COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PUBLIC HEARING

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

FY '03 OPERATING BUDGET

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Room 401, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, February 27, 2002
9:45 a.m.

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BILL 020001 - An Ordinance adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2003.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA

COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
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COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
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COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASCO

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Eleven Penn Center
1835 Market Street, Suite 600
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103
(215) 561-2220

BILL 020001 PAGE

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning, everyone. This is the continued public hearing of the Committee of the Whole regarding Bill No. 020001.

The first department to testify is Fairmount Park.

(Witnesses come forward.)

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

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning, Council President Verna. My name is William E. Mifflin, the Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission. I'm pleased to be here this morning to present testimony on behalf of the Fairmount Park Commission for our Operating Budget for the Year 2003. I'm accompanied here this morning by, my immediate right is Paul Nice, Deputy Director. Behind him is Dennis Waller, Deputy Director. And to my immediate left is James Donaghy, our Director of Operations. And I'm also joined by a number of our volunteers and supporters of Fairmount Park.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We welcome all of you. Proceed with your testimony.

MR. MIFFLIN: Thank you very much. I believe you have a copy of my testimony, and I would just like to highlight a few things from the testimony and then, of course, be happy to answer any questions you may have.

The FY 2003 budget is $772,000 above the FY 2002 estimated obligations and provides funding for mandatory wage increases for bargaining unit employees, the continuation of five volunteer coordinators, increased street tree maintenance, and compliance with City codes requirements and increase the funding for the Park Ranger Program. Council President, these are a number of issues that the Fairmount Park Commission has sought for a few years. They have been priorities for us and I'm very pleased, in fact, that I am able to report to you this morning that with total assistance of the City of Philadelphia, Mayor Street's Administration, we're able to provide this critical service to you.

As you may know, the mission of the Fairmount Park Commission is to provide for passive and active recreation accessibility to all Philadelphia residents and our visitors. Our mission today is even more important than in the past. The tragic events of 2001 combined with our present national economic situation, parks, in fact, play a very critical role in the quality of life experiences for all of our citizens. Fairmount Park provides the maintenance of facilities and amenities of our City parks and program leadership to support organized park activities, to preserve the park trees and open spaces as well as our historic sites and buildings. The Park Commission has a responsibility for nearly 9,000 acres in the City, which is one-tenth of the total City land mass and more than 50 neighborhood and regional parks are managed by the Commission which composes one of the largest municipal landscape park systems in the country. And we have enjoyed the support of this Council in many years in providing these critical opportunities for our citizens.

In addition to the citizens of Philadelphia, the park system is also a destination site. This past summer, as an example, we hosted the Extreme Games as well as, for the first time, the International Dragon Boat Championships, both in part held on the Schuylkill River. So in addition to providing the critical quality of life opportunities for our citizens, we also provide a major role in the tourism and eco-tourism, particularly, in the City. It's estimated that millions of dollars are spent annually by visitors to this City to come to Philadelphia for a special event or come to Philadelphia to view our world renowned historic facilities or to return to Philadelphia to visit family and to use the wonderful green spaces for picnics and other than opportunities in Fairmount Park. So we, in fact, play a critical role in improving the City of Philadelphia.

Major accomplishments last year:

As part of the William Penn Foundation Grant include the completion of a natural lands restoration plans for seven parks which identified 452 high priority restoration sites.

Completion of trail master plans for Cobbs Creek, Fairmount, Tacony, Pennypack and Poquessing.

And as a result of the grant from the William Penn Foundation, another $1 million in additional grant funds have been obtained from various sources. These funds will be used to fully or partially fund wetland creation and gully repairs in Cobbs Creek Park, restoration of Concourse and Centennial Lakes in Fairmount, streambank stabilization in Tacony Creek Park, and the restoration of Meadow Lake in FDR Park.

Ecosystem restoration projects have occurred in seven parks with combined effort of park staff, volunteers, and contractors.

And I'm very proud to report that over 30,000 volunteers, some of whom are here this morning, have engaged in restoration projects, working over 75,000 hours on over 1500 projects. That's an absolutely significant and remarkable number and, quite frankly, other cities cannot compare to that level of volunteerism.

