- every new item that we consider for implementation or for -- you know, we take under consideration, we evaluate the cost as part of it.

And all of the managers are --

we try to instill that in 'em so that's not their only thought but a primary thought.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, again, I don't want to use the word "easy," but some of the things you described like shutting down recreation and the library and some other things that you mentioned, you know, that's taking the axe and just knocking some things out.

But I'm talking about the business, the operation of the entire prison system. When's the last time -- and maybe Mr. Gillison wants to jump in -- that really there was a real hard look at the way we do business there, an independent audit? The Controller's audit, I'm sure, is not necessarily the entire answer to the question.

But what do we do to look at that significant amount of money that's being spent to make sure that there aren't some new ideas? You know, sometimes you get set in a way and you do things in a particular way for 15, 20 years, but maybe there's a better way.

Mr. Gillison, what do we --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I can tell you --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What do we do to take a really good look at that entire operation and just make sure that what we are doing is the best way to do it?

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I can tell you that one of the things that we tried to do is just what you suggested: Taking a look at it and seeing whether or not we can do things in a different way, not just in a cost way, looking at costs first, but just in a completely different way.

The whole idea of community corrections is really borne -- you know, thinking outside the box gets you to that point. The whole idea of looking at the medical innovations that we have sought, Dr. Herdman was actually able to negotiate, I thought, one of the best medical contracts in recent history, when you look at the small increase that we were able to get, given the rate of increase that is around in everything else. We were able to do that because we had people in the inside looking forward and saying there's another way to look at this, given what we have.

I'll defer, obviously, to his expertise in how he did that, but that's something that I think that we have been able to do.

And where we're going next is, what is the real look of corrections? That's the big question that we have to answer, and I think that that's where we're going next.

But Dr. Herdman can --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Deputy Mayor.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Just as an example, the annual cost increase from Fiscal Year '04, Councilman, was 15.7 percent, annual cost increase. This year, it was 2.1 percent.

There are a whole series of interventions that occurred in the past three years to achieve that. The average cost of -- escalation costs around the country of 7.6 percent. So we're well below.

So, for example, we're enforcing formula compliance in drug use, and that has produced a continual decline in the cost of our medications, even though everyone's getting the medications they're supposed to get. There's a whole series of interventions along that line.

Our contract increase this year with the major vendors was 1.5 percent, and that compared nationally to between 10 and 20 percent. So...

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Good work. Well, we all know that that's a very challenging profession up there. And we admire your work.

And, again, those new innovations and changes, and sometimes those things could really result in significant cost-savings.

And in my next go-around, I'll ask another question.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Krajewski.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon, gentlemen.

PANEL MEMBERS: Good afternoon.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Mr. Gillison, we had a meeting back sometime in January in my office --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: -- where you had discussed the possibility of reopening Holmesburg Prison. I believe your plan was to single-house 600 inmates in three temporary pods.

And I also gave you a whole list of reasons why I would oppose it.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes. And I said --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: I think it was obvious to me then that the Administration hasn't done any research on this, because I don't believe that you are aware that there was a charter school 500 feet away.

Has anything since our last meeting changed your mind, or can you give me a little --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I'll be glad to.

The answer is: No, nothing else has changed my mind. What has gone forward, which is what I said to you then, is that before we did anything, I would make sure that I would sit down and I would give you exactly what our plan would be.

We have always -- one thing about Holmesburg, which I'm sure you know, we've never really closed it. There's always been people on Holmesburg's property.

Now, it fluctuates with the numbers of people that we have as an overage from State Road over to Holmesburg itself, but Holmesburg itself does have people in it.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well, Holmesburg was supposed to be closed on the condition that we built Curran Fromhold.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I understand, but the issues that I can tell you is that Holmesburg has never been, quote/unquote, closed. We have had people there, and still, people are there today. We don't have it at the same level.

Curran Fromhold is a 2,000-bed facility. Holmesburg was -- is -- only has (addressing Commissioner Giorla) how many now?

COMM. GIORLA: There are 100 males and there is a --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: I can't hear you.

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COMM. GIORLA: There are 100 males and approximately 115 females housed on that reservation.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: A hundred?

COMM. GIORLA: There's 100 males and 115 females.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So the idea that it was closed, obviously that's -- it is a -- it is, in fact, correct as to certain portions of the facility but not -- what we were asking, what I was basically informing you was, in looking and trying to be as efficient as possible and wrangling out as much efficiencies as we could, Holmesburg has the ability to put the temporary facilities on the inside of the walls that will allow us to, as the population goes up and goes down, provide a level of service that we know we can actually maintain and maintain it efficiently; we just can't use the buildings that are on the inside of there now.

I would like nothing better, as I told you, to knock down all of that stuff on the inside. The walls are obviously there; they're not going anywhere. And we would be able to put up those temporary facilities for about 600, and we would be able to probably not be able to have to worry about being sued in federal court for triple-celling.

Now, you indicated to me that that would be something that you would want me to come back to you -- you gave me a list of things, and I'm looking at everything that you gave me, Councilwoman. And that's one of the things that we are making sure that, before we move forward, I will definitely sit down and talk to you.

As far as the charter school issue, I'm aware of the charter school issue; I'm even aware of the personal relationship that you have to the charter school. I don't believe that this would in any way, shape, or form impact that particular operation.

We're talking about trying to take a dilapidated situation, make it into a safe place for all of us, and have the City use its assets to its best efficiency.

And, obviously, I'll be working with you. I told you I'll come back. We'll sit down, we'll talk, and you'll see everything. I'll even go up and do whatever I can to make sure we need to do it.

But we have to make sure that we provide a place of safety for people that are being placed in our --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: And I believe I also told you, Mr. Gillison, that the neighborhood and the residents would certainly not support that.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I said I would come back and we'll talk.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: And you better get ready for a fight.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I

understand, but I don't -- I don't -- sometimes you don't have to fight if you end up --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well, not when you come into the office like that and say, "No, we're going to open up Holmesburg."

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No, I said that we --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I said that we were -- I was there to discuss it. I didn't say this was a fait accomplis. What I said was, I need to discuss this with you now, because my way of operating, and this administration's way of operating, is not to try and bulldoze just everything through. I wanted to have your input. I go to every Councilperson --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well, I'm sure you do.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: -- and I sit down and I talk.

But I want you to know what we

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need to do and to be able to use the assets that are given to us. That's what I try to do --

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well, I also want you to know what I have to do.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I understand.

COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: All right. Thank you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you very much, Councilwoman.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon. I have a couple questions. How you guys doing.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Doing well.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. In your testimony on Page 2, second paragraph -- well, first I want to congratulate you on your minority participation numbers; they're great. I think they're just about the best that's been in here.

COMM. GIORLA: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But on Page 2, Paragraph 2, you said that Philadelphia's jails have a higher per-citizen incarceration rate than most major cities.

Is there a reason for that? Is that a good thing? Is that a -- well, what's going on there?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, it -- it's certainly not a good thing, Councilwoman. Philadelphia averages about 159 citizens per inmate. Other major cities -- New York, Chicago, Los Angeles -- their ratio is much higher; it's in the neighborhood of 3 to 400, or sometimes higher than that, citizens per inmate.

We think that there's a number of competing factors as far as why that ratio exits. Not only as the other

Councilpersons mentioned, the rate of unemployment, high school dropouts, the poverty within the City.

But we're also looking at length of stay. The amount, as I quoted earlier, 90 days that someone -- the average person spends in custody --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: -- there are large numbers who make bail and are released within a couple weeks. There are some that stay far beyond that.

Some of that is, we believe, is tied to processes within the interrelation of the criminal justice system primarily between Courts, the Clerks, the District Attorney's Office, the Defenders, and the Prisons.

We're looking at ways to increase our use of technology. For instance, asking the clerks, all of us, to print data and send it to the Prisons electronically rather than have a courier pick it up and transport it to the Prisons every day. Small things like that.

The use of e-mail, scanning-forward-document technology; that would enable to us get away from paper documents.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: All of those things, we hope, will decrease that length of stay.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And also, I know, Councilman Goode asked you about high school dropouts. I would also like to know the numbers on -- the data on those coming out of the foster-care system, okay?

How many inmates -- you don't have to give it to me now, but how many inmates are former foster children?

COMM. GIORLA: I don't have that data here, but I can supply you with that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And I'd also like information on your daily sentence. I know that you were here before and you said -- I believe you said that 60 percent of those incarcerated at Philadelphia Prisons are awaiting trial.

COMM. GIORLA: That number is closer to 70 -- it fluctuates between 71 and 79 percent.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So what is the balance? I mean, how many there are on probation or parole violations? Just what is the other -- what makes up the other, say, 30 percent?

COMM. GIORLA: The sentenced inmates?

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Sentenced.

COMM. GIORLA: They're sentenced to county sentences and a few to state sentences.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Sentences over two years.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So then, anybody violating probation or parole are part of the 70 percent.

COMM. GIORLA: They're a part of that detention population until their violation hearings are held and some type of a decision is made on their status.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And the other thing, I've heard that Prisons time and time again, every year, talk about the fact that they're waiting to explore -- in your third paragraph, you talk about that you're working with the District Attorney's Office, the First Judicial District, the Defender Association to explore ways to sensibly and safely reduce our prison population.

We've been exploring that for a while. And when are you going to come up with some recommendations?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, we've had several, and some are contained here. As stated, the change of confinement for state inmates who are housed in the County, new legislation that passed in November gave us the ability to send them to State custody, 'cause that was an unreimbursed cost.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right,

right.

COMM. GIORLA: We've already transferred 187 all of an agreed-upon 250. We're talking to the State about taking the additional number.

That does not remove all of those inmates in that status, that state sentence status. In (indiscernible) population, there are approximately 150 others. Some of those are in work release and working. We hope not to --

(Timer bell rings.)

COMM. GIORLA: We hope not to transfer them since they're being successful, working in the community.

Some others who have disciplinary infractions or have not made a good adjustments to our custody we hope to transfer the remainder up the State custody.

The court system is -- has just begun an initiative to have a mental health court, where those who are considered seriously mentally ill but functioning at a high enough level, where they can be successful on their probation or parole supervision, are being released under intensive supervision. The numbers are small right now.

But, as Councilman Jones asked earlier, that low-security population with low bail, most are non-violent. A large percentage of that population are mentally ill. They return frequently.

So, you know, when you consider releases, they have to be released under some type of supervision. They need some assistance in the community.

We think that as many as 500 people within our population could be placed under that type of supervision annually. And that would help reduce the population.

And, finally, the video initiative may reduce court continuances, which will reduce the population even further.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay,

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great. All right.

Thank you, Madam President. I have questions, but I'll ask again.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Goode.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you, Madam President.

This conversation is flowing quite nicely because some questions are leading into others.

I had a conversation with the Mayor about a week ago. We were talking about budget matters, and I won't go into the whole discussion other than we talked about several things like the budget worksheets that were a part of the community forums.

We talked about even the Pennsylvania Economy League has a budget calculator up, where people can do their own budget.

And we those are just exercises but how they may have been useful tools for the citizens. I told him that I actually did the budget worksheet, where you try to get a hundred points. And I got to 202 points before I reduced it back to 100.

He asked me how I did it. I told him I closed the Prisons, to which he had some shock. And I didn't mind closing the Prisons in a budget exercise that was on paper, and, clearly, when it was adjusted, as an alternative.

The Commissioner just used a figure of 500 to say what he believes we can reduce the population by. Isn't that number low?

COMM. GIORLA: That number was in regard to mentally ill inmates who require community supervision.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: I just want to go a bit further, then.

Not looking at closing down a prison, but looking at a different way of actually reducing the prison population based upon those people who are non-violent, based upon those people who should be able to go into diversion programs, we looked at the issue of dropout rates, but beyond dropout rates, there are any number of issues. There are education issues, there's substance abuse issues, there's mental health issues.

And we are using a prison system at possibly $100 a day to house people in a very costly manner, when they should be diverted to other community-type programs.

And so, what are we seriously and aggressively doing to look at how we reduce recidivism based upon targeting non-violent offender who have issues that we should be dealing with, particularly when we're already committing $100 a day?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you, Councilman Goode.

I think that that's an excellent question, and I think that's where the -- I think that we are finally getting to the point where people are going to have to answer that question as a society.

We have not dealt with the

secure bed versus the -- the need for secure beds for violent offenders versus those that are nonviolent, and we just fill up our prisons with those persons.

Right now, the onus is on the police to follow the law, which means if somebody does something wrong, you lock 'em up. There is then a provision for the District Attorney to decide who's going to get charged; and once they're charged, a bail is set

The Prisons are just the recipient of the body they once get there and can't make bail. And, as the Commissioner said, close to 75 percent on average are the detainees

We have to actually, as a society, answer the question. There's a lot of laws out there that everybody wants the police to enforce, but does everybody have to go to jail?

I am heartened by the fact that I have heard people finally suggesting that everybody doesn't have to go to jail.

In the exercise that you completed, people were saying that they -- and I attended those budget programs around the City. They said they would be willing to close the jail if you had a community program to but 'em in and give them the drug treatment that you needed, give them the psychiatric treatment that you needed, and give them something in the community, not having them being locked up in jail

So the community, for the first time, is on record, as far as I'm concerned, as supporting that.

So now we have a situation of, we have this large population. I would love to see the population come down by 3,000 up on State Road. And that's my goal: 3,000 folks coming out.

But, you know, for 3,000 people to have programs that work, we have a lot of building to do in the community. And that's where I need the assistance of Council, to help me build those communities in the community, build those community programs.

'Cause if you're not going to have 'em in secure custody, at $100 a day, I know I can build a lot of 'em for about $20 a day. I can put 'em on electronic monitoring for $12 a day

But I need your support in order to make sure that that can happen.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay, thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Point of order.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, that's one of the things that -- you know, alternative sentencing or alternatives to incarceration until people are waiting for trial is what I was looking for.

Also, when I asked about why Philadelphia has such a large inmate population versus some other major cities that have the same types of crime and all those kind of activities going on.

I don't know that you need community support for -- for home -- for the bracelet. I forgot what it's called.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Electronic monitoring and the GPS monitoring.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right. I don't know that you need 'em for that. But certainly, I know you would need to talk to the community about the residential facilities.

Now, 17th and Lehigh -- and Cambria is in my district. And the way that that went in the beginning was all wrong because nobody told anybody anything, including me.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So there's a method. People like to know before the fact rather than after the fact 'cause they feel like you're pushing it in there, putting it on them.

But we do need to talk. And I would be interested in knowing exactly where the people agree that they -- that they agree to a prison being closed down and doing something out in the neighborhood. I'd really like to hear that.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Oh, yeah. It was a part of the report that we received from the persons that help put it through WHYY. Part of the recommendations that we received was from them that said that they supported the idea of closing a prison down.

But the caveat was: Have the programs for them to go to, that they would be able to feel support.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So that was the caveat that we have to work on.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right. I know it's not my turn, but --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It's not your the turn.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, thank you.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And we do have a number of Councilmembers --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right, okay. Now, I'm going to turn this off, but can I be at my same place I was before?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes, absolutely.

The Chair recognizes Councilman O'Neill.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

Councilwoman Miller, I'll be brief so you'll get there faster.

The 400 or so prisoners that had state sentences that were housed at our facilities this time last year, you've now gotten them down to about 200, right?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: And how did you bring that about?

COMM. GIORLA: Through a cooperative agreement with the State that was negotiated with the District Attorney's Office, the courts, and the

Prisons.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Were they there and are they there? 'cause you still have 200. Are they there because a judge ordered them to be there even though they had a -- clearly had a state sentence?

COMM. GIORLA: They're there because the State agreed to house them.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm not sure that --

COMM. GIORLA: The people that are still in the prisons?

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: The state-sentenced prisoners, the ones that have gotten out in the last year, how did they get there originally? Because normally, if you get a state sentence, you go to a state prison.

COMM. GIORLA: Well --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So was it the judge in Philadelphia who said, I'm going to give you a state sentence, but I'll cut you a break: You can serve it at

Holmesburg or one of our facilities?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes. Up until November the 24th, it was legal for judges to sentence inmates to county custody on sentences of up to one day less than five years.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: They no longer have that authority.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: So now, they'll be transferred upstate.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay, but you're stuck, I'll say, with about 200?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Until they finish their sentences?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay, thank you.

Second thing: How many of your prisoners -- and you can give me a number or a percentage. Just a gut feeling based on your professional knowledge and

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expertise and experience, how many -- we're maximum security, obviously, right? Everything we have on State Road is maximum security?

COMM. GIORLA: No, that's incorrect. About less than one-third are maximum security.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: The bulk are what -- we have a classification system that classifies inmates as community custody, which means they can be housed in a facility without a fence, with minimal supervision.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Minimum custody, which means they need a locked facility.

Medium custody, which means that they're usually minor disciplinary problems. They're a little more difficult to manage. They need a more secure.

And closed custody, which is the same as maximum custody --

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: -- where they need full-time supervision under very restricted circumstances.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So if we only had the prisoners or detainees that needed maximum security in our facilities, how many would we have?

COMM. GIORLA: About 4,000.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Out of 9500 or so?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. And it's my understanding that getting the other 5500 into minimum security or less-than-minimum-security facilities cost-wise I'm talking about, 'cause you were just talking about the cost, would run anywhere from the $12 or so for the --

COMM. GIORLA: The bracelets.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: -- bracelet, up to about $70 for a minimum-security facility contracted out to somebody?

COMM. GIORLA: Most likely, yes.

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COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. If I had Councilman Green here, he'd already have the calculations on this one, but it seems to me that that would be somewhere between that differential, somewhere upwards of 15 to $20 million per thousand employees that you could move out and only -- so if you have 5500, just round it out to 5,000, you'd be talking about somewhere -- just cost-savings, somewhere between 7500 -- 75 million and 100 million a year.