For Fiscal Year '03, the City has demonstrated an increased commitment to the park, as I've indicated, by budgeting for volunteer coordinators who are presently funded by the William Penn Foundation Grant. These positions will continue to facilitate volunteer projects in the natural areas while expanding to support additional stewardship activities throughout the park system. Based upon this commitment and the success of the program to date, the William Penn Foundation recently announced a second grant of 1.5 million to the Fairmount Park Conservancy to support, among other items, additional restoration in the park system. With the support of the Conservancy, the park will begin implementation of the Growing Greener funded restoration of FDR Park, completion of installation of 17 gates and 2300 linear feet of guide rail to protect healthy ecosystems and recently restored sites. Unfortunately, with the parks open spaces and numerous areas in which illegal dumpers can come into the park usually in the cloak of darkness, it's imperative that we maintain the park areas prohibiting illegal dumping that is in some parts actually wide spread.

Regarding our tree maintenance program, which is always, I think, of utmost importance to City Council, we're proud to provide a comprehensive tree maintenance program, including tree removing, pruning, planting, and spraying. Maintenance services are provided on an estimated 250,000 street trees as well as the millions in the park system. Tree removal is performed when a tree is dead, defective, or creating a public safety hazard.

Pruning is performed to create clearance for vehicles and pedestrians, particularly around traffic control devices to relieve hazards and trees and to improve the health and extend the life of trees.

In Fiscal Year 2002, Fairmount Park will prune 13,105 trees with a projection of 14,000 in Fiscal Year 2003.

And, Council President, you may remember I've testified previously to levels of approximately 4,000 and 5,000 per year pruned. So these are remarkable numbers and these will clearly extend the health of our existing street tree population.

In Fiscal Year '03, we plan to plant 500 trees. That's not enough tree plantings, but our program in this five-year increased tree maintenance plan is to, in the outer years, reduce the number of removals because we would have caught up with the backlog of removals and then have a more aggressive tree planting so that we keep our streets green.

In FY '02, we anticipate removing a total of 1800 park trees, and often we focus in areas of high public use like our downtown squares and our playgrounds and picnic areas.

As I mentioned earlier, our park rangers will now be fully funded. This will provide 24 rangers throughout the park system. Twenty-four is clearly not enough for all of the park, but we were, quite frankly, in jeopardy of losing those 24 starting July 1st because of a budget shortfall. And the City has recognized that critical need and has fully funded the rangers along with the support of the Park Ranger Board which provides a small endowment to make up the difference for the annual cost of the rangers.

In '03 we will open our first large picnic grove known as the Belmont Groves. Picnicking is perhaps the No. 1 recreational activity in the 9,000 acres, although there are many, many activities that are pursued by our citizens. And this is a facility on the site of the former Playhouse in the Park, and we will be able to accommodate 250 picnickers at any given time under shelter with ADA acceptable rest rooms, play equipment, grills, et cetera. And this will be staffed in part by our Park Ranger Program.

In December of '01 under the leadership of the Managing Director's Office, we initiated a program with Ready, Willing and Able. These are individuals, formerly homeless and disadvantaged men, who provide an extremely valuable service to the Park Commission in maintenance of our areas along Kelly Drive, the Vine Street Expressway. And as I came into work this morning, they were performing work near Memorial Hall.

We accomplished a great deal in Fiscal Year '02, and we hope to accomplish the same in environmental education, which we believe to be a main tenet of our programs and services in Fairmount Park. Last year we reached out to 33,000 individuals, adults and children, in providing 269 on-site or outreach programs to schools, community groups, senior citizens, special needs, scout groups, et cetera. We hope to continue to provide what we believe to be a very valuable service in teaching the users of the park about this finite resource.

In partnership with the Mayor's Health and Fitness Office, the environmental education division has developed the Mayor's Health and Fitness Hikes in Fairmount Park. We invite all members of City Council to participate in these hikes through our seven watersheds along our newly restored recreation trails, and it's a nice opportunity to learn more about the park and to have a healthy aerobic exercise at the same time. And we expect to offer the same high-quality program this coming year.

The private support and services for the park continue to be at an all-time high. I've mentioned the establishment of the Fairmount Park Conservancy which is taking a unique approach in working and coordinating with business. We believe the corporate sector and the business sector can help the park, in fact, very specifically with special events and with programs that, again, improve the quality of life, but work towards their ability to retain quality employees in their offices and their areas of employment. Here in Philadelphia, it's very important that they have an opportunity to participate in park activities. And this is one of the valuable services that we play, and we look forward to working with the business community.

The park participates in a number of city-wide volunteer projects such as the Martin

Luther King, Jr.'s Day of Service. And we now have agreements with LaSalle, Temple, Villanova, St. Joe's, Drexel University, Philadelphia University, University of Pennsylvania, and Ursinus have all partnered with Fairmount Park to help improve the quality of our neighborhood parks as well as the School District of Philadelphia and their Service Learning Initiative.

Quickly to summarize the remaining of my testimony, we have a number of management initiatives. Councilmembers support the Fairmount Park on our Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust Board. This is a non-profit organization which assists the Fairmount Park Commission in property management and to date has brought over $3 million in restoration funds to historic structures where the trust can provide long-term leases to both for-profit and non-profit organizations who would like to help restore these very important historic structures.

In '03 we plan to negotiate and execute long-term agreements for the Ohio House, Loudon Mansions and Rockland Mansion.

In Fiscal '03, the Fairmount Park

Commission will initiate a new playground safety program. The purpose of the program is to provide the safest play environment for our children. The national playground safety standard will be used as a guide, and the program will include an audit of existing playgrounds to identify and correct problems. Frequent inspections will be performed to keep the playgrounds safe and in good repair for an enjoyable experience for all our children. A number of our park employees have recently completed the rigorous training to qualify as playground safety inspectors.

In conclusion, the Park Commission will continue to work creatively with the Friends of Park groups, private sponsors, foundations and park users to ensure that all Philadelphians are aware of our park resources and have access to them. We plan to continue our close association with volunteer groups and funding entities that support them.

I have included a service level graph for your review that identifies some key performance measurements in support of our efforts.

And, again, I'm sure you'll have a chance to recognize some of the folks who are here today who have been supporters of Fairmount Park and of parks in the Department of Recreation. And they really, quite frankly, provide the wind for our sails in many times when it's such an enormous task to maintain this wonderful system with so many needs and concerns. And the passion and the support of the citizens of Philadelphia has been extraordinary through the years. And the Park Commission really can't say enough about them. I've invited my friend James Trachtenberg here this morning. Jim is just an example of what people do in the City of Philadelphia. He's a third-generation furniture maker. He has a warehouse in North Philadelphia. He lives on Pennsylvania Avenue in the Fairmount area. He has adopted the part of Fairmount Park on Pennsylvania Avenue and at his expense brings his employees out to keep that part of Fairmount Avenue clean and enjoyable for all the people who use that part of the park. I could be here the rest of the morning giving you examples like Jim Trachtenberg and Lydia Hunn who do things with Temple University. But they'll have opportunities perhaps during public testimony to share with you their personal experience. I'm just pleased to be here this morning with them. And I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Mr. Mifflin. You.

Mentioned the restoration of Meadow Lake in FDR Park. Is that where the swimming pool was?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, it is, Council President. The swimming pool has been abandoned for a number of years.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: When will the restoration be completed?

MR. MIFFLIN: Let me ask Mark Folk, the Director of the Natural Land Restoration Project.

June of 2003.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. I notice that you have a slight increase in your budget in Class 100.

MR. MIFFLIN: That is correct.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That doesn't include park rangers, does it?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It does include the park rangers?

MR. MIFFLIN: It does include the park

rangers -- I'm sorry, Council President. The park rangers increase is Class 500. The increase in Class 100 is for the five volunteer coordinators.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Fine. What is included in your FY '03 budget for street tree pruning and removals and how does that compare to your FY '02 estimated obligations?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we have an increase in our street tree funding.

MR. NICE: Councilwoman, my name is Paul Nice, Deputy Director for Administration. For street tree maintenance, removal, and pruning in FY '02 our estimated obligations are $1,006,865. And in Fiscal '03, it's $1,163,279, an increase of $156,414.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. Can you tell us what the current backlog is for removals?

MR. MIFFLIN: I'll ask Director of Operations, Jim Donaghy to provide you with that estimated number.

MR. DONAGHY: My name is Jim Donaghy, Director of Operations. At the current time, that number is 6,000. It's down from 8,000 the start of the year. This year we're going to be removing about 4300 trees. And on an annual basis, we receive 2500 new requests for tree removal. And so with the current plan, we anticipate that within five years we'll be able to completely eliminate the backlog.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: How is the NTI Program interacting with the Fairmount Commission for tree removals?

MR. DONAGHY: The NTI program is providing additional funds for the removal, as Mr. Nice just quoted you a number about $1.1 million in our budget. There is $3.1 million through the Managing Director's Office that also is used for the street tree pruning, street tree removal, and street tree planting. And the numbers that Mr. Mifflin had just reported to you in his testimony are the total numbers of street tree work that we're currently performing with the combination of those funds.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr. Mifflin, you did explain about the Ready, Willing and Able Program. How many people have participated in this program?

MR. MIFFLIN: Today it's 17.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And what is the length of the program?