And it seems like those same people that got together about those state prisoners could figure out how to get together on that one. It's not just real dollars; it's people being in a facility that is not the facility they have to be in.

And I know there's other issues dealing with -- (indiscernible) the expert here, 'cause he's announcing seeing the world from both sides.

So anyway, I want to leave that

because these are -- that to me is the most serious money out there. I mean, I have my own beliefs that if the State doesn't pay for this, we shouldn't be doing it for them. These aren't City jails; these are County prisons, and we do County things because we do them as an agent for the State to bring services to the local community so the State doesn't do them.

These are not City responsibilities. County responsibilities are State responsibilities that have been delegated.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But the funding level -- everyone's talked about the Courts for so long. The Courts are nothing compared to the Prisons; I mean, you know, unless you add it up cumulatively since the Supreme Court gave that famous order that they never enforced.

But, Mr. Gillison, two things,

'cause I know that these are two areas that you know a lot more than I do and a lot more than just about everybody in the room or in the City, but the one area is, there is --

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'll come back. That's fine.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon.

PANEL MEMBERS: Good afternoon.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Councilman Goode raised important questions about the assessment on the front end. I'm interested in knowing what happens at the discharge and the continuum of care, particularly for children and youth.

When a prisoner is -- I've had instances, a couple in my office, where a prisoner is released and they have no ID. And then my office does what it needs to do -- jumps lots of hoops and irons out the wrinkles to help this person get an ID card because without that, they can't do or start anywhere.

So what happens at discharge with prisoners?

COMM. GIORLA: When we determine that an inmate still in custody needs an ID, we have a service that they can apply while in custody and pay a fee, a $10 fee, to obtain an ID.

If they're unable to do so, their social workers can connect them with the -- with the State to see how they can apply.

When they do leave our custody, we provide them with a list of resources and a number of hotline numbers that will allow them to contract agencies for assistance.

And also, we've gotten some of the agencies to accept our -- what we call an incarceration letter, which comes with a photo, verifies their dates in custody

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so that they can have some of their benefits restored, like medical assistance.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So if we recognize and accept the fact that more than half of them do not have a high school diploma, and the average informed, so-called educated professional has to do what they need to do to navigate a system, why are we placing that responsibility on them to be able to have the initiative to follow the directions on a sheet of paper to require an ID?

Why can that not happen before they depart from those doors?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good afternoon, Councilwoman.

It's an excellent idea. And the short answer is that the best way to do it is to have the prerelease center, which is what we've now started, that, as a sentenced prisoner, would be able to leave the prison. We will know when they're doing it, and we can get all of that done so that as they are leaving, we will be able to give them a package that has those very things in it.

The real question, though, is because 75 percent of the people who are leaving leave when their bail is paid -- and that can happen in the middle of the night, it can happen anytime.

We don't know and there's not a process for them -- for the prison --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: To close the gap.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: -- to actually close that gap.

So a guy may end up getting to the prison, and he may not have had his identification when he got to the prison; it might still be in a property receipt located at the district.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So he doesn't have access to his identification. Therefore, there is a -- that's the disconnect if it was seized. A lot of times, we don't know.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So that's why in the system, for at least the 30 years I was working in it, we worked out the deal that the prisons would identify, the lawyer would sign -- from the Public Defenders Office, I would sign, and then we would actually restore his information rather quickly, but that's because we had this disconnect between the time of arrest and the time of discharge, 'cause as soon as your bail is paid, you walk out.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And you don't have to go through anybody.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let me move on 'cause that bell is going to go quickly.

According to the Pennsylvania Prison Society, women constitute the fastest-growing segment of America's prison population. How is our city addressing the unique needs of women offenders? number one.

And, number two, who maintains reports of sexual abuse of women by employers or the employees?

COMM. GIORLA: The women we have housed both at -- well, we actually have three facilities: Riverside Correctional facility, which is our main intake center for women; we have the Cannery, which is the site adjacent to Holmesburg Prison.

There are a number of programs that are offered to the female offenders, one of which is a prenatal and a postnatal monitoring program.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: A monitoring program that's grant-funded.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let's do it this way: Send a listing to President Verna, because I guess there are several that you can speak to that address the specific needs of women?

COMM. GIORLA: Oh, absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

Speak to the continuum of care for children of parents who are offenders.

COMM. GIORLA: The Prison Society chairs a group that's known as the Working Group for Incarcerated Women, which offers a number of services.

(Timer bell rings.)

COMM. GIORLA: The Maternity Care Coalition runs a pre- and post-natal care program, which monitors and helps offenders, even after release, up to one year following the time they give birth.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: The Amachi Program that mentors the children of incarcerated people conducts a program at Riverside as well.

And the Women Against Abuse.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Now, in order to answer your question about the sexual allegations, I'm assuming you mean while in custody?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

COMM. GIORLA: That may be subject to abuse by staff?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Indeed.

COMM. GIORLA: We have an Office of Professional Compliance, formerly known as our Internal Affairs Division, which investigates those complaints.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: In nearly all cases, unless they're so devoid of evidence that we could dismiss them, we involve the police and physical evidence is collected.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Interviews are taken. They're submitted to the District Attorney's Office, if necessary, for review. And, you know, a full investigation is conducted.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. All right. Thank you for your testimony.

COMM. GIORLA: You're welcome.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon.

PANEL MEMBERS: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Just a couple of quick questions. I want to get some clarity.

The individuals that we have at Liberty Management, say, 10th and Lehigh as an example -- and this is based on a conversation I had out on the street. We were out there with the Mayor and saw a group of guys who were being supervised by COs during a cleanup program, I think it was.

They indicated that they would be able to leave the facility if they had a job -- is that -- other than that, they had essentially done everything that they were supposed to do, but if they had a job, they would be able to go home and do whatever.

COMM. GIORLA: The lack of employment doesn't prevent them from being released.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: It does not?

COMM. GIORLA: The 10th and Lehigh facility is a work release -- it's a contracted work-release facility. We're -- the number of inmates we have housed there fluctuates between 80 and 115 male inmates.

And there's a female service located there as well known as Phoenix House, which houses between 10 and 25 work-release inmates.

These are low-custody offenders who have been sentenced. They can go out in the community to work, and they report back to the facility at night. And it's a partial confinement.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So why couldn't they leave? I mean, they were just holding -- I was actually with the Mayor.

COMM. GIORLA: They're --

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COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And they were saying, well, you know, we're going --

COMM. GIORLA: They're still under a sentence. They haven't been released as yet; that's why they can't leave.

When their sentence is up, when their parole, or they've completed all of the sentence stipulations to the satisfaction of a judge or the State Patrol Board, they do leave.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So it was not -- they were not being accurate?

COMM. GIORLA: They can't leave at will unless they're authorized, but they can leave.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: When their sentence is complete -- okay, I'm just basing this off of what we got on the street, and they gave me the impression that they had pretty much done everything that they were supposed to do, but they couldn't leave for a particular reason.

And my recollection was that they didn't have a job. And maybe it was they didn't have housing to go to. I mean, they went on and on. And the Mayor actually took -- one of staff members of the Mayor took the information, and we were going to look into it, and I'm trying to figure out why --

COMM. GIORLA: We don't -- no one stays in custody --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You don't know?

COMM. GIORLA: There -- maybe what they were referring to -- and, you know, if you have some further information, I might be able to --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Yeah. I just -- unfortunately, I was out there by myself.

COMM. GIORLA: They are referred to the -- they are unable -- the inmates have to have a home plan.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Have to have a what? I'm sorry.

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COMM. GIORLA: Have to have a home plan before they're paroled, where they have to have a stable residence that can be verified. They don't necessarily have to have employment.

Sometimes they have to meet certain stipulations set by judges of the Parole Board, and that's to perhaps take part in drug treatment programming, perhaps some anger management or domestic abuse classes, victim awareness.

If they don't comply with those stipulations, they wouldn't necessarily be granted parole. But when their time is up, that doesn't hold them. If they're time expires, it expires.

They may not --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So is there something that could have accelerated their release?

COMM. GIORLA: Well --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I wish I had all of the specifics.

COMM. GIORLA: Well, what can

accelerate their release -- and, you know, we give 'em this information -- is full compliance with every stipulation of a judge, every condition that's set by the Parole Board, a lack of disciplinary infractions, involvement in facility activities, and, you know, general compliance with the stipulations of their sentence.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And how much do we pay to house those individuals?

COMM. GIORLA: At 10th and Lehigh? 'Cause the cost varies, depending on the site.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It's 63.

COMM. GIORLA: $63 a person.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: $63 a person, okay.

Sorry. I just didn't have the specifics. They were quite adamant about their ability to leave, and I don't -- I got to check with the Mayor to see who took that information down.

All right. Thanks, Madam President. That's all I have.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: (Addressing Councilman Clarke.) Just so that you know you're not crazy, colleague, I've heard that same kind of complaint coming from the halfway houses. So I don't know if there's misinformation out there or whether or not there is some incentive by which halfway houses get to keep people longer than they should.

And then those people -- I got complaints about those people having to contribute a certain portion of their pay when they do work. And then how that plan is to be prorated and given out. Like, for example, to family members who may need help with child care and other things.

So there have been a number of

those kinds of complaints. You must be at the same barbershops I'm at.

So a couple of things. Is it true that 500 people are released from state institutions a week back in Philadelphia County?

COMM. GIORLA: I'm not sure about those numbers.

COUNCILMAN JONES: That's the number of reentry -- Mr. Gillison, would you help him out?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That's probably about right, on average.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And if we looked at that and we started, let's say -- what is the recidivism rate for those 500 people?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Without any support?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, without supports.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Without supports? The studies show somewhere between 40 or 60 percent, with really in the urban areas being higher towards the 50 percent.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So let's round it out to 50 percent. Of those people that come home on average, 500 per week are going to wind up back incarcerated.

In some neighborhoods in the City of Philadelphia, we are living within communities that have less protections than a prison in their communities, because these people go back, they repeat the crime right in their neighborhoods, and they wind up going back up. So we are kind of at risk now if we start looking at whether or not we are safe as a public.

The other thing is that under supervision, under supervision, people never go away; they kind of get a sense of what that community's expectation of them is. By making have to wear those funny-looking, orange jumpsuits, cleaning the ally, cleaning away some graffiti, and to kind of restore a lot of the things that they took away from that community by committing a crime.

And in the structure of it, they actually pay restitution to people. If they stole your car, then the $500 deductible is a part of the sentence and the re-institution of that funds is mandated by the sentence.

And those are the kinds of things that I want us to start to look and be more pound-wise instead of penny-foolish by way of incarceration.

The other question that I would have is, I notice on Page 52, you went up for your cleaning services from what was appropriated of about $53,000 a year to about 375; is there a reason for that? 375,000.

COMM. GIORLA: That's primarily for cleaning supplies.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So what -- we are a lot cleaner prison this year versus last year?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, due to the

fact that we have more people confined in less space, we have to step up our efforts in sanitation. Some of the supplies that we have to buy are less durable.

COUNCILMAN JONES: That's almost -- that's almost -- that's eight times as much cleaning. I mean, I'm just curious as to -- what did we go from low-cost detergent to -- I mean, help me to understand why that's so odd.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We'll get back to you.

COMM. GIORLA: I'll supply you a breakdown of the materials we used and the cost.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, you've gotten better from last year. But you know I'll send you a letter to find out if you don't answer me.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. I also want to go back to the GPS tracking system. How many inmates are actually using the GPS tracking system or ankle bracelets or a combination? How many inmates are actually on that program?

COMM. GIORLA: At this time, we don't have any. We're initiating that as a phase of our work-release program.

The courts and pre-trial service have a number of defendants on electronic monitoring. And I believe the juvenile services has inmates on GPS tracking.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What is your anticipation in the next fiscal year? How many inmates are you targeting to be on this program?

COMM. GIORLA: Probably anywhere from 10 to 50.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Say that again?

COMM. GIORLA: Anywhere from 10 to 50 as part of our work-release program.

COUNCILMAN JONES: That's it?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, the technology isn't perfect. It's not -- it's not as conclusive as people would like you to think. There is a component where you can monitor someone indoors within a specific area.

The GPS component has some drawbacks. There are areas where people can travel where their movements cannot be tracked, or their whereabouts can be estimated but not exactly tracked.

We want to be cautious about the offenders we place on this. And because of the fact that we just awarded the contract the other day, we'd like to start this up carefully.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: So is this more or less a data testing phase as opposed to a full-fledged rollout?

COMM. GIORLA: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. Thank you. That explains it.

Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I want to go back to technology, and we just touched upon some technology.

But I was pleased to hear that one of your ideas that didn't involve technology, something about additional fencing that eliminated the need for the towers, which, you know, that's the kind of things we like hearing.

But let me ask you about the use of technology in the system. Would you consider -- do you believe that we are now -- we have all of the technology that is out there that would help you reduce your cameras, et cetera, compared to other systems?

COMM. GIORLA: No, Councilman. I don't think we're even close. We're using a computerized inmate management system, which enables us to keep inmate records. That's 15 years old as far as implementation, 20 years old as far as development.

It doesn't interface well with the courts or the police system. Each time we need to have it perform a new function, we have to seek out the proprietary programmers and those associated costs.

It doesn't generate the reports. For example, for my testimony here today, I would like to be able to tell you that a certain category of offender, a repeat -- a repeated convicted person spends so many days in our custody, and I couldn't without a lengthy hand search of our records.

There are also -- for our medical records for our department, we're still using paper medical records, and there's a cost associated with that. Each time we transfer an inmate from one facility to another -- and by that, I mean 50 yards -- we have to pull a medical file, a nurse has to review it, an officer has to take custody of it, they have to move it across the street. The same process has to take place there.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So this goes back to my earlier observation. What about in the area of the video surveillance within the jail? Are we -- I think this is one question you're glad I've asked. So what about video?

COMM. GIORLA: The increased use of video has enabled us to redeploy some people in our facilities.

The costs -- in our two oldest facilities, the cost of retrofitting would be -- and I couldn't estimate at this point, the House of Corrections and the Detention Center. That might enable us to reduce personnel costs, but the cost of the retrofitting would be -- you know, the electrical service is old. Having to install conduit in those facilities would be difficult.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Yeah. See, that's what I want you to look at, because there's a whole new world in this technology; it's all wireless now, Commissioner. And, you know, I'm sure that you have to adhere to certain standards. But this technology, over the last few years, has really changed. The wireless stuff is just unbelievable.

My last question, before I turn it over to someone else: Recently in the Daily News, there was a story about cellphones making their way into jail.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Is that a significant problem in our facilities?

COMM. GIORLA: That's not only a significant problem in our facilities here, but nationwide.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Now, technology -- I'll give you a heads-up on something. You probably already know this, that there is technology out there that has the ability to block cellphone signals only. Those phones coming into your facility could be blocked. And, basically, they'd be a paper weight.

COMM. GIORLA: The technology that exists to jam cellphones at this moment is illegal. The FCC doesn't permit it. There is legislation pending both in the Congress and the House, the Congress and the Senate, to change those regulations.

We did -- while we didn't participate, South Carolina conducted a demonstration of the equipment some months ago -- I believe back in January of this year. And we're actively supporting that legislation.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, you know, I can understand the FCC being concerned in an environment that's public, but I bet if we had the Law Department write a letter to the FCC and said we want to use it in an area that, A, is prohibited from cellphone use, that they'd have to be real hardheads to be not cooperative with that one, so --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Councilman, I --

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COUNCILMAN RIZZO: These are the kinds of things that I talked about --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Councilman, may I -- because I really just want to let you know how active that not only this commissioner has been, but also Curtis Douglas, who is the Integrity and Accountability Officer for Public Safety on my staff, we have been coalescing with Congress people all over the country in order to get a waiver from the FCC.

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We have been on this for the past six months, and we are trying to get that.

I can tell you that our Congressional delegation has been apprised, our United States senators have been apprised. We have been mobilizing.

You will probably see in the next week or two a nightline matter, where Philadelphia is going to be on the cutting edge, trying to do something about this. And people are looking to us because we're fighting the battle. Nobody else around the country is doing it yet; we are, and we've been doing it for the past six months.

So, I agree. I wish it was as easy as just writing a letter. We wrote the letter. The Mayor singed the letter, I signed the letter; we had everybody sign the letter. And the FCC said no.

So now we're taking it to the next level. And we're not only publicizing it, but the Philadelphia Prison actually has the first dog that was trained to sniff out cellphones in the country because of the problems that we've had.

So we are really aggressively fighting this, going after it. And I'm sure that I'll get your support when we need to really take it up to the next level.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And if I ever lose my cellphone, I'm going to borrow that dog.

(Laughter.)

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thanks a lot. Thanks, Commissioner.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, thank you, Madam President. I just have a couple questions.

When the inmates come in, you know, and they receive intake are they actually is there a plan that's developed per inmate for example once you take the intake and you find out that they don't have a high school diploma or a GED, is it mandatory for them to take classes or is it voluntarily for them to take classes?

COMM. GIORLA: That's dependent upon the inmate's custody status.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: For the detentioners, which is 70-plus percentage of our population, it can be recommended, it can be suggested, and many of them do.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COMM. GIORLA: Their length of stay varies, and some complete programs, some don't.

We can't compel them to do anything other than just follow the rules and regulations. So a large number of them choose not to.

The sentenced inmates, they have to abide by sentencing stipulations set forth by the judge. And they also have to work if we require them to do so.

The level of participation from the sentenced inmates has increased. And probably this time last year, we had about 36 percent of our sentenced inmates involved in a work program, an educational program, or some type of training.

As of last month, on March the 30th, we have closer to 70 percent of the sentenced inmates involved in work programs or some type of a vocational training.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, all

right. I just wanted to know because, I mean, if you have the -- they're in the facility and you have the folks there to provide the training. It's really a good time to kind of grab 'em and hopefully get 'em started, particularly if the average stay is only 91 days. But at least if they can get started, that would be good.

I have one other question. Do you have any other recommendations or suggestions for any other specialty courts? Certainly, we all know about drug court, gun court, and now this mental health court, community court. Are there any other recommendations or suggestions that you, and maybe this team of people up here with the D.A., the First District Defenders, et cetera?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, the mental health court initiative that I referred to earlier pertains to sentenced individuals.

I think we need to have a mental health diversion so that those who are seriously mentally ill and have committed some type of criminal act, the illness may have caused the act, they don't need to be taken to jail in the first place; they need to go directly into treatment.

So there needs to be some type of diversion initiated so that that won't happen.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay that's it. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Gillison, as you know, the Commonwealth is constructing a number of new prison facilities in the next couple of years or four. Does it make any sense for us, or is there any value in exploring an opportunity to maybe participate with them in capital dollars to kind of segregate some bed space, some cells specifically for Philadelphia County?

I mean, I know the Commonwealth is in a desperate financial situation also, and they may be looking for a partner to put some dollars in that would guarantee us a certain number of beds or a certain number of cell space.

What would be that benefit to us, if any, relative to prisoner placement and cost?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, one of the -- thank you very much, Councilman. One of the issues that I think that we have to really get beyond is the age of the House of Correction. It's almost at the age now where it needs to be totally replaced, and that's a 2,000-bed facility. So if we are looking at to replace a facility, then that's something that we would have to do.

We actually had a discussion. The Mayor wanted us to discuss with the surrounding counties the ability of perhaps doing a regional facility, and we have begun discussions on that.

I can tell you one of the problems, though, that we have to always remember: If you build it, they will fill it. And that's a fear. I mean, I think that we have to find a different way.

I would rather keep the pressure on all of us to really look at who really needs to be in jail rather than partnering initially and quickly to build a facility, because I know they'll fill it.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I don't disagree with you, and I think we need to do all of the other things that's been talked about by Councilman Goode and Jones and others relative to keeping people from getting there in the first place and then making sure they don't go back once they're out.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But if the Commonwealth is engaged in this, in this effort, is there any economy of scale or any savings that we could experience as a result of participating in a project as

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opposed to building one ourselves?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: The answer is yes.

And I think that our talks that we began -- I think these talks originated about a year-and-a-half to two years ago, from what I understood. We have renewed those talks with the surrounding counties. We can expand and sit down with the Commonwealth as well.

I think that they have already chosen sites where they want to build their four prisons. I don't know their capital needs at this time or whether or not the economy has hit their capital needs program as well, but I do know that if they are planning on building something, we could do a condominium approach to it --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: -- where we could guarantee a certain level while we rotate out some of the prison space we have here and then replace it, and we might be in a better position.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So that is being pursued?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I think that has to be pursued.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The other issue that popped out today, and I've had this discussion with all of you before, in the Daily News, I think the Daily News story today, was the cost of health care in the Prisons, and it seems -- and it doesn't seem to be the number-one highest number on the list of the costs of annual inmate costs.

What drives it? I know what drives -- high health care costs are driven in every segment of the economy. What drives it specifically there and what can we do to get our arms around it?

CHIEF HERDMAN: Well, there was a 1976 Supreme Court decision that the people in prison have to be delivered the same care that you or I would receive in the community.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Right.

CHIEF HERDMAN: So -- and they have access to primary care, chronic care, and so forth. So that's the baseline. Not more than what happens in the community, but we have to meet that standard.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And anecdotally, though, I've been told that it is more than what is in the community, that the number of times on average an inmate visits the sick bay, whatever you call it --

CHIEF HERDMAN: Oh, yes. In terms of the interventions that I mentioned to the Councilman that we did that had a substantial effect was, we are delivering more than 200,000 outpatient visits of care a year.

And it turns out that the system was set up so that if an inmate, before 11 o'clock at night, put in a sick-call chit, "I want to see a physician," they would be seen the next day, seven days a week, by a mid-level practitioner, a nurse practitioner, or a PA.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I mean, that situation was an easier one to get than a health-center appointment.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Oh, it's much easier to get than a health-center appointment.

And it turns out that nearly 40 percent of those requests were really not for medical care; they wanted to see their social worker, they wanted to make a phone call to their attorney. So they did not have to be seen by a clinician.

So we introduced a triage system where, at night, we take all of those requests, and we do get those people to the services that they need, but they don't have to take up a clinician's time. And that's how we were able to, you know, reduce the escalation of costs from 15 percent to 2 percent.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Now, is that correlation also with the reduced cost in pharmacy?

CHIEF HERDMAN: No, that didn't because those --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, if they're not seeing a clinician, then --

CHIEF HERDMAN: Well, those unnecessary requests didn't need medical care, so no, it did not affect the pharmacy utilization.

Where we've been able to affect pharmacy utilization is by -- is mostly on psychiatry. HIV is 60 percent of our pharmacy budget, and that's, you know, community standard of care. So it's very expensive, but that's what we provide.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Mm-hmm.

CHIEF HERDMAN: And that cost had gone up because we are identifying more and more HIV inmates every year.

Now, 20 percent is psychiatry, and what happens is, if an individual comes in the front door and says, "I want a-second generation psychotropic," $1200 a month, we used to do that; we used to automatically continue on that medication. Now we check with the prescribing physician in the community, and if they haven't been tried on an earlier version, the first generation, we convert them to first-generation, $60 a month.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Are we pursuing generics too?

CHIEF HERDMAN: Oh, yes. The compliance with generics is almost a hundred percent.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So the number that appears in the paper today, is that an old number, or is that a current number? It looked like 6,000-something per year per inmate.

CHIEF HERDMAN: It's closer to $6,000 proper. And it's very difficult to get good comparative numbers; in fact, the agencies that do that say there are no good comparative numbers.

Our outside consultants say that we're about average, and that's just for

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--

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Average for a prison system, or average for --

CHIEF HERDMAN: Average for a prison system. And that's despite the fact that, you know, the Philadelphia region is the fifth most expensive medical-care region of all the Medicare regions, primarily because we have so many medical schools and that creates demand and the unit costs are so high.

So even though we're in a very expensive market, we're about average.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So you're comfortable that what actions you've taken to reduce costs are being effective.

CHIEF HERDMAN: They've been effective. There are more that we're working on; we're collaborating with the Department of Health, for example, to expand the service area of one of the health centers to cover the Prison, which would make us eligible for what's known as 340B, federal pricing, and that would save us $2.5 million a year, and we're pretty optimistic about --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So you're actually trying to save money on your own. It's amazing. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Please revisit with me that 60 percent of your inmates have HIV, are HIV-infected?

CHIEF HERDMAN: No, no, no. Sixty percent of our pharmacy expenditures are for HIV medications.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Oh, pharmacy expenditures.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Last year, we treated about 750 individuals for HIV. This coming year, we expect to treat a thousand, because we are doing rapid HIV testing, which is all voluntary.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is that

part of the assessment on the way --

CHIEF HERDMAN: That's part of the initial assessment. Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Oh, okay. All right. What is your involvement with CBH?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Point of information.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Surely.

COUNCILMAN JONES: You said 750?

CHIEF HERDMAN: Yeah, but we have 37,000 individuals that come into the prison in a year.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay, oh, 37,000.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Right.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay, not in any one given day.

CHIEF HERDMAN: Annually.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

CHIEF HERDMAN: CBH, the Department of Behavioral Health, gives us some of our funding for mental-health services, and we work closely with them in terms -- for example, when an individual comes in and we want to identify whether they really have a serious mental illness or they're just withdrawing from medication, from drugs, we contact CBH and get them -- clinical information from them to see what their history has been in the community.

So there's cooperation.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Any involvement with Mr. Cohen, PHMC, PH -- Philadelphia Health Management Corporation?

CHIEF HERDMAN: We've had conversations with them about some potential collaborative arrangements. But at the moment, no.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. To your request about Councilmembers having a role with regards to the community involvement, community understanding of the dilemma, have you ever considered engaging clergy?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Oh,

absolutely. One of the things that I've been able to do over the last year is to really work with not only the Mayor's Office for Faith-Based Initiatives, but also get out and go to the various clergy environments.

One of the things that we did very well in order to help the Prisons avoid some costs was Fugitive Safe Surrender, where we actually allowed people to surrender in the house and use the 16th and Mifflin, Dr. Ernest McNair's church, where we ended up having over 1400 people surrender on warrants.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And over 2,000 warrants were taken off the street, resolved their cases. And those are persons who would have been put through the system and would have taken up some beds up at the Prison at some level; we avoided that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So that worked.

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DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That worked.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Are they going to institutionalize that on an annual basis or however the drive, the need dictates since it worked?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That's right. What we're doing is that we're taking that model of activating the clergy and having people understand that their clergy person can be trained.

And we're actually taking them and working collaboratively with the court system through an effort that's known as Peaceful Surrender, where you can go to your clergy person, who now has a way in, understands the system, and can get you into the system and out, without having to go through the prison system.

We're now working in a pilot in South Philadelphia, and we're going to try and go and expand that through the City.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Finally on this topic, Councilwoman Donna

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Reed Miller spoke about the difficulty it is in engaging community members to have a stake in rehabilitation of prisoners.

So potentially, there's a role for churches. Since so many of them are 501(c)(3)s, they're looking for ways to engage and make a difference in communities, and this may be an option, if you will, to have them speak to community members and help folk understand that, you know, at the end of the day, we really are all in this together.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Oh, absolutely.

And I also want to, you know, give a thank-you to the Kingdom Care Network with Ernest McNair coming out. He's been working with it. And they've been working up -- I know that we've reached out to the Black Clergy Association. I know Reverend Washington and I have been sitting down and talking about different ways to collaborate on that as well.

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COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm. What's the (indiscernible) with those discussions?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We are trying to get them to open up their churches to not only engage the community, but actually engage in what are they doing at the Prison to help us in our reentry efforts.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you all for your testimony.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you very much.

Commissioner, do you break down the cost for the -- how many facilities, first, do you operate, come under your jurisdiction?

COMM. GIORLA: We have six facilities in our campus on State Road, in Northeast Philadelphia. And we have five our satellite facilities throughout the area.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Do you have any idea about out how much each would cost to operate? Do you break them down in terms of sites and facilities; you know, one facility may cost one thing to operate, another facility may cost something else.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes. We do look at the overtime expenditures, the supply expenditures, and the maintenance expenditures broken down by facility.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: How about personnel?

COMM. GIORLA: Personnel as well, yes.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: And so you have an idea of how much east facility -- can you give us a breakdown of the cost of each facility, to operate these facilities?

COMM. GIORLA: I don't have those figures here, but I could supply you with the costs.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Supply them to the Chairwoman, please.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: I just started.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: I noticed that in your third-party contracts, if I'm pro -- if someone is providing, say, insurance costs, do they provide the cost for all three facilities or the facilities the cost for insurance broken down by each facility? How do you contract out for your services; by facility or by -- is it overall cost?

COMM. GIORLA: It depends on need and the population that has to be addressed.

Medical is a good example. We provide a different level of services at each facility. At Curran Fromhold, which is our largest an dour male intake, we provide intake services in conjunction with general health care.

At our work-release facility, University Avenue, in West Philadelphia, we provide almost no medical services there onsite. Most of those are provided up at the prison complex.

It depends on the needs of that particular facility or population.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: But when you RFP the contract, is it for a certain facility or is it for overall medical service?

CHIEF HERDMAN: It's --

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Or any service; it could be maintenance, it could be whatever services you contract out.

COMM. GIORLA: Any services -- again, it's -- it would with be overall -- it depends on the scope of services, because several of our services are blended.

You mentioned maintenance. We have full-time Civil Service maintenance personnel to attend to most of our facilities on State Road.

We have two newer facilities -- Curran Fromhold and Riverside -- where maintenance is contracted with the U.S. Facilities Organization.

When we issue or reissue an RFP or renew the contract for those facilities, that scope is limited to that facility or, you know, extended, depending on the need.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Okay. So we'll see all of that when you give us the information.

COMM. GIORLA: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Okay. I noticed also that you contract out for vocational-skills training for inmates. What kind of vocational-skills training is that?

COMM. GIORLA: We contract with the JEVS organization to provide building maintenance, customer service, environmental maintenance, and life skills.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Mm-hmm.

Are they -- do -- are these voluntary programs or are the inmates required to participate in those training programs?

COMM. GIORLA: Well, again, sentenced inmates are required to comply with their sentencing stipulations and are required to work.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: Many of them, because they know they'll be with us for a certain period of time, 'cause they know they have obligations to fulfill in order to make parole or to agree with the terms of their sentence, they will volunteer. Or, you know, we don't have to compel them to; they will volunteer.

Among the detention population, it's -- the level of participation is entirely voluntary.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Mm-hmm. Okay. Where and how will the additional $3.7 million for additional beds be allocated?

COMM. GIORLA: They may -- we

may seek expansion of the sites we're already contracted with. For instance --

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: You mean outside of the City?

COMM. GIORLA: No. We -- housing inmates outside of the City was not a desirable alternative.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: It was something we had to do because of our population fluctuation. While we are awaiting the construction of the CEC Center at D and Erie, if at all possible, we don't want to repeat that.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: It all depends on where the population takes us.

Right now, we have a contingency of a hundred additional beds at that D and Erie site. We do have some offers from other jurisdictions for available beds, but we want to stay away from those if at all possible.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Have you

ever thought about having a management company run the Prison and the City get out of the prison business? Was that question answered earlier?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It was not asked earlier, but I can tell you that that is one of the things that I have been able to take a look at, and we are still studying that issue.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Okay, all right. Thank you.

Councilman O'Neill, you ready?

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm okay. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: He's okay.

Councilman Goode?

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Some of my questions are still information requests. Even the information regarding dropout rate for prisoners, I would still like to see how we can get that information.

I'm also requesting similar

information from the Police Department. Chief Ramsey did provide me with some excellent information regarding homicides, regarding both the victims and perpetrators. One of the things he was not able to provide was the dropout rate. And that information, I believe, was gathered by the previous administration through the School District by submitting information to the School District.

But it caused me to wonder about another question and information request. Of those people who are murdered on an annual basis, do we track if they just got out of prison? And do we track whether they were killed by someone else who just got out of prison?

COMM. GIORLA: The Prisons doesn't, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Isn't that information that we should track?

COMM. GIORLA: I believe we should.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Actually,

that was posed to the Deputy Mayor.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I'm just writing down that I think that that is something -- and the answer to your question is yes, I think that we should.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: So the request I have is that we look at how many of those people who are killed, how long they've been out of prison.

How many of those people who perpetrate that crime have been out of prison.

And whether both of them, one or both of them, were high school dropouts.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Okay. I will get on that.

I can tell you that, probably anecdotally, my sense would be that because the numbers of people who are murdered in the City are people who compete against one another, for lack of a better word --

COUNCILMAN GOODE: It's victim-specific.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Victim-specific, yeah, it is very victim-specific. And, therefore, I think that they are all quite known to one another. So we should be able to get that information.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: From the information that Chief Ramsey gave, I can tell you, just based upon last month, there were 117 people killed -- I'm sorry, 117 people shot.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: 89 were African-American, and 83 to 89 were African-American males.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: And so that's about the 70 percent mark --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: -- which is the same that it's been every year --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: -- for the

last five, six, seven years.

And of those people who were shot, in terms of the murder rate: 24 people were killed last month, 20 were African-American, and 17 of those 20 were African-American males.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: And we've been down this road before.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We've been down this road.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: When you talk about the issue of crime, sometimes people will relate that to the murder rate. Even more recently, people have concerns over crime by some Pew studies and other studies that have been done, I think, not just related to the murder rate of these ex-offenders by ex-offenders, but even in terms of the killing the police officers.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: And so there's a misperception of how safe this city is or isn't because of the crime rate. But this is a very targeted group of people within certain ages, race, sex, educational level across the board.

Just along the same lines you're thinking, there has to be a better way than just sending them back to prison over and over again because the only -- the issue is not just whether they will go back to prison, but the issue is also whether they will live.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Absolutely. I concur.

I know that the Police Department is working on a study of some of these issues, but I think I'll expand it. And so I thank you very much for that.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay, thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: I just have one last question of the Commissioner.

Is the Philadelphia Prison System accredited through the American

Correction Association?

COMM. GIORLA: Our facilities are not. Our medical operations are accredited through the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

We looked at engaging the American Correctional Association to have our facilities accredited. The age and current state of some of our older facilities made that cost-prohibitive.

However, we do have a Policy Development Unit that drafts all of our written policy and procedures based on the American Correctional Facility Association's standards for adult local detention facilities.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: But you don't ask them to rate you.

COMM. GIORLA: Well, there's a cost associated with it.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Associated with it, mm-hmm.

COMM. GIORLA: With each facility. We're planning to begin with our Policy and Audit Division to have our policies reviewed and audited first. And then we can extend that out to our different sites.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Okay, thank you.

Are there any more questions?

(No further questions.)

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: There being none, thank you, gentlemen.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COMM. GIORLA: Thank you.

(Short break taken.)

* * *

(Proceedings resume.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Council is now back in session. We will now hear from the Police Department.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon and welcome.

COMM. RAMSEY: Good afternoon, Madam President Verna and all of the distinguished members of the City Council.

On behalf of the Philadelphia Police Department, thank you for this important opportunity to testify before you today to discuss the future of policing in Philadelphia.

You already know on my right is Deputy Mayor Everett Gillison. On my left is Deputy Commissioner Jack Gaittens, and right behind him is Deputy Commissioner Richard Ross from Field Operations.

The Philadelphia Police Department's Fiscal Year 2010 General Fund budget request is $522,478,250, with the below-listed allocations.

Salary and overtime expenses, or Class 100, comprise approximately 97 percent of the Department's budget:

$505,976 in Class 100 Funds.

$8.4 million in Class 200.

And slightly more than $8 million in Class 3 and 400 Funds.

The FY 2010 budget request is almost $14 million less than the rebalanced Fiscal Year 2009 targeted budget, or $13.9 million less.

Most of the budget reductions are incurred within Class 100 expenses, 96.7 percent, with the remaining absorbed in Class 300 and 400 expenses, roughly 3.3 percent.

For FY '09, $12,444,000 in contracts were awarded, of which 5 percent went to minority, women, disadvantaged, or disabled enterprises. And with my testimony, ma'am, I did submit a graph, a chart that outlines the breakdown from '09 and '08.

Our rebalanced FY '09 budget was reduced by almost $13 million through not hiring an additional 200 police officers, leaving 30 select civilian positions unfilled and reducing overtime expenditures by $7 million.

For Fiscal Year 2010, we will continue to implement all of the reductions from 2009, coupled with the following:

A civilian hiring freeze, with

the exception of essential positions and radio communications and forensics.

And another reduction in overtime expenditures by $17 million.

In addition, we have returned 190 vehicles to Fleet Management, and reduced the number of take-home vehicles by 41.

The Department's authorized sworn strength through Fiscal Year 2010 is 6,624. Our authorized civilian strength is 854.

When I was sworn in January 7, 2008, the Mayor immediately charged me with developing and implementing a new crime-fighting strategy for this city. Our crime plan included a major restructuring of the Department, with visible uniform patrol at the core of our strategy.

Guided by our principles of intelligence-led policing, accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvements in operations and administration, we made significant progress in reducing violent crime and moving toward making Philadelphia the safest large city in the country.

During the calendar year of 2008, against a backdrop of far too many of our officers, five being killed in the line of duty, Philadelphia experienced a citywide 15 percent reduction in homicides and a 10 percent reduction in shooting victims.

In those police districts in which additional resources were given, the results were even more pronounced, with a 26 percent reduction in homicides and a 15 percent reduction in shooting victims.

Our investigative units also increased their performance dramatically, with a 75.2 percent clearance rate for homicides, which is up from 58.6 percent in 2007.

Our first calendar year, 2008, and thus far in 2009, has been centered on lowering violent crime, targeting hot spots with enhanced patrol efforts and aligning the Department with its crime-fighting mission.

Technology provides the platform upon which we can build a more efficient and more streamlined department. To that end, we have upgraded, and will continue to prioritize upgrades, in information technology infrastructure. We've already provided an enhanced access to information and criminal intelligence to our patrol officers through databases now available in all our vehicles via mobile data computers.

Earlier this month, we also recently launched two critical systems that will allow our patrol officers to return to service more quickly after the processing scenes and offenders.

The first provides both the Department and the District Attorney an integrated electronic discovery system whereby all paperwork for the discovery process is now submitted and received electronically. The second provides an integrated and uniform forensics- and evidence-tracking system.

An equally important component in reducing expenses over the past four months has been the formation of an Overtime Management Unit within the Department. This unit is responsible for oversight, developing coordinated policies and procedures, and establishing broad-ranging criminal justice partnerships that will promote systemic change in the use of overtime.

We have been asked to reduce overtime by $7 million in FY '09 and an additional $17 million in FY '10. In Calendar Year '09, we have lowered our use of overtime by $943,000 per month and by 2.8 million for the calendar year to date.

Additionally, last September, the City of Philadelphia was one of a dozen cities nationwide that partnered with the U.S. Marshal Service and key community leaders, including members of the clergy, to bring Fugitive Safe Surrender to Philadelphia.

Over the course of four days 1,248 fugitives with outstanding warrants turned themselves into law enforcement officials, taking the first steps towards rectifying their past missteps.

We have envisioned and aggressive and innovative crime-fighting and prevention strategy for the upcoming year. The Department will pilot its first Neighborhood Policing Model at the end of the month in eight police districts. Underscoring this policing model is a commitment to the community in terms of engagement and problem-solving.

Each of these police service areas, or PSA pilots, will be structured on principles of geographic accountability and integrity, increased use of crime analysis, and intelligence to develop specific tactics and strategies.

Collaboration will also be a centerpiece of our efforts moving forward.

The Department recently launched Operation Pressure Point in partnership with 17 local, state, and federal agencies. Personnel from all of those agencies are working side by side during the most volatile weekend hours and are being deployed to hot zones within the City with the greatest proportion of violent crime.

Our law enforcement and crime-fighting efforts are greatly enhanced by initiatives that leverage the resources and manpower of multiple agencies in Philadelphia. This year, we will explore and apply for every grant and hiring opportunity offered.

We have applied already for 200 officers through the COPS Office totaling $43,173,000 in funding. This is a competitive grant, however open to all police agencies across the nation.

In the event we have no further -- we have to reduce further our Fiscal Year 2010 budget beyond what it is proposed, we'll do the following:

Lay off 256 sworn personnel and implement a sworn hiring freeze.

Our corresponding authorized strength would be reduced from its current level to 6,624 to 6,368 early in Fiscal Year 2010.

The Department will attrit an additional 190 persons. Layoffs combined with attrition would result in a total loss of 446 personnel in Fiscal Year 2010.

With a sworn hiring freeze in effect, the Department would not be able to begin the recruitment and hiring process until FY '11. This process would take up to a year to complete before the Police Academy could graduate another class, resulting in yet another 190 officers lost to attrition.

Our sworn strength could be reduced to 5,988 by the end of FY '11, for a total loss of 636 officers, which is near a 10 percent reduction in sworn strength.

The Department would reduce

and/or eliminate certain specialized units in order to back-fill patrol units. Layoffs would affect the most junior personnel in the Department, including the recently graduated '97 recruits and the 160 recruits slated to graduate on June 22, '09, all of whom have been, or will be, deployed to foot patrols in the City's most violent areas.

Under the proposed conditions for the FY '10 budget, the Department must strive to meet our crime-fighting goals while living within the constraints of the budget. This is, by no means, an easy task. We will continue to focus resources and patrol and draw personnel from units when necessary. We'll closely monitor and examine all overtime usage and work with our criminal-justice partners to become more efficient and effective.

We've had many challenges facing us, but we also have an ambitious goal of reducing homicides by an additional 35 percent in five years and helping to create safe and sustainable communities for all who live, work, visit, innovate and play in Philadelphia.

With your support and the support of all of our peer-city agencies, including the School District, we'll continue to drive down violent crime, reduce disorder, protect our youth, and partner with our diverse communities whom we serve in making Philadelphia the safest largest city in the country.

If we must implement layoffs, combined with a hiring freeze, we will inevitably lose the positive gains we've made during FY '08.

Everything we do in this police department should support uniform patrol; it's the backbone of our efforts to rebuild communities and our neighborhoods.

Reducing our sworn strength by nearly 10 percent would undermine these efforts and halt our process toward achieving our public-safety goals.

And that concludes my prepared

testimony, Madam President and members of Council. And now we're happy to answer any questions that any of you may have.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Commissioner.

Can you tell us how many police officers are funded by the State? And what is the amount we receive from them?

COMM. RAMSEY: The amount funded by the State as new police recruits?

Jack?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Good afternoon, Madam President and members of City Council. Deputy Commissioner Jack Gaittens.

I assume you're referring to the PCCD Grant, and that was to fund 100 police officers. It's a $5 million grant, which was continued for three years in a row. That will expire this November.

So we've had three years. So that's $14.9 million over the three years, and we have been informed that it will not be renewed.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Commissioner, can you tell us what the various reorganizations are that have taken place within your department?

COMM. RAMSEY: The reorganization?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mm-hmm.

COMM. RAMSEY: Basically what we've done is, the Department is divided into field operations and support services primarily.

The majority of the Department in field operations, under the leadership of Deputy Rich Ross, that includes not only district patrol but our specialized field units, and all of our detective units are a part of that. About 88 percent, 89 percent of our department is assigned in operations.

Our support services, which is headed by Deputy Commissioner Jack Gaittens here, includes our training division and all of our support units, whether it's Forensics, Radio, our IT Communications, all of those elements are under his command.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

You're requesting $26.5 million in the Grants Revenue Fund for FY '10. This is an increase of $14.3 million --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- from your '09 estimated obligations. Who is the grant for and how can these funds be used?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, we're going after federal grants very aggressively in light of the budget issues that we now face. So we're looking at every possibility we can for enhanced revenue. Certainly the COPS grant is --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: From the Stimulus?

COMM. RAMSEY: The Stimulus, coming from the Stimulus.

We just received word from the

Bureau of Justice Assistance yesterday, as a matter of fact, through an e-mail, that the money that was set aside for certain civilian hiring can only be used to bring back someone who's been laid off, not to create a new position.

We were looking at bringing onboard some additional people in our Forensic Services; for example, DNA technicians, ballistics experts, a crime analyst, and the like. And we aren't going to be able to use the money for that, but we're going to go after every grant possible.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's wonderful. And so we should.

Commissioner, you're requesting $14.6 million in personnel services, and that is for employees to be hired. Are they a combination of uniform and civilian, or are they mainly uniform?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That would be uniform, ma'am. We are looking at a civilian hiring freeze, with the exception, as the Commissioner said, Communications, Forensics, and in the Prisoner Processing, people who are involved with the photographs, the fingerprints, or downstairs in the PDU with prisoner handling.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So how many uniformed officers would we be able to hire for $14.6 million?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: For the fiscal year, we are looking to put in two classes, 190 recruits total.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, you are only requesting $308,225 for employee benefits. Who pays the balance?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That comes from the Budget Office, ma'am.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I beg your pardon?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: The Budget Office. We don't pay benefits through our general operating.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: This

is from the Grants.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Oh, from the Grants.

That would depend on the particular grant. We have -- just to give you a summary of the grants, we actually have 45 actual grants, totaling $19.5 million. And we expend or obligate 6.9 million of that. The balance is expected to be expended prior to the end of the grants.

We are looking for extensions in the Burn Gun Violence Initiative. We wanted to get an extension on the Joint Patrol with the Pennsylvania Police and the Cold Case DNA.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The question really is: If the grant doesn't cover the full cost of the benefits, who pays it?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That would be the City.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The City?

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DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So is that why we're requesting the $308,000?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Which page are you on, please?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Where is it. Section 43, Page 3.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: All right. I've been informed that that's with the Auto Theft Prevention Grant. That also includes the benefits in there.

Very few of our grants include benefits and --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: But don't benefits cost a lot more?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, they do. Benefits are very expensive.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So the City pays the difference?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That is correct.

Generally speaking, historically, the grants that we've gotten have not covered benefits. It would cover salary, it would cover equipment, cover overtime, but benefits have not been included. More recently, we have been looking for benefits to be covered.

The same way with a vehicle. When we get a grant now for a vehicle, we're also looking for maintenance and for fuel usage, which we've never looked for before. So we're looking to be more fiscally responsible when it comes to grants to cover the associated costs which the City incurs.

If you look at Page 175, you could see the blueprint. The YVRP actually has it broken down to Class 100 and has the categories for the fringe benefits broken out.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: But it doesn't cover the whole cost?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: No.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Greenlee.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you,

Madam President.

Good afternoon again. And thank you, Commissioner and all of the folks in your department for all you do for the City.

You talk about the success you've had in reduction of homicides and shooting victims particularly in those districts that have gotten the additional resources. I know there was concern when that was first announced, and it certainly made sense to me, what you were doing, but there was some concern in some of the other districts in the City that there would be a shift in the crime.

COMM. RAMSEY: Right.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And the word would get around that there's less personnel in certain districts.

Have you seen much of that? Have you seen an uptick at all in some of the other districts, if you will? And if so, has there been any shifting on your part as far as personnel?

COMM. RAMSEY: We do track displacement sir, to make sure that it doesn't affect another unit.

First of all, let me say that at the time that we came up with the nine police districts, we did not take people from other districts. We made it by cutting back on some of the specialized units, if you recall.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMM. RAMSEY: There was a specialized unit that I totally dissolved and put back into the district as well as trimming some other units as well. Our goal is to put more people in patrol and not take 'em out.

As a result of looking at our crime present last year, for this year, we did add three districts --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- that were borderline last year: The 16th, 23rd, and 25th police districts were added to the nine that we originally had.

I can't say that was due to displacements as much as it was just due to the overall criminal activity that took place during the course of that year.

But we have been following very closely. In fact, we have crime briefings every day. With Pressure Point, now once a week, we meet to go over that. And we are looking for those kinds of things to happen.

It's -- you know, so far, we've not seen any real significant displacement outside of the district that's already impacted.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: But it's always a fluid process, I guess, in a sense.

COMM. RAMSEY: It is.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yeah. Okay. I know when it comes to saving costs, one of the things you hear a lot about is court time, how much officers have to spend in court oftentimes just sitting around and waiting to testify.

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And I know this isn't just the Police Department; you know, it's the D.A., the Courts, whatever, so maybe Mr. Gillison can answer this better, I'm not sure.

Has there been any improvement in that? What has been done to try to cut down on some of that cost? which I think we all probably would like to cut down.

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, there's been a lot done in that area, and I'll certainly let Deputy Gaittens give you the exact figures.

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

COMM. RAMSEY: But let me just say that one of the things that we did was create the Overtime Management Unit headed by Inspector Flacco, who spends full time and attention, along with a small staff, looking at various areas where we've had overtime expenditures, looking for reductions.

Court overtime, of course, is

one of the largest areas; about 34 percent of our overtime budget is spent just in court alone. So one of the things we look for is unnecessary scheduling of officers on days off, having too many officers assigned on a particular case, where it's not needed, you know, that many aren't needed to actually provide testimony in court, making sure officers sign in and out on time. I mean those kinds of things we've been looking at very, very closely.

Through our Criminal Justice Advisory Board, CJAB, we've actually made a lot of progress with both the D.A. and the Courts, getting cooperation in terms of scheduling and looking at these cases, looking at -- we started with a threshold of six. Any case that had more than six officers, we actually took -- pulled the file and actually took a look to see whether or not it required that many officers. And in many instances, many officers had a very minor role in that particular case. And with the conversations with the District Attorney's Office, it was felt perhaps they weren't needed in court.

So we've already seen some savings in terms of our court overtime.

We're also looking at our investigative overtime, arrest overtime, the amount of money that we're spending on all of those things, to see where we can cut.

Seventeen million in overtime is a lot of money --

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mm-hmm.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- but we do have it broken out into different categories.

And, Jack, do you want to give some figures?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: As the Commissioner, said we're looking for all of those efficiencies.

In addition, just to give you one example of how we came up with a decent-sized savings:

The primary narcotics court used

to be closed on Wednesdays, our officers primarily in Narcotics were off on Mondays. So on the days that the officers were off, they were being subpoenaed go to court, which is a guaranteed minimum of four hours' overtime for a court appearance even if they only punch in, the case is continued, and they leave.

So we -- working together with the court, we said, Well why don't we close court on Monday when the officers are off and have it open on Wednesday when they're already scheduled to work. So we saw a decent savings from there.

And as the Commissioner stated, in Calendar Year '09, since the unit had been created and since we are doing these efficiencies, we have saved over a million dollars in court alone.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay, thank you. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're

welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon, gentlemen.

PANEL MEMBERS: Good afternoon.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I too have a question here regarding the $17 million in overtime for the hiring of new officers so why don't you finish that explanation, because it's very much tied to my same question.

COMM. RAMSEY: In terms of how we --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- reduce our overtime?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes, mm-hmm.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: All right. We are looking at a target of $17 million and, to be honest, that's going to be a very difficult target to hit, but that is our goal, and we are going to do our best we can to hit that.

And the way we've laid that out is, we are anticipating savings of $6.5 million in court reductions, 4.2 million in either a reduction or payment for special events.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. What does that mean, 6.5 million in court reduction? What does that mean specifically?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: All right. For Fiscal Year '08, we spent almost $25 million in court overtime. So we intend to reduce the spending for officers appearing in court by 6.5 million in Fiscal 2010.

And as I said, special events: either reimbursement for or a reduction in the spending of $4.2 million.

Investigative overtime to be cut back by $3 million.

Arrests overtime, $1.5 million.

Administrative, $500,000.

And the Crime Plan, $1.3 million.

That comes out to a total of $17 million.

Now, one of the areas that we will be supplementing the Investigative, the Arrest, and the Crime Plan, because even though we are trying to reach these fiscal goals, our primary goal is safety out on the streets and fighting and reducing crime.

And so, we will be supplementing some of our budget with the use of Forfeiture Funds. On Page 179, under the use of Federal Forfeiture Funds, we have increased that, as I'm sure Charlie's already noticed. We will have a level of $10 million for the Federal Forfeiture Funds.

So where we are coming up short, where we need to do these initiatives with the Narcotics Units and with the Warrant Units, we will be supplementing with the use of Forfeiture Funds to offset some of that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Let me move to another question before the time is up.

All of the departments have been asked to share with us MBE/WBE participation, and we thank you for yours as well. However, you are currently at 5 percent MBE/WBE participation, which is one of the lowest that we've seen from any department to date.

And, according to your testimony, you did increase MBE/WBE participation from 12 to 17 percent?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That was the number of contracts.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: In contracts.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Right.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So if you could just speak to -- to put this in the backdrop of this fact: Philadelphia is 56 percent minority and 54 percent female. Help us understand why there is not a greater reflection of what the City looks like when it comes to contracts.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Okay. If you bear with me, I'm going to be a little bit wordy, but I think we need to lay out the process here, 'cause there's been some confusion over it.

For this fiscal year, we have $12.4 million in contracts in the following categories: Petty cash, personal and professional services, small-order purchases, citywide, departmental, firm limit, and state.

Now, of that list, we have no control over the vendor selection for citywide, departmental, and firm limit. And looking at our 12.4 million, 8.7 million of that falls into those categories for which we have no control over the vendor selection.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. You've given us a lot of information and I -- I -- what do they say, you have to put the brain in gear before you put the mouth in?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Digesting that quickly. I need you to actually slow down a little bit.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Who's responsible, then, for those vendors; is that OEO?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: They do some participation in that, but those contracts are awarded by Procurement. The citywide, the departmental, and the firm limit are awarded by the Procurement Department. So that is 70 percent of what we contract.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So the Police Department has no say in that process.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: No say in the selection of the vendor.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

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DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We give input as far as what are specs are, what our requirements are, service needs.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, we do that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: So that leaves us basically 3.7 million over which we have some control.

The majority on our part of that 3.7 is the personal and professional services category; that's for contracts which are over $30,000. We spent 2.7 million on that, and that's where we pick up 6.17 percent for participation rate.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: The way that works is, whatever particular unit within the Police Department requests that work, they write up the scope of work.

Our Procurement Unit inside of the Police Department writes up the RFP, the request for proposal. Then we send it over to OEO for their participation ranges.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Frequently what we will get is best effort, without a specific number on that.

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We post that request on e-contracts for 15 days as a minimum.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And we will get responses back through the e-contract system. And then we check with OEO and ADPICS, which is the --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: ADPICS?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: ADPICS. It's the Advanced Purchasing Inventory Control System.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And that is a system in Procurement.

We check those databases to see

if any of these responding vendors are OEO-certified, whether its MBE, WBE (indiscernible).

And at that point, we have leeway to assign to the vendor who best fits our needs, even if they're not the lowest bidder. And, frequently, there are no certified vendors.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: My Procurement people tell me that we have certified vendors responding.

And our next highest category is the small-order purchases; that's for $30,000 and under. And we have a very, very small percentage right there. It's 0.87 percent. It's ridiculous. It's very small. And that's out of $530,000 awarded.

The way that that works is, the requesting unit gives our procurement, Police Procurement, the specs that they need. Then we identify the commodity group, which is basically a five-digit number in the procurement system, and then that's in ADPICS; or it's in SPEED, and SPEED is the Special Procurement Enhancement and Edification Database.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: I don't make up these names. All right.

Then we'll search that commodity group for an OEO-certified vendor, but frequently, there are no certified vendors.

Now, the Police Department has to --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Wait, wait, wait. There are no certified vendors as determined by OEO or the Police Department?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: As determined by OEO. They're not certified.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We do have minority vendors that we utilize, but they are not certified so they can't officially count against that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: So then we will go into the MBEC database. Even though it's called "OEO," the label on the database still says "MBEC."

We'll go into that and we'll look for vendors in those categories too. And, again, frequently, there's no certified vendors there.

So what we'll do is, we'll --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Well, I don't want to violate my time much more.

I appreciate your thoroughness and your ex -- is there any way you can forward that information to Madam President?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Because OEO is scheduled to come before us. And we're trying to get our arms around ultimately where does the check stop.

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DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And we need that information to prepare for those.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And the bottom-line recommendation from the Police Department is, I think we need to simplify the certification process. I think we ought to look outside of just the City for certification. If somebody else has already certified the vendors, why don't we just accept that.

We've had -- my personal experience with a couple of our vendors who were eligible but did not through it, they said it's a very lengthy, cumbersome process, and you got to disclose a lot of your personal financial information. And they basically said that for a 30 or $40,000 contracts, it's just not worth the aggravation.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Indeed. Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank

you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Madam President.

Commissioner, Deputy Mayor once again, Deputy Commissioner, I have to say that you guys do an incredible job in a -- and I don't want to say "thankless situation," but difficult to find thanks often for what you do and how you do it.

And I guess one of the things that I'm -- I'm looking over some of the stats here is that I heard in your testimony, you said the murder rate went down.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: By what percent was that?

COMM. RAMSEY: By 15 percent last year. To date -- 10 percent so far this year.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What was the shooting-incident rate?

COMM. RAMSEY: The shootings went down last year 10 percent.

COUNCILMAN JONES: 10 percent.

COMM. RAMSEY: So far this year, we're up slightly in shootings, 30 more shootings this year than the same period last year.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We are year to date at over 1500 shootings in the City of Philadelphia. And, but for bad aim or poor munitions or just the luck of the draw, we would be at a lot higher incident rate.

And I -- I don't point this at you because you're not pulling the triggers in these situations, but it was incredible to me to hear the head of the NRA, Councilman Clarke, argue our governor about why we needed to have local gun control laws.

In the month of July, there were 157 shooting victims in the City of Philadelphia.

In the following month of

August, 129.

In September, 166. In October, 154.

In November, 121 shooting victims in the City of Philadelphia.

In December, the Christmas holiday season, 130 people were shot.

The first of the year, 114.

In February, 101.

And 117 in March.

We're on pace to break records, and I really don't know what we -- what can you recommend that we do to kind of stave this off?

And I'm glad that homicides are down, but there are parts of my district, in the 19th Police District, where every 28 days, guarantee you, as the sun rises, someone will be shot. And we need to brace ourselves for the summer coming up.

And what can you tell us, what can you help us to get ready for that we can do with you, with you? And give us some kind of guidance.

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COMM. RAMSEY: Well, again -- and thank you very much, Councilman -- you really point out a major problem that we're confronted with here in the City of Philadelphia.

Another saving grace for us is the excellent trauma centers that we happen to have here in our city that do a remarkable job in repairing a lot of the damage that's done as a result of gun violence, at least the physical damage, not so much the psychological damage that is caused by it.

So far this year, as you mentioned, as of yesterday, there were 407 shooting victims in our city compared to 377 last year. That's the 30 more that I had alluded to.

And I too have listened to the debate with the NRA and our governor, and I side with the Governor. I mean, I think that the Governor, the Mayor, this Council, all of those people that have pushed for better legislation regarding guns are really on the right track.

I think we need to really take a look at the enhanced penalties that we have for those people who use guns to commit crimes, whether it's a robbery, whether it's a shooting, or what have you, the fact that they put somebody else's life in danger by using a handgun to commit a crime, to me, should result in a much different penalty than the times they receive.

We've got a terrible problem here with gun violence in our city, and it's not getting better anytime soon. So we can't continue to, you know, just rely on someone's aim or lack thereof to drive our numbers. We have to really take a serious position where people understand that it is not in their best interest to carry a gun. And right now, I can't honestly say that there's a disincentive to carrying one.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We -- I don't know -- and I applaud my colleagues Clarke and Miller for leading the way on -- or at least symbolically trying to stem the tide of the shootouts that we have in Philadelphia.

Statistically, you know, it's getting better in Beirut by way of gunfire. We have to make sure that that translates to homeland security in a truer sense. And I'm not going to belabor that because I know you worry about it every day.

And a couple of other management details.

The 192nd Unit was closed, which represents parks in the City of Philadelphia; the 4th District happens to have the largest acreage of parks in the City of Philadelphia. So, therefore, and because I'm concerned --

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- about how the redeployment is going --

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- you sent

some of your officers to the 5th and 39th Districts respectively, and I wanted to know, are there any spikes in crime? I mean what has been the result of that?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, I mean, it's still early, but so far, we've not seen it. I sent quite a few to Traffic, to deal with traffic issues. Many went to the 16th District because a lot of what takes place in the 92nd District was responsible for actually occurs in the redrawn boundaries of the 16th.

I happened to drive down Kelly Drive yesterday, and they had it, you know, blocked off for a regatta. And, you know, the same number of people I saw last year out there handling it again this year. And we actually encourage the captains to use those people from the 92nd who know how to handle this stuff.

So I've not seen anything, but we're going to monitor it very, very closely to make sure we don't have a problem, but we did send the resources to those districts that now cover the park and will monitor it.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'll make this my last point.

You made certain deployment changes last year at this time to kind of address some of the high instances of crime in particular districts.

COMM. RAMSEY: Right.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Are you reevaluating that as we go along to adjust to where crime is mobile or moving?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, sir, we're constantly reevaluating.

The nine police districts that we had last year that we identified as being the most violent, we added another three districts to that. The 16th, the 23rd, and the 25th Police Districts were added to that number. So that we did expand it based on what we saw in 2008.

We will continue to monitor very closely as we continue to break down and analyze all of our crime, but we did add some districts to that mix.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll wait for the next go-around.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon, Commissioners.

COMM. RAMSEY: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: First of all, I want to commend you for your efforts, you and your command staff, for trying to make this city a much safer one to work, to live, and to visit. I think it's very important and I think it is a thankless job sometimes.

I want to also personally thank you, Commissioner. I want to thank Commissioner Gaittens, Commissioner Ross, and Lieutenant Healy for working with us, for your leadership and foresight in working with the Project Lifesaver Program. That is a program that is going to make it much safer for children with autism and also with senior citizens with Alzheimer's and dementia.

So with that, I want to thank you for your leadership.

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, thank you for bringing that program to our attention. I mean, had you not done that, I don't know if I would have been aware of it. But the first class goes into school, I believe, the 29th or 30th of April.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yes. We'll be making announcements about that.

But I wanted to get back to something you mentioned about overtime. Do you think it's realistic that you're going to be saving $17 million in overtime for 2010?

And the reason I bring it up is because this Council -- I know from -- probably a lot of councils from the days of Mayor Bernard Samuel; he was the last

Republican Mayor in this city.

But it seems to me that every time we're turning around, we're always pointing to overtime reduction in the Police Department, and that has been going on and on and on.

And I don't know how you propose to do that. I know you mentioned it before, but do you think it's really realistic, that it's a realistic number to go by?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, it's going to be difficult, but I think it's realistic, provided we don't have something unusual occur during the fiscal year that would cause us to then bump up our coverage and cause us to incur more overtime.

One thing I did do -- and I don't know if this was done previously or not, but it certainly has been done now and will continue, not because of the budget crisis. I think responsible management of overtime has to take place in good times as well as bad.

We created the Management Overtime Unit. These are people who have been full-time monitoring and looking and challenging and making sure that there's no waste.

Now, many cases are still in the system, so we're still seeing a lot of cases where a lot of police officers are being subpoenaed to court and are sitting, waiting around, and not being called to testify and the like. What we're hoping is, with the new tools that we've put in place, that less and less of that will take place, and you'll start to realize that savings in Fiscal 10 and 11. So that's one of the areas that we're looking at.

Now that we are actual getting reimbursed or charging for some of the events and so forth that were all coming pretty much out of our own budget that we had to take care of, that too is going to bring some relief to us.

With the rest, we're monitoring that. If there's, you know, three people that were a part of an arrest, there's no need for all three to stay overtime to process the arrest. So, again, you know, another savings.

Technology was mentioned early on. There are ways in which technology can save man hours, which can translate into a savings of overtime. So if it takes you four hours to process something, with the right application of technology, maybe it takes two; well, that's a savings of two hours that might have been resulted in an extended tour.

So I believe it's doable. We certainly have to work hard and monitor it very carefully, but we are going to do everything possible to make sure that we make that happen.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. And you mentioned -- this is, I guess, the gloom-and-doom Plan B. It's the laying off of 256 personnel. That would be in addition to the $17 million savings in reduced overtime?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes. In fact, the Plan B calls for an additional 1.3, I think, on top of that in terms of overtime. But it's the 256 recruits that currently we have, 97 of which are on the street now.

We did start something new with foot patrols. All recruits, beginning last year, who come out of the Academy, go on foot patrol, and these are on foot patrol now. We've got another 160 going to hit the street in June who will be all on foot patrol as part of a project working with Temple University, Dr. Jerry Radcliffe, and that would be part of that group.

But we do attrit at a rate of about 190 a year. We add that on there. By the end of FY '10, we could be down as much as 446.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Wow. Okay.

One of things that bothers me:

Recently, we lost at least two police officers in automobile accidents, and I just want to know how safe are we making those vehicles for police officers? For instance, are there side airbags as well as front airbags?

It's almost like we have to put 'em in tanks anymore to protect 'em.

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, I mean, they have the safety features, but it's not so much the safety of the cars; it's the way in which we drive the cars.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: That's true.

COMM. RAMSEY: And that's what we're addressing. I mean, we've got too many preventable accidents, and we've got to take actual -- I mean real action against individuals who drive these cars in a reckless fashion.

(Timer bell rings.)

COMM. RAMSEY: Not only are they risking their own lives, but they're risking the lives of the public at large, and we can ill afford to lose cars.

So we are reviewing, our Accident Review Board, looking at all of these different vehicle accidents that are taking place and the officers that are involved in those accidents, because in many instances, it's due to their driving in a fashion that's not consistent with high levels of safety.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And you're doing that through the Police Academy?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I want to echo the comments of some of my colleagues and just say we all appreciate the hard work that the Philadelphia police force does. I'm a political science major; I know, as a matter of fact, that there is very little the Police Department, whether it has a thousand more people are not, can do about the crime rate in the City. Much of it has to do with demographics, how many teenagers are out at any particular time, the level of poverty in the City, education in the City.

So many factors where the City is failing in other regards lead to the crime and recidivism and other things that you have to deal with on the streets on a daily basis.

So I want to thank you and all of the members of the Philadelphia Police for what you do every year for you.

I wanted to specifically talk about just some of the changes that happen in the budget, and maybe you could explain to me where things are moving around. It was somewhat hard to follow this year because of the reorganization.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And like, for example, if you look at the Commissioner's Office, there used to be something called the Commissioner's Office; now there's something called the Office of the Commissioner.

The funding has gone from 7-million-2 from the General Fund to about 13 million from the General Fund. And can you explain the differences in terms of what the additional resources are required for?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, sir. I'll give you a general overview and let Deputy Commissioner Gaittens get into more specifics with you.

But part of the reorganization took Internal Affairs, which we now call the Office of Professional Responsibility. That is now under the direct report to the Commissioner.

I also -- we also, as part of the reorganization, created a Office of Violence Prevention and Youth Services; that is again a part of the Commissioner's Office. My sense and feeling was that we could do a better job of really providing service to the crime victims as well as paying real attention to prevention programs that specifically target young people.

So those two accounted for some of that, and I will let Commissioner Gaittens talk to the rest.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, sir.

Just looking at the Office of Professional Responsibility, what we've previously known as IAD --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can you -- if you're on a page, could you point it to me, 'cause you're more familiar with the Police Budget than I am, probably.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: I'm on Page 116, sir.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: On 116, okay. Thank you.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Right. And if you look at the second grouping down, it's Office of Professional Responsibility. That is Impact, Internal Affairs, EEO, and the administrative people.

Altogether, we're looking at 127: 124 sworn, plus 3 civilian, for a total of 127. So that makes up a significant increase in the Commissioner's Office. And it was Commissioner Ramsey's feeling that Internal Affairs should report directly to him obviously because of the nature.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And that's most of the increase.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So with respect to Patrol, I guess if I look at -- can you point me to where old Patrol is, and then --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Right. Field Operations is on Page 149. And you're absolutely right; it was difficult for myself to try and figure this out as to the way that it was reorganized. I'll try and give you a thumbnail sketch of how it actually shook out.

You won't find this on any of

the pages because I did some calculating on my own, but Field Operations, what we used to call Patrol, in June 30th of '08, their number was about 5677. In the increment run, January 1, 2009, 5761. Looking at the Fiscal 2010 budgeted positions, we are looking to have 5836.

So that is an increase of 159 over June 30th of '08 and an increase of 75 over January 1st of '09.

As the Commissioner said, a lot more focus is now going into Field Ops, specifically what we consider Uniformed Patrol in the past.

The other thing that was added to that was the Forensic Science Bureau, and there are 73 people assigned to that, so that made up a large percentage of that. That includes the Crime Scene Unit and the officers who do the ballistic investigations.

So that way, they are working more closely with the detectives assigned; now they all come under the same umbrella as opposed to being in my shop. And now they're all together under Rich Ross.

COMM. RAMSEY: And, Councilman, if I could just add one thing. The whole thought and theory was that those -- when you look at how work actually gets done and the support functions, that having 'em under a central leadership made it a lot easier to hold people accountable for getting stuff done. And it's not too different deputies with two different functions and that sort of thing.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So just trying to further understand this. If I look at Page 150, you've got it broken down in different sections of the City: Regional Operations South.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And then Regional Operations Command North.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: How do you divide those?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, what we did

was, we created two regional operation commands, which, it is my understanding that many, many years ago --

(Timer bell rings.)

COMM. RAMSEY: -- it was a structure similar to that in place.

It was my sense that the size of this department, being the fourth largest in the U.S., a very large department, it's just so much for one person.

Having it broken into half gave me greater concentration and greater accountability in terms -- it's almost equally divided, quite frankly, from north and south. Kevin Bethel has the south and Tom Wright has north, as deputy commissioners.

We also moved detectives -- at least divisional detectives under the divisional inspectors, so they now have the districts as well as the detectives for follow-up.

So what we tried to do was put things under the same leadership that relied on one another to a point where it made it a little smoother in operation, in more manageable chunks to deal with.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

That's my time, Madam Chair.

So if I could give you some -- are you aware of any technology that can increase policeman presence on the street by one hour per shift?

COMM. RAMSEY: Any specific -- well, I mean, we've got a long way to go to get our technology up to speed. I was listening to earlier testimony by other agencies, and we're pretty much in the same condition.

But there's two things. One, we do work very, very closely with Allan Frank and DOT, and he's doing a lot to try to get us up to speed, but one of the first things he has to do is fix the infrastructure that our systems run on because they're just too slow, too old, and so forth.

But once we get all of that

done -- and for an example, our records management system, where field case reporting can be done in an automated fashion, arrest reports, and the like. That will save an enormous amount of time and will allow a person then to spend more time on patrol, more time problem-solving, more time working with community, more time doing the kinds of things we'd like to see 'em do as opposed to being inside, filling out paperwork, you know, manually or even in an automated way, but you got to do it three times, you got to put the same stuff in three different reports, you know, which is a waste of time.

So that's where we can start to save not so much money as it is people hours or person hours, so that we can start to use those people to heighten our visibility, heighten our effectiveness on the street.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And in addition to that, if we had -- suppose we had handheld devices. We get the information out there live time, it's available to everybody who can go into the system, whether it's a detective or a Special Investigations Unit.

Following it further down the road even beyond the Police Department, the Department of Records, instead of scanning everything that we do now and hand-delivering hard copies, they could be electronically transmitted and they could be there in live time.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Do you need changes in law either at the City or State level in order to go paperless with respect to police reports, arrest records?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: I believe there will have to be some changes depending on the nature of the report, yes, but --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there someone in the Police Department or in the Legal Department looking at what legal changes have to be made in order to --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: At this

time, no, but we do have people working there.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can I ask you to please report back to the Chair with what legal changes have to be made in order for you to go paperless, as the Commissioner was discussing?

Commissioner, I point you to your -- I think you mentioned to me one time that your friend is a police chief in Tulsa, Oklahoma?

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: They have increased manpower by one hour per shift by doing exactly what you're saying, which is allowing reports to be filed from the car.

COMM. RAMSEY: That's -- Ron Palmer is in Tulsa, yes, in his second tour as chief there.

But, yeah, Ron is one of the more innovative chiefs. We've taken a look also at what NYPD is doing, LAPD. I mean, there are a lot of departments --

Charlotte, Mecklenburg -- that have made a lot of progress in terms of their technology. And we're certainly looking to try to do that.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But you have no savings in the Five-year Plan as a result of --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman, I know you're not feeling well, but --

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm sorry, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- your time was up a long time ago.

Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Taking too much of an advantage of the Council President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President, and I'll be brief so Councilman Green can get back on his train of thought.

First of all, gentlemen, good afternoon. And I just want to say, like my colleagues, that we really appreciate your laser focus on reducing violent crime, 'cause at the end of the day, a safe city is a city that people will want to live in. And that's our goal.

And I want to preface my question by some comments. And, Chief Gaittens, you've known me for a long time. I like to consider myself a law-and-order Councilman, you know, be it from gun violence issues, going to the Supreme Count along with Councilwoman Miller, and doing the drug march thing, you know, out on the streets, you know, being out there with the officers, the Police Advisory Council, whatever we need to do.

As a matter of fact, my first year here, I actually -- I think it was my second year when I actually got into a thing with then-Police Commissioner Timoney 'cause I was upset with him because he did not agree with me about bringing the National Guard to the City of Philadelphia to put on the drug corners.

And they did a little funny cartoon about me in the City Paper and had me sitting on a tank. And, you know, it was quite funny. But I mean I was -- I looked better than Dukakis, absolutely, because I didn't have that funny little helmet on.

But I understand the frustration levels on some of these issues gets you to the point where you want to do some extraordinary things.

I happen to represent the most diverse district in the City -- probably even in the State, 'cause I represent Rittenhouse Square, but I do represent parts of those areas that you have designated as some of the most violent. And I pride myself in being able to have the flexibility to go to Rittenhouse Square and kind of hang out, you know, and up to North Philly.

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And I feel good about the fact that I can go to pretty much every tough corner in North Philadelphia and get out of my car. You know, once they see the black car, first they think I'm the police, then no, it's Darrell. I can get out and I can talk to these guys on the corner.

And what happens in a significant amount of times is that I enter into these conversations with about how they feel they're being treated out on the street. And, you know, this -- we got to say it 'cause it's a sensitive issue but we need to talk about it.

And I guess I'm looking for help 'cause I can't resolve it. I mean, I talk to the guys and I know 'em. I mean, most of your officers don't know these guys as individuals, but I've seen 'em grow up 'cause I've lived in North Philly all my life. And most of these kids out here, they're decent guys; they just may not have a job or whatever (indiscernible)

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having challenges.

And I don't know what to tell 'em about what recourse they have or what they can do to have conversations, you know, 'cause I think that they genuinely want to be in a position where they have a relationship with our fine police officers.

And I need your help to tell me what do we -- well, how do we deal with this, this issue. And it's not -- it may not be as widely known because these people will never come to a community meeting to talk about it. They're never going to go to the press.

You know, but if you're out there -- and I know you all are out there in the neighborhood. I just need to know what can I do or how can you help me deal with this little situation that's continuing to brew.

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, first of all, Councilman, thank you for raising the issue because it is a very important issue, especially in light of a couple of very high-profile cases that we've got going on now that hopefully will come to a resolution soon.

There is no excuse for treating a person disrespectfully, period. There just isn't, whether a person is, you know, a decent, law-abiding citizen, a person that's committed a crime. Whatever the situation may be, there's just no excuse for a police officer to do that, period. And it's not going to be tolerated.

Now, what are some of the things that we're doing aside from just, obviously, investigating complaints that are made and taking serious action.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

COMM. RAMSEY: One of the things that I mentioned earlier in my testimony is police service areas, PSAs. What that basically does is divide districts into either halves or thirds, where we deploy the same officers every day along with their supervisors. You got to get to know the people that are in the community that you serve.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

COMM. RAMSEY: You can't do it running from 9-1-1 call to 9-1-1 call all day long; it just doesn't work.

Putting rookies out on foot patrol initially. Don't get started in your career by going from one crime scene to another where something's always wrong. A person's either been a victim of a crime or they've committed a crime or whatever; you don't get -- drive by a thousand good folks to get to the one that's got the problem.

So, you know, those are the kinds of things that will change attitudes. We give about 85 hours now in service training -- not in-service, recruit training toward diversity and so forth, but we've got to step that up with our in-service, our MPO training, because you know, you can't get 85 hours in an academy and think that's going to last you

30 years; it just doesn't happen.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Mm-hmm.

COMM. RAMSEY: So we've got to find ways to enhance our dialogue with people to better understand the differences that exist between us and also, you know, celebrate diversity as opposed to having, you know, attitudes and using inappropriate language and all of the kinds of things that have recently come to light.

So those are the kinds of things that we're talking about.

I had a meeting not too long ago with -- Councilwoman Miller was in attendance with some of our elected officials.

(Timer bell rings.)

COMM. RAMSEY: I had one Friday with Bilal Quyuum from Father's Day Rally to talk about the different ways that we can set up dialogues between police and community and small groups where we can actually talk about these issues. Maybe get a radio station to be involved and airing it live and getting people to comment online. But really open up lines of communication to better understand from both sides.

And we've had an unfortunate year with five officers killed in about eleven months. We've had police shootings that have taken place, and there's a lot of tension out there, and I'm very sensitive and aware of it. And we've got to do some very strong things and positive things to bring that back to where it needs to be.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you. Commissioner --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: If I could have just one more minute to throw something else in? 'cause I think it's important.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Oh, absolutely.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: On the proactive side, Jane Golden and the Mural

Arts, they have a Cops and Kids Program, and it's outstanding. It actually brings the youth in the neighborhood, you know, 12 to 17, 18 years old. They get together with the cops and they talk about their feelings for each other.

And it starts out rocky. Just about all of the sessions that they have, you know, there's a little mistrust or they don't particularly care about, you know, associating with the police.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: But as they get to know each other over the weeks and work together on the Mural Arts Program, they get to understand each other's perspectives. And, you know, you put yourselves a little empathy, you put yourselves in their positions. And we're having great success with that.

So I -- we are very much in favor of the Cops and Kids Program.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. Can you -- and I don't know if you have a point person on this Neighborhood Initiatives or whatever we want to call it, 'cause I think -- I know a number of the other Councilmembers have these issues in their districts, and if there's an opportunity, 'cause, you know, we want to -- we're a team.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: We're a team, and we got to make sure that, you know, if you don't know people or we don't know people, we need to be able to have a forum where they may feel more comfortable if I call 'em in or another Councilmember says, "Come on, guys. Sit down," you know, 'cause these are guys that are, like, from the 15- to 22-year range.

COMM. RAMSEY: Right. Well, the plan is to definitely keep you involved.

Deputy Commissioner Ross is basically my point person. A lot of this I've done myself and will continue to be personally involved, but I'm relying very heavily on Deputy Commissioner Ross to be the one to kind of keep this ball rolling --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- and make sure it takes place along with his -- the deputies he has on his staff.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right. I have his cell phone number.

Okay. Thanks, Commissioner. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon. How you guys doing?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Fine, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Great.

I wasn't in the room but I did hear you on the intercom downstairs.

Someone did ask a question regarding YVRP, but I have a couple questions regarding that program also.

And I do want to thank you, Commissioner, for meeting with us last week. And we do understanding that this is going to be ongoing dialogue, because I have some groups in mind of young people that I think you can come out -- some police officers can come out and talk to. And that'll help open up dialogue with some of the younger folks, 'cause they are the ones that grab our ears all the time, talking about their inability to communicate with the police officers.

In one part of the budget, it looks like you're eliminating YVRP, but then, in another part, it says that the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations for YVRP is 1.65 million, of which 500,000 is for Class 200, purchase of services.

If that is the case, what will the $1 million in Class 100 and the

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$500,000 in Class 200 be used for?

DEP. COMM. ROSS: Deputy Commissioner Richard Ross. And our grant guru is basically tell me that's merely a new grant, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: A new grant?

DEP. COMM. ROSS: Right.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So you lost the funding from the old grant? 'Cause it's eliminated -- $173,739 is eliminated. And that's on Page 61, Section 43 of the budget, but then it picks up again on Page 178.

COMM. RAMSEY: Page 52, ma'am?

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes, Page 52, Section 43 of the Operating Budget. Then it states the loss or the elimination of 173. And then on Page 178, Section 43, it states that you'll have the 2010 appropriations of $1.65 million.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Yes, ma'am. And we apologize for this. The way that this budget is worked out this

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year, because we are closing down one responsibility division and creating a new one, it's in a separate division.

If you look at the top of the page in the upper right-hand corner, you'll see that says "Operation Division 21," and on Page 178, it's Operation Division 34.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: So it switched from one division up into the Field Ops.

The amount of money is correct; it is $1,150,000, and that will be for personal services. That's Page 178.

It's basically the same grant, and it is for the same purposes. Before, there was more funding for it.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. You know, I thought that, but I wasn't really sure because you eliminate it, then you --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: It's because we closed out that one responsibility division, and now it's in a new responsibility division.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: It is very confusing this year.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So now, if you have it in Class 100, what exactly does that mean? I mean...

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Class 100 covers salaries and for overtime.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right, but it --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And as for the YVRP, it's primarily overtime.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right, but you're not going to hire police to do that, right? It's not going to be Police Department personnel. Isn't this a program that's normally run by outside agencies, or will some of the City agencies run part of this?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Good afternoon, Councilwoman.

No, you have a -- it's a joint effort. You do have police officers that are working with the program, and primarily, they use overtime in order to staff it; that's what's reflected there.

You also have PAN, and you also have probation officers from the First Judicial District working in conjunction as well. So this is a team effort.

You also have the District Attorney's Office and other partners that make up YVRP. And this is just one portion of it.

But they reflect a lot of the grant-spending here so that you can see and track what monies are being allocated where.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So that does include people from various City departments.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That's correct.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. I just wanted to make sure of that.

Plus I'm really glad that -- you know, I think YVRP is a good program, and

I've certainly heard other people talk about it being a good program too. I just wanted to make sure it was still going to be around.

How long do you think the new On-Street Action Operation Pressure Point is going to continue? Is that going to be --

COMM. RAMSEY: Through October.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Through October?

COMM. RAMSEY: This is the plan now. We have 17 different agencies involved -- federal, state, and, of course, local. And through the end of October is what we're looking at now for that particular operation.

This is the second weekend. Just completed this past Friday and Saturday.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, I know last weekend, you did the 39th Police District --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- which part of it is in my district. I think Councilman Clarke -- do you have part of the 39th, Curtis Jones?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, great.

So basically, it's there for the warm weather?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, all right. And, you know, we heard a lot about Stop-and-Frisk when --

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- Mayor Nutter was just concluding his mayoral run and then when you came.

Have you really implemented it? I mean, I do know that there was something that was going on that was like a Stop-and-Frisk anyway, but I haven't heard anything about Stop-and-Frisk. As much as we heard about it then, now you don't hear anything about it.

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COMM. RAMSEY: Stop, Question and Frisk has really been a tool that's used by police since the mid-1960s, 1964, I believe --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- is when it first was decided by the Supreme Court.

We did last year increase the number of pedestrian stops by 56 percent, 215,700 versus the 138,300 the year before. But even though we increased the number of pedestrian stops and vehicle stops by another 13 percent, the number of complaints against police only rose 7 percent.

So we did a lot of upfront training to make sure officers knew when it was appropriate to use that particular tool. And we also constantly and continue today to place a lot of emphasis on knowing who the individuals are that are known to carry guns and known to commit crimes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I forgot.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You must conclude.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay, thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Madam President.

And I would like to just clear for the record that I have the most diverse district in the City of Philadelphia. Councilman Clarke claimed that, but he was mistaken in that regard.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'd like to know, what is the process by which we work with private entities on security by way of providing our officers? How does that work?

COMM. RAMSEY: Is it the reimbursable overtime that you're talking about?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: All right. An entity will go to the district captain and say they want to hire a police officer. The district captain will meet with person and basically tell them what the ground rules are.

Our officer will go out there and they will perform the functions as delineated by the contract. However, they are under the understanding that if something comes out, out on the street, a robbery or a burglary or something, and it happens in front of the officer, he's leaving that entity and he's going to take care of police business the way he should. We don't act as bag-checkers at X-location or whatever, but they act as police officers while they're out there.

They have 'em -- if it's the very first time that they are being used but they intend to have an ongoing relationship with the Department, they will have to pay 50 percent upfront. And if it's a first-time-only time, they would have to pay one hundred percent upfront.

Other than that, people who have an ongoing relationship with the Department and are paying their bills on time, they just get billed as they normally would.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What is our current outstanding receivable based on private-collection entities like that?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: All right. As of right now, for Fiscal Year '09, there was $16.5 million billed out. Of that, we've collected $10,905,974, which basically means there's about $4 million left outstanding out there.

I know this is near and dear to Councilman Rizzo's heart.

(Laughter.)

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: But of that amount -- I just want to clarify that. Of that amount, $3.2 million is basically government; it's the State of Pennsylvania that owes us that money. And it's not really all overtime.

We get reimbursed for police recruits in the Academy; we get that reimbursement from the MPO Commission. That's all lumped into there together.

And if you look at where we've been historically with the collections, in Fiscal Year '07, it was abysmal. Excluding the government, we only had a 71.3 percent collection rate. Now, councilman Rizzo became involved in this and he focused attention on the program.

And in Fiscal Year '08, it improved and went up to 82.4 percent in collection rate. This year, I'm happy to say, we have a 91.1 percent collection rate for the non-governmental entities.

Now, speaking of government, it's not to say that, you know, $3.2 million doesn't matter; it's very important that we collect that money.

And our personnel are being much more aggressive with the State. We've been in contact with them twice already this week, and we are going to follow up with that.

You know, traditionally, the feeling has been that government is good pay, it's just slow pay. And it's on us because we've accepted that, that they're slow pay. Well, we're not going to accept that, that it's slow pay, anymore. We're going to go after them a little more aggressively.

I mean, 91 percent is a good -- it's a good percentage rate, I'm happy with that. But next year, it's going to be a lot better.

So that's the focus now.

COUNCILMAN JONES: If the Revenue Department could get 91 percent pay, we wouldn't have a deficit. So we appreciate your efforts. And I was curious as to how we do it and how we actually collect on that.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I wasn't going to bring it up 'cause we had a nice conversation with the Revenue Department.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: It's an important topic.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But, Commissioner Gaittens, I was kind of disappointed that the Revenue Department didn't seem to be as in the loop on this thing. And I know you guys asked for a tape of that, but they don't seem to be as engaged in this process as I was led to believe.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Well, so I'll just say that -- I will say collecting from the government entity, that will be on us; we'll take responsibility for that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. Because I think I caught 'em a little short on that. And I even in that tape --

I'm sure you looked at it -- said let the Police Department do what they do and you guys do -- you know, you do what you do, collect money from people that owe us money.

But congratulations. That's a good move forward.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And Deputy Mayor Gillison has been involved in this process. And we are looking to move forward.

As you know, we are looking to going into e-billing and the ACH, the automatic clearinghouse. So there is a lot, using technology, that we can do to move forward here and make it a lot better. It just makes sense that people should be able to pay by credit card.

One of the Commissioner's favorite examples is: The young people out there today, some of 'em have never heard of a checkbook; they wouldn't know how to balance one if there life depended on it. They have their credit card, they go online, they e-bill, and there it is; it's all over and done.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We can't do that right now. It just makes sense for us to get into that technology. Then you have the money right then. There is no collection, there is no playing around; you got the money.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's good. Music to my ears.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam President.

Commissioner and Mr. Gillison and Deputy Commissioner Gaittens, every year, as the weather breaks from the winter to the spring and early summer, we have an onslaught of kind of lower- level nuisance activity that doesn't always rise to the level of a 9-1-1 call, but that's the only place, up until recently, that people had to call.

So in every neighborhood in the City, when kids are out there getting their spring fever and drinking their beer and causing noise and trouble, people dial 9-1-1. But in busier parts of the City, that call often winds up relegated to the lower end of the response. And if they do respond, oftentimes they're gone on arrival or there's nothing showing.

Recently, we've had a meeting with 3-1-1 and your people relative to the kind of interface to allow neighborhood constituents not only to call 9-1-1, which they should do, but to have the ability to call 3-1-1.

And the reason that it was raised was because we wanted to have the PhillySTAT information available at COMPSTAT meetings for police captains to see just what kind of activity there is in their neighborhood that may not be a robbery or a burglary or a rape but is nonetheless annoying to the constituents.

Could you give me an idea as to where we may be in that interface?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, 3-1-1, even though it's relatively new, is making some very, very good progress in a lot of areas.

The majority of the calls that are referrals that we've gotten have been for abandoned autos, but it can be far more than just abandoned autos. As you mentioned, teens gathering or drinking or what have you, those kinds of things are still going into 9-1-1 but can go into 3-1-1 for a referral, especially if they're chronic problems that, you know, just continue over time. It really would take some of the burden off the three million-plus calls we got on the 9-1-1 system last year.

So we're continuing to work with 3-1-1. I think that they've done -- and I've been in -- this is the third city that I have been in that's implemented a

3-1-1, and I think that, actually, Philadelphia's a little further along than the others in terms of what they've been able to do so far.

But it will grow as people become more familiar with it. As people -- you know, that first impulse is going to be to call 9-1-1, 'cause that's what we've been trained over the last 20-some-odd years. Now we've introduced something new, and it's going to take a minute before people make that distinction.

But there's a lot of training and education that's going on right now both by personnel from 3-1-1 as well as our own district captains that go to community meetings and talk to people about what's appropriate for 9-1-1 versus 3-1-1.

So right now, it's mostly abandoned autos -- I think 1185 so far this year, at least as of the end of March.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It's a hundred percent, by the way.

COMM. RAMSEY: You know --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It's a hundred percent response.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yeah, has been abandoned autos, but I do believe that it won't be long before we start to expand that beyond that.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: In the same line of thought, a number of years ago, we had a more active night court, community court in the districts than we do have now. Now we have it somewhat more sporadically and not on a regular basis.

Part of the problem that the judges complained about early on -- and maybe we could revisit the situation -- is that on the nights that the judge was sitting in the courtroom from 9 o'clock at night till 1 o'clock in the morning, 2 o'clock in the morning, there weren't arrests being made or there weren't people being brought in before the judge. And they got a little frustrated with, you know, the lack of activity and kind of scaled it down.

I know certain District Councilpeople from time to time have had night courts effectively. But when we were doing it on a regular basis, it seemed to be more effective.

I recognize your financial constraints and your personnel constraints, but is there any discussion again of maybe trying to jump-start those judges getting back in those neighborhood courtrooms on a Saturday night usually through the spring and summer?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I can tell you that there was some discussion with Justice McCafferey about this very thing and trying to look at it. Obviously, both from the State level and from our level, as far as payment, we'd have to figure out the economic hit that we would have to deal with. But those are some of the things that we're trying to do either through CJAB to discuss and then put out a workable plan.

I think that coupling that with, hopefully, as we get closer to this budget being really examined and where the courts are going to go and how they make up their challenge that they faced as well, where we go is going to be more of a community-based model. And I think that we'll be able to look not just at a specific night court but also have something on a community court basis that will be around a lot longer.

And we just won't have what we have now, which is community court in Center City looking one way and not really going out to the districts.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And the effectiveness of the program was the ability to get a parent off the couch or out of bed and come in at 1 o'clock in the morning to explain why their 14-year-old daughter had a 40-ounce malt liquor in her backpack.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: That interaction with the judge and the parent and the child was very, very effective.

And so, if you need some help with getting that rolling again, I'm sure there's a number of judges, as in the past, who would like to volunteer for that. The issue for them at the time was the coordination with the captain and the other commanders in the district to get these people picked up, you know, and brought in before the judge.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Okay.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you very much.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COMM. RAMSEY: Okay, thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I was just doing some quick math in the Field Operations, and it looked to me like there are about 3600 police officers in the field. How much -- do you have any sense of how much of a police officer's time is spent being proactive, walking the beat, et cetera, in the neighborhood, helping Mrs. Jones cross the street, talking to the shop owners in the commercial district versus how much time is spent being reactive?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, one of the things that we're trying to change is the percentage of time people can be proactive versus reactive, which is why we're starting all of our new police officers for that first year on foot, because we need to reestablish foot beats; I think that is probably the best way of getting in contact with the community.

It depends on the day -- it depends on the district you're in and the day and the time as to just how reactive versus proactive you can be in terms of volume of calls and such that it doesn't allow for very much other than running from call to call.

But my hope is that when we get our patrol service areas and when we really start to settle people down in the PSAs and then have a different strategy in dispatching calls --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm sorry, Commissioner. What's a PSA?

COMM. RAMSEY: A Police Service Area --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- which is something new that we're going to be rolling out in the next few weeks that we will be able to spend more time proactively problem-solving and engaging the community.

You know, the foot patrols that we started aren't just about making quality-of-life arrests and things of that nature; they are required to make positive citizen contacts and, you know, knock on doors, go up on porches and hold conversations, visit business owners.

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You know, I mean, over the years, many departments, including ours, have gotten away from that, and we're moving back toward that. I think that's incredibly important.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Are you familiar with -- is there a point system for police officers that gives them benefits for vacation or other things based on whether or not they've -- you know, arrests they've made or other things that's sort of outside the normal --

COMM. RAMSEY: No.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: No, there's not? Okay.

Of the other cities that you worked in, did they have fitness requirements for police officers --

COMM. RAMSEY: No.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- in Washington and Chicago?

COMM. RAMSEY: No. The issue always comes up and it always becomes an union issue in terms of the people that are already on the job. We will have some conversations with the Fraternal Order of Police.

In most instances in the cities that we've had some discussions around the table with major city chiefs, that if you put standards like that in place, it would begin with new hires, and then you would have to gradually build it in so that eventually, that would be the entire department, but you'd almost have to grandfather in people that have been around for a while.

That's normally the approach that's taken.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Have you seen any other cities move towards that?

COMM. RAMSEY: Small jurisdictions, not big ones, that haven't already had it. I mean, some departments never --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: We used to have fitness requirements that we no longer have.

COMM. RAMSEY: But once you lose it, it's hard to get back. You can't just get it back overnight; you have a very difficult time doing it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there any measurement of how effective the force is as a result of the fitness of the police officers compared to, say, a 6,000-man force with fitness standards?

COMM. RAMSEY: I don't know if that's something you can really quantify. I mean, right now, when you take a look at the number of people we have unavailable for duty for various reasons -- sickness, injury, things of that nature -- 6 percent roughly, a little more than 6 percent, is what we're looking at in terms of our force.

Many of those officers that are off are because they are fit and they are chasing and jumping over fences and wrestling with people. They're the ones that tend to get hurt.

So it's a very difficult things

to quantify in terms of whether or not, you know, not that there shouldn't be some kind of standards.

But how you go about putting that in place so that you have reasonable standards throughout the department based on, you know, the full range of functions that police officers perform is really the challenge, and that has to be negotiated with the union, and those are terms and conditions of employment.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And what about, like, military-style requirements of meeting a certain height that used to exist in the Philadelphia --

COMM. RAMSEY: Those were thrown out years ago through federal courts and lawsuits that were filed when the standard used to be -- I don't know about here, but in my old agency, it was 5-foot-8, and it virtually eliminated women and many other people.

And, you know, so that was at least 20, if not longer, years ago that

that was pretty much thrown out. And, quite frankly, thank God. We've got very good police officers that are under 5-foot-8, so...

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So of the 3600 people roughly that are police officers in Field Operations, what we used to call Patrol, how many people are walking a beat, on foot patrol?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, right now we've got -- we'll have 256. Right now, we've got the 97, plus each tandem has a veteran officer with 'em. So that would be, what, 130-some-odd people roughly. We'll be adding another 160 June 22nd, when that class graduates, again, with a veteran officer.

So we'll have quite a few out on foot patrol.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you'll have 256 plus 160? You're going to keep the old recruits on foot patrol?

COMM. RAMSEY: No, no. The 256 happens after the 160 come out.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

COMM. RAMSEY: Okay, you got 97 now. So they graduate in June.

We did this based on targeting specific areas where we've had the highest rate of crimes taking place in public space. We worked with Jerry Radcliffe, Dr. Jerry Radcliffe, from Temple University to identify these areas, working along with Deputy Commissioner Ross and his staff. And that's how we targeted the areas specifically.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: You know, taking the train in everyday, I often see under train bridges or in train parking lots or others police cars just sitting there at different times.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there any sort of rule that the Department has about when patrolmen or women can, you know, sit in their car versus, like, having to park somewhere in a neighborhood and walking around at a time when they're not moving?

COMM. RAMSEY: If they're not on directed patrol, which would be sitting, specifically 'cause you've got a drug corner or something else going on and you're told to sit there, or making out a report or something of that nature, then they should be mobile, unless they're going to park and get out and actually walk.

Now, there's no standard policy around that. Some officers are bike-trained, for an example. So one of the things we're looking at for this summer is to, you know, add the bike racks so you can have your bike with you, and if you can do a little hour or two on a bike patrol, you can do it and then do some vehicle patrol, mix it up a little bit.

But there is no standard because a lot of it is driven based on the workload at the particular time.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So, I mean, I do see this all the time, and I know people complain to me about it. Do you think it would be a good idea to put in place a formal policy?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, what's even better would be if you tell me when and where and we'll check it out and make sure that --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, I mean, I personally can't -- well, let me put this another way.

Are you looking at technology that will be able to track where a car is at any given time that would let you know right away if someone's sitting still versus either moving the car or they've said, "I'm out of my car, I'm on foot patrol"?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, not for that reason, but if we had the vehicle locators, it would be more for safety reasons than anything else, but we don't have that right now.

So, again, you know, we have to rely on supervisors to make sure that officers stay active and stay on patrol.

And when we find places where people congregate or if they're doing something inappropriate, the more we know about it, then the quicker I can take action as opposed to, you know, hearing about it but then can't really get a handle on it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Is there a sanction for that?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Green, Councilman Green, I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes, ma'am?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Your time has been up.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I just have a short question. It's about a new program that you have in the Department that's called PPD 20/20.

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Could you give me a brief description of what that entails.

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, it's a strategic plan or a strategic vision to move the Department over the next few years. 20/20 was chosen for the more obvious reasons, you know --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Eyesight.

COMM. RAMSEY: -- 20/20, clarity of vision terms, things of that nature, and it's only 11 years away, which, for me, being born in 1950, is kind of hard to believe, but it is only 11 years away.

We do have a project. Lieutenant Tom Hires was selected through a panel that looked at several different people who applied for the position. He's going to be the project manager.

We're putting together a team. We do have some assistance from the private sector to help us put it together, but we're going to looking at training, we're going to be looking at technology, we're going to be looking at equipment, we're going to be looking at facilities.

It's easy to get mired into today's crisis and not really think about what the future holds and how we need to keep pushing this department forward if we really want to see progress.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: How many would be on the team?

COMM. RAMSEY: Probably about five or six.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Five or six on each team?

COMM. RAMSEY: Five or six, and these will be officers of all ranks. We're going to put together a survey. Very soon we'll be going out to department members, taking a look and trying to get their input from their perspective. We'll be doing similar things with the community, to find out from their perspective some of the things that they see.

And then we'll start working in certain critical areas. And even though these are some tight budget times, in my opinion, there's never a right time to start trying to plan for the future. You have to start somewhere; we may as well start now.

So these are the kinds of things that we're trying to do. That's what PPD 20/20 is all about. If we want the very best department in the country, then we have to work toward achieving that, and that's -- it's going to take a huge effort, but it's all doable.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: All right, okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

Gentlemen, now that I have both

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deputies here, the Deputy Mayor and the Deputy Commissioner, with respects to cameras, I just want to make sure we're all on the same page.

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I had actually asked the question earlier, when Deputy Mayor Gillison was here, but the Police Department, I don't think you guys were here.

We understand that the issue with respects to the technology was challenging, to say the least, in the last strategy, so now we have a -- what we believe to be the appropriate hybrid model.

And I hate to repeat it, but I got to bring it up, and that's the issue about placement as we move forward:

One, in terms of our rollout for the next year to reflect what was the earlier viewpoint of the Police Department's in terms of placements, which I agree with quite -- quite vehemently, 'cause when I looked at those locations, I said, Oh, yeah, they know where the crime is.

And, two, the Temple University issue. I hate to keep bringing it up but I'm going to keep bringing it up till we get those cameras off that campus.

Can we talk about the rollout? 'cause I know we have less money, but how we, in terms of hybrids or -- and then in terms of the Temple University relocation cameras.

COMM. RAMSEY: I'll take a part of it and let Deputy Commissioner Gaittens take the other part.

We have 84, by the way, that are, as of today, that we have up and running, a combination of wireless and hard-wired. And I think 61 of that number is on the wireless network, and the remainder being a part of the hard wire group.

Jack?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That's

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correct. And as you're well aware, Councilman, we did run into engineering issues.

The original goal was 250 cameras by October of last year. The current goal right now is 244 cameras by July 1 of this year. I will maintain the same standard that I've always had: If it's not good enough, it's not going to count. A goal is just a goal.

As you were saying about the Temple area, that became a part of the challenge.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Deputy, before you go past that, now, the new rollout will reflect the earlier recommendations?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And they're not driven by technology but driven by stats.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We've gone back to it 'cause several of the captains have changed in certain districts since that time and we have sent it back out to them. Again, if this is still a location where you need a camera, let us know.

Right from the beginning, we said, as a part of the policy, it will be the district commanding officers talking to the people in the community, talking to the businesspeople, the Town Watch groups; they are the ones who deal with the crime in their area and they know best where those cameras need to be.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And so, that's what we're going to do, we're going to go with them. I'm not going to make the determination, the Commissioner's not going make it, we're not going to have outside people picking the cameras.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: It will keep us out of it too.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Right. The people who run that district know the crime best, and they will tell us where the cameras go, fine. So we went with that concept, we got our list.

We ran into the engineering problem, if you will.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: But a totally wireless solution was not going to work; the picture quality was just unacceptable.

So what we did is, we went with a hybrid solution. The test area was right around Temple University. They had the 12th Jefferson, 13th and Cecil B. Moore, you know, 12th and Girard. They did the cameras out there to test this mesh technology, to see how it would work.

And it worked very well. It's doing good, the picture clarity is fine. We have no complaints with it at all, it's working very well.

So what we did is, we moved on.

And, you know, I guess the camera people consider that low-hanging fruit. They got the cameras up there and --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Extremely low, yeah.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We went back to the district captain at the time and said, Well, we want to move these cameras and put them elsewhere. And the district captain said, "Well, actually, I like it there, that is a good area around there, we don't have much crime there, we want to keep it that way. I want the cameras to stay there."

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: On Temple's campus?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: No, right out there. And you know what? I said we can't say this is our policy to let the district captain pick where the cameras go and then go back on it.

But, to address your situation, Councilman, 'cause I know what the issue is there, as far as the locations go, the upper west end of the, you know, the North Central Division, what used to be the North Central Division, I've worked there 15 years. You're absolutely right; there is a significant need for cameras up in that area.

So what the plan is, the pod cameras -- you're aware of them -- the portable, overt, digital-display cameras that are up around Germantown and Erie --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Those cameras have their stand-alones. They are going to be moved out to 31 and Diamond, 31 and Fontaine, 32 and Diamond. Unisys is using a subcontractor to do that.

They have told me that that move will be done by the end of April and I have no doubt you will be following up on that and --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Oh, absolutely.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And so we've been assured that that will be done.

We would like to put a lot more cameras in that area. You're absolutely right; there's a critical need for cameras out there. We don't have access to fiber on that location at this point. And that's the bottom line to that.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: If we get the -- what is it, the Cecil B. Moore Library? My understanding is that we have fiber there, at 23rd and Cecil B. --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: There's fiber there, there's fiber at Strawberry Mansion. I mean, there is fiber out there but it's not City-controlled.

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: What about the library? Can't we -- that's ours.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: We're -- I would like to do it, but that's an issue that we have to work out with the School Board or with --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: No, this is ours, this is the City's. It's a City library at 23rd and Cecil B. Moore. My understanding it has fiber. And if we can run a hybrid off of that, I mean I'm --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I'll be glad to take a look at that because I -- as you know, I've been basically doing this for -- since sitting in the chair.

One of the things that we do want to do is really look at the School District fiber, because we really want to have an interoperable system that allows us, especially in emergencies, just to turn the switch.

And because of the amount of fiber that's all over, that library fiber, if it's there, I'll have them identify it and I'll tell 'em to bring it right to me.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So we'll be able to deal with that.

(Timer bell rings.)

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: A real quick follow-up. See, this is where I start losing --

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DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: But I haven't -- I didn't --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: 'Cause we've had that conversation a few months ago about both the School District, Strawberry Mansion, which is a very hot area.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Right.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The school itself and the library. And now I'm hearing you say the same thing, so it doesn't seem like we made any progress.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: No, the School District we have not because we're at -- we're still in discussion because they have made their point and we're making our point.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Well, how long does it take to --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Well, it's actually --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I mean, we're talking about a safety issue, okay?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I agree.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I know

the principal.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I agree.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And if it's my desire, I cannot believe that she would not support putting --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: It's not that level. This is a federal contracting level that we have to deal with.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: There's a surgeon e-rate --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: -- that we have to deal with. And there is an opinion that basically says we can't use their fiber and want to use it.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: So that's what --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You need a waiver from the feds to say it's okay.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And right now, we have not gotten the waiver so --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Who is

working on that?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: We have a couple of people. And in my office, I have my chief of staff working on it, Mr. Resnick, who's working on trying to get the agreement. We're also pushing it up to our Congressional delegation.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Who is -- if you don't mind me asking --

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: -- who are they working with from the federal level?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I know that they've been negotiating with the --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: 'Cause this conversation is really getting a little stale about this camera.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: And I know that the person that's over in the School District is obviously Jim Golden who is the security person over there. He wants the same thing we want, which is to use the fiber.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: Point of information.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: But that's the issue, so that's where we are.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Point of information.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes. The Chair recognizes Councilman Green for a point of information.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Excuse me, Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: No, go ahead.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Who have you spoken to in our Congressional delegation?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I have -- me personally?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Anybody.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I have spoken to Congressman Brady about this.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: You have?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So his

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office is working on this.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I have spoken to him.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Did you ask them to work on this?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I have -- and I know that we have had our persons that are our Congressional -- what do you call them, the people that advocate for us?

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Oh, that's not his district, by the way so --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I know, I understand, but we -- you know, we've asked our lobbyists also to make sure that we have this with that, and I've spoken directly with the Mayor about it, and the Mayor actually knows about it.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Who are our lobbyists?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That -- right off the top of my head, I'll tell you I have get back to you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. If you

could provide that to the Chair.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Okay. Not a problem.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And also a point of information with respect to the original contract with Unisys. I just want to recharacterize what happened, deputy Commissioner Gaittens having been in the very business of providing video surveillance for a number of years.

What happened was, there was a contract for 250 cameras. They provided a certain amount of high-site towers for those cameras. The specs called for 225 of the contracts to cameras to be fixed, the other 25 to be moving.

It's a simple physics, engineering question. If you make all of the cameras able to move that you apply to the same high-site tower, you're not going to have the bandwidth. It's not a question of the technology, whether wireless or wired or WiFi or copper or whatever.

It is a question of the amount of bandwidth that you've dedicated to those cameras. And if you keep moving 'em around, you're not going to have enough bandwidth for the one high tower to make the cameras work.

So the problem -- I mean, the problem is not quite how you characterize it. It's that when the specs were changed, they didn't change the amount of bandwidth that was going to be available wirelessly. So that caused the problems.

So with respect to Councilman Clarke's position, not every camera has to be --

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: That's correct?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- wired or fiber. You could get far many more cameras out there if you're willing to go with high-resolution, fixed-position cameras and using a combination of wired and wireless. You could deploy them much more quickly and it would be far less expensive to deploy. And I just -- because you're only talking about pixel change events, it gets sent back.

I throw that out there. If you want to deploy lots of cameras, that is the most effective, inexpensive way to get cameras on corners.

And even if you had 'em looking at four corners like that instead of one that went there, it would be cheaper because you've got fixed cameras, which are cheap and you're only sending back pixel changes, so you don't need the bandwidth. And you have high sites all throughout the City that the City has access to at the moment.

So this problem is a problem that we can solve very inexpensively and very quickly if we just kind of look at the problem differently, I think. And if the goal is to have cameras out there, then maybe we just need to sort of relook at the specs again.

And I just throw that out there

as a suggestion.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Okay.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Madam President, if you'll just allow me a little leeway on the follow-up.

'Cause I'm really -- and, you know, I'm a very easygoing guy.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: But this whole issue about not getting authorization from the feds, and I really had that conversation with you last year, all right? And I had a conversation with members of the Administration about the rec center -- I'm sorry, the library at Cecil B. Moore.

And it doesn't sound like this is any further along than that conversation, so I'm concerned about the commitment of getting that done. So I'm not hearing from you today that there has been any progress, and I'm a little concerned about who is actually working on this --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: On the issue of --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I mean, I don't understand why it's that difficult.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: The bottom line -- and I will tell you, on the issue of the school matter, that's something that is with me, and that's what I'm -- I'm pushing that matter.

You brought the matter to my attention as far as the library, you brought that to my attention today.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: But I had that conversation with somebody --

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: I will look at --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: -- months ago.

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: That's my problem about this disconnect and this hierarchy, this whole org chart. I keep talking about every time we come here, and it's, like, this person on the org chart doesn't know what that person's doing.

And I keep having these conversations, it's getting frustrating, frankly speaking, 'cause I keep talking about these cameras, and I'm going to keep talking about 'em until somebody figures out a way to get the police to support they need.

This is a simple matter. I mean, it's, like, put some cameras up. And, you know, the worst-case scenario is somebody will go around the corner; they just won't freely commit a crime.

I mean -- but the fact that we -- you know, we got a camera at 15th and Cecil B. Moore and you got two cameras on Temple's building, you got a 24-hour manned booth, and we put a camera on that. And it's, like, ridiculous. So I'm almost like --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Point of information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: At some point, Deputy, I mean, come on.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: But I -- and, again, as I said to you before, on the cameras, if you have a question, there wasn't a org chart issue. It is -- if there's a question about it, I've always said please tell me because --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I did tell you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: But I --

(Indiscernible; parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I talked to you last year about this.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: About the --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: We had a meeting, you couldn't make; I understand it was a family issue. You sent a person who had no clue about what I was talking about; I let that go by. And then we had a follow-up conversation, then you talked about the school issue.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: That's right.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And that was, like, last year. It's, like, the end of April.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Again, that issue is something that I thought we would be able to have done by now, and we haven't, and I'm still working on that.

So, yes, I'm being held accountable; I have no problem with that. We are going to get that matter resolved.

But that's just not something that I can say when I'm going to have a waiver from the federal government. I'm working on it. As soon as I can, I'll be able to tell you about that. Believe me, I want to because I don't want these things to be hanging out there.

But that I look at as my responsibility, and as soon as I'm able to

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resolve that, Councilman, believe me, I'll be the first one to tell you.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Clarke, I believe Councilwoman Miller had a point of information.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. I just want to do a follow-up on the cameras.

I understand Councilman Clarke's frustration, but have we put any cameras up at all?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Oh, yes, absolutely. When we -- last year at this time we had four, I believe. Right now, we're up to 84, and we have a plan that will get it up to 250 by, I believe --

COMM. RAMSEY: 244.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: 244 by the end of July.

COMM. RAMSEY: This fiscal year.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yeah.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay,

good. I've been talking to Joe James.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So -- and I -- and, you know, this is a whole process.

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I would just hope that whoever made the decision to put Councilman Clarke's camera up at 15th and Cecil B. Moore, when you've got all these other cameras of security set up around there, would not make that kind of decision in the 8th Council District, because, you know, I work along with the police captains, and we understand what's going on out there.

And according to what's happening with Joe James -- and I do hope that you guys were listening to Councilman Green, because one of our problems in the northwest is that we don't have fiber optic, we don't have -- we're having a problem with hard wiring. And so, if there's a least expensive way to do it.

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But I know that we're trying to work with where -- like at the library and places that already have some kind of wiring. I don't understand all of the technology; I just know it's not that easy to put up the hardwired cameras in our district. I think Tasco's district is going to have the same problem. Because they explained it, where it stopped, where the wiring stopped --

COMM. RAMSEY: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And all up there doesn't have that particular type of wiring.

But I just wanted to chime in on the cameras because we've been anxiously waiting for them. It's just been people involved for two years, trying to get this done. So, okay?

COMM. RAMSEY: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I just don't need any newcomer to come in here and decide that they know best -- not when me and the captains and the people in the

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neighborhoods have talked about this, okay?

DEP. MAYOR GILLISON: Yes, ma'am. We agree.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to follow up and seize the moment regarding the cameras. I had an offline discussion with the Commissioner here, and I have documentation that goes back to October '07 of 40th and Market, where 40th, we have senior citizens who are financially being raped by the hacks. And the hacks are now becoming the runners for drugs, as has been witnessed by a number of businesses on that strip.

And additionally, you have a child-care center there with about 200 little people, and you have a dancing school, mostly girls.

So that tract of land between 40th and Market to 43rd, 44th is a runner's row for all types of drug activity.

So I say that to say, I don't know what the criteria is for cameras. Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell has been copied on everything, but to the extent that that piece of world fits into the criteria, when you look at seniors and children in the midst of that mix of drugs, I would put it on the record for consideration for a camera out there as well.

Secondly, Commissioner, Washington, DC, you were credited with providing citizens with a detailed public accounting of on the website crimereports.com --

COMM. RAMSEY: Right.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- where citizens can go online and instantly see the date, type of crime, and the neighborhood. Do you anticipate a similar plan for Philadelphia?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, I do.

We just had a demonstration Friday, I believe it was, of a new website that's going to be more interactive and have more features. I do believe very strongly in giving people the information they need and certainly knowing what's going on by neighborhood, by district, by however, the block that they live on or want to buy a house on.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mm-hmm.

COMM. RAMSEY: They ought to have information available to 'em.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: When do you anticipate the roll-out?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, we're going start with the redesign of the website very shortly. I tink that is scheduled to begin, I believe, in July. And crime reports is going to be a part of that. Yeah, July.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So at whatever point that happens, inform

Councilmembers --

COMM. RAMSEY: I will.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- 'cause that's a very type of information we can take back to constituents who are sending us concerns about drug activity --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- and the like right in their blocks where they live.

COMM. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you all very much.

COMM. RAMSEY: Not a problem.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

Councilman Rizzo, did you want to be recognized?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I want to end this on at least my positive note, that I've recently spoke with the State police Commissioner, Commissioner, and he wanted

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to thank the City and specifically the Police Department for the great job in this transition to the State Police patrolling the interstate highways.

They thought it was going to be a very difficult task, but it turned out to be a very pleasant task. And from the Commissioner on down, they value that relationship that they have now.

So I just wanted you to be aware of that.

COMM. RAMSEY: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And the other thing I want to say is that you have a very challenging job, you know, and I just wanted to thank all of the members of the Philadelphia Police Department for the great work you do. And in the room today, we have some people that you partner with every day -- the school crossing guards, the Fraternal Order of Police. So I think we have a pretty good environment. And to hear those words from the Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner was very nice to hear.

COMM. RAMSEY: Thank you, sir.

And the Pennsylvania State Police have done an awful lot for us. In fact, with Operation Trigger Lock, for an example, where they actually team a state trooper with one of our officers and go after illegal guns, that's proven to be very effective, and they're a part of Operation Pressure Point as well.

So we have a very, very good relationship with the State police.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It's interesting. Occasionally, I have an opportunity to run into one of the troopers that's working the interstates, and some of them are from Altoona --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yeah.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- and some places that there's probably one policeman in the whole county. And to be exposed to our police radio T band, they are very happy --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- that they don't have that -- the same type of crime to deal with as our men and women do.

So, you know, again, thank you very much, all of you.

COMM. RAMSEY: Thank you.

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Last year, Commissioner Ramsey testified that the reduction in the backlog of outstanding warrants for wanted persons, he was going to try to reduce that by pushing warrant service down to street patrol-level instead of relying on the, quote, fugitive squad to get them, unquote.

What has been the effect of this effort?

COMM. RAMSEY: Let me get my numbers here.

We actually have done well in

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the area of warrant service -- if you'll give me one second here. Let me get the actual numbers for you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: While you're looking for those numbers, Commissioner, I'll ask a question that Commissioner Gaittens maybe can keep track of, and that is:

If a perp is arrested for a crime and is not charged, or they're charged with a crime but not convicted, are those crimes considered closed and, therefore, go towards the clearance rate?

COMM. RAMSEY: What was the question again, sir?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: If a person is arrested for a crime and is not charged, or is charged with the crime but not convicted, would those crimes be considered closed and, therefore, go towards the clearance rate.

COMM. RAMSEY: Yeah. It's cleared at the time of arrest.

Sometimes there's something

called exceptional clearances. There are a lot of categories of clearances.

But if a person is arrested and, later, the court finds 'em not guilty, unless there's -- you know, there could be a variety of reasons why a person is found not guilty of a particular crime. Not necessarily means that they aren't, you know, the person that was involved in the crime and the case was not properly closed.

So yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And if a person's in custody for one crime but the police suspect they committed another, does that go --

COMM. RAMSEY: No.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- towards a clearance rate?

COMM. RAMSEY: No. You have to have concrete proof that a person was involved in that particular crime. So you get into multiple clearances.

For an example, where we get a

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person for burglary: Burglary is the kind of crime that rarely do you catch a person the very first time they ever in their life committed a burglary. Normally, it's one of those kinds of crimes where there are several. But you often times don't have any evidence, whether it's forensic evidence or their own confession that would link them to that crime.

Now, we debrief and we try to do that in every instance but -- and there are sometimes when a person will take you on a ride and they'll show you the exact houses that they broke into, some of which, the burglary may not have even been reported at the time. But more often than not, that's not the case, and then it winds up being one clearance.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Sorry. Do you have the answer to the other question?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, I do.

In 2008, we had, in February of '08, 2,810 active warrants. Now, as of the 15th of April of this year, we have 3,096. Now, let me explain that what really means.

In '07, we made 3165 arrests by warrant; in '08 that number, was raised to 4895. So we made a tremendous number of arrests by warrant, which means that we cleared more warrants, but because it's a dynamic process, new warrants are being obtained.

We had an increase in arrests last year; many of those have warrant resulted in warrants being issued.

So we did step it up quite a bit: We went to 3165 arrests to 4895 as a result of arrest for warrants.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Commissioner, based on your experience -- and if anybody would like to step in, please do -- what do you think is the connection between reduced crime for 2008 compared to the previous year and increase of warrant arrests?

COMM. RAMSEY: I think the

deployment of our resources, the focus that we've had on that. The number of police officers that we had, at one point, we were as high as 6748, on our way up to 6800, and so we were able to deploy them very effectively.

Police do matter, they do make a difference. I realize there are a lot of social factors that impact crime, but how we deploy, how we track daily crime briefings, getting away from the COMPSTAT of a one-month retrospective look, looking more tactically at crime is really what we've done.

Our reorganization, I think, has helped because it's really fixed accountability better, and we're going to continue to drive those numbers down.

So I think all those things together -- and our clearance rate went up tremendously. Homicides, for an example, went from a 58 clearance rate to a percent clearance rate. Well, that means you're getting the bad guys off the street that aren't around to commit another crime.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right. And that was my question about increased warrant arrests in that, you know, every study I've seen shows that's it's a very small percentage of the population --

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes, you're right.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- that's committing of all the same crimes.

COMM. RAMSEY: And that's true.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So increasing warrant arrests leads to less crime? Is that --

COMM. RAMSEY: It certainly helps. I mean, we got about 1600 more that we picked up last year on warrants than the year before.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Are you aware of any research on this?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, I'm sure there -- I'm sure there's -- you know, very few things haven't been researched, but I'm sure if we went to the

NIJ, the National Institute of Justice, we could probably find someone who's taken a look at that.

Again, you know, it varies from city to city, but I think one thing does hold true: That one way of reducing crime is getting people who are already wanted on another crime at least into the system.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Commissioner. I commend you on that issue.

Yes, Deputy Commissioner?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: And I'd like to point out a technological efficiency that came about in this last year; the Commissioner mentioned it in his opening remarks.

We converted from an MDT to an MDC; it's now a mobile data computer. Officers in the field now have access to the warrant data right on their laptop. An officer comes on, reports on to his shift, can go into that computer and bring up his district and whatever particular sector they want, and they can show all the active warrants.

And then by zooming in whichever particular one they want, they can bring up the warrant --

(Timer bell rings.)

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: -- who it was issued by, what it was for, the particular charges, and zoom in on the photo number and get the mugshot of the individual wanted.

So that officer, if they're diligent enough, they can look up everybody who is wanted on that sector where they're patrolling in that night go out, and they can go out make the arrests based on that; whereas before, back when I was in Patrol, you had to know which warrants are out there, talk to the detectives, hope to get a picture from a mugshot.

So it's readily available on all the MDTs out there right now.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

A final question in that regard, and I hate to do this to you, Deputy Commissioner, but you brought it up.

What percentage of the time is a police officer in the field actually able to connect to the police computer, using that MDC information that you just talked about?

DEP. COMM. GAITTENS: There are significant problems with the network, the load.

As you're aware, we probably spend most of our time in the 85 percent usage rate, and we spike up to a hundred percent very frequently; it causes great frustrations with the officers in the field. It causes more problems with the detectives who are trying to enter information, and they spend an inordinate amount of time being clerks and typing in and trying to get their paperwork entered. It's very frustrating for them.

And, as the Commissioner stated, one of the most important aspects of a technology improvement would be the network upgrade first, before we try and launch anything else onto it. It's like riding in a Maserati on a dirt road. I mean, we really need to fix the highway first.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are there any other questions from members of the committee?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Green?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Last year, Commissioner, you testified that traffic control is an issue in the City?

COMM. RAMSEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And you noted that it was important to find out what are those critical intersections where we can have consistent police presence and really pull traffic and make things work a lot

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better, people blocking the box and things like that, et cetera, all solvable problems.

Where are we -- have we identified those intersections this year?

COMM. RAMSEY: Well, we have, but it's been a work in progress to get the consistency in terms of staffing the corners. And we had a conversation about that last week. In fact, today, we had officers out at certain intersections.

When we take a look at the traffic congestion, especially downtown, Market Street in particular, and others, it is ridiculous. And we've not had the consistency in terms of deployment all the way down as far as it needs to go to pull the traffic the way it needs to be pulled.

And I have myself seen officers just standing by the box with the lights. Well, I need 'em out there directing traffic, not just out there by the box --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well --

COMM. RAMSEY: -- you know,

changing lights.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes, sir. I mean, if I -- if you could somehow swear me in and I could get a ticket book, I could literally pay for my salary in my four trips through City Council. There's not a corner -- there's not a corner I pass on my way to, you know, 20th and Market or 15th and Locust to wherever I go that doesn't have somebody blocking the box.

You mentioned last year the possibility of having civilians issuing tickets for blocking the box. Is that something that you've investigated that you think would pay for itself that we can move forward on?

COMM. RAMSEY: I personally don't see why, you know, there's not some expansion of being able to write certain types of violations. I don't know where we are in terms of taking a look at that, unless, you know, Jack or the Deputy Mayor. I'll look into that and get back

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to you.

I know I mentioned it last year. A lot of jurisdictions do that: They don't use police officers; they have civilian traffic control aides, and they do that. They direct traffic, they can issue citations, they can do those kinds of things.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I have a few more questions that I'll submit to you in writing. The Majority Leader has asked that I stop asking questions today.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I will. My safety is in jeopardy.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Again, gentlemen, thank you so much.

COMM. RAMSEY: And thank you, ma'am.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: This committee will stand in recess until tomorrow morning, at 10 a.m.

Thank you again.

(Proceedings end at 6:20 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings of the City of Philadelphia Council Committee of the Whole are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me on Monday, April 20, 2009, and that this is a true and correct statement of same.

JOSEPHINE CARDILLO
Registered Professional Reporter

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