MR. MIFFLIN: The length of the program?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

MR. MIFFLIN: We anticipate a continuation of the program. We don't receive the funding directly. It is administered through the Managing Director's Office. Because of its success, the indications that we've received is that it will, in fact, expand. And we have not been informed of a termination date for this program. All signs would indicate that it's going to continue into the future.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: When was the last time the Park Commission commissioned a master plan?

MR. MIFFLIN: 1983.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Has the plan been updated since then?

MR. MIFFLIN: The '83 plan has not been updated since that time. There have been a number of plans that have been completed such as those that I've referenced this morning, master plans, restoration efforts for our watershed areas, plans for our trail master plans throughout those areas. And there have been numerous mostly physical plans completed for parks such as Franklin Square, Washington Square, Rittenhouse Square, Flora Park. So there have been a number of planning exercises, particularly in the most recent four to five years.

I testified here on October 31st in a special hearing on parks and recreation that in fact a strategic action plan is necessary for Fairmount Park, and we are very interested in pursuing that and have actually put together the basis for a proposal to the Commonwealth to in part fund a strategic action plan.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Is the budget before us representative of what the park requested?

MR. MIFFLIN: The Park Commission, like most other departments, seeks additions to their budget that are not funded in totality.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, what was your request?

MR. MIFFLIN: We had requested approximately 1.6 in addition to the park budget, largely in Class 100.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can you tell

us what the Administration's rationale was for denying the request?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I think that, again, not unlike other departments, the City is facing specific economic changes and the park is part of the City team and it's, I think, reasonable for the park to get a response that we would not be able to receive all of the funding that's requested. I'm pretty much a veteran of having submitted budgets that, you know, come back not looking the same as I had originally requested. But the one that I'm testifying to here this morning, quite frankly, has, as I indicated earlier, initiatives within it that cause me to be, quite frankly, pleased with able to provide park rangering and volunteer coordinators and working with the Managing Director Office an increase in street tree preservation.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: At this time, the Chair recognize Councilman Ortiz.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

Good morning, Commissioner.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Commissioner, how are we doing in terms of tree replacement, new trees, and getting rid of the ones that are diseased and so on?

As I drive, I see more and more spaces between the trees that were there before.

MR. MIFFLIN: There are clearly gaps in the street tree population. We've been using the figure of 250,000 estimated street trees for a number of years. And in fact, we only have about a quarter of the City accounted with street trees. And we have been removing more trees than we have been planting them, which is disappointing, quite frankly. But with the resources available to us, and now again with the expended resources through the Managing Director's Office, our No. 1 focus has to be on safety. And we are removing dead and dangerous trees which potentially could, if we don't remove them, cause personal and property damage. After we remove the backlog, and staff has just testified this morning that they're about 6,000 trees that need to be removed. Once the backlog is eliminated, which will probably take us close to two years because that number doesn't stay stagnant. Each year we get a number close to 2,000 more trees that have reached their maternity. We planted a lot of street trees in Philadelphia back in the '30s and '40s. And so if you look at areas like Logan and Germantown, and West Philadelphia, these large lemon plain trees are dying. They've outgrown their space. So we have quite a large backlog. Once we remove that, we'll have a more aggressive tree planting program. And we work with organizations like the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the City Council District and many others who are helping replant Philadelphia street trees.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: But in the park itself, the reforestation of the park itself, we have taken down a lot of trees within the park itself. And that forest look to it is kind of missing. What is the plan, the strategic outlook reforesting Fairmount Park?

By the way, we have a lot kids here today and this is thier park and we got to leave it for them.

MR. MIFFLIN: As part of the William Penn Foundation Grant, we plan to install 6,000 native trees and shrubs and herbaceous plants through volunteer restoration projects. This in FY '03. There are a number of reasons why some of the forest areas are looking thin. Some of it is just the maturity of our forest. Others, the trees are succumbing to the ills of the urban environment with acid rain, with the drought situations, in fact, that we're in today. Some of our parks are overbrowsed by deer and we do not have new vegetation or acceptable vegetation reoccurring.

So the strategic plan is to work with our support groups, to work with organizations like the William Penn Foundation in the reforesting of many of these natural areas. We can't do it in certain areas, in particular, the Pennypack and Wissahickon, until the deer population is managed, and that will take us about another year.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: How are we doing the with the deer?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I guess it depends on your perspective. If you were a deer, probably not doing so well. But we think we're -- we had last year a very successful management plan led by Barry Bessler, my Chief of Staff. And this year we're right on track where we would like to be as well. We'd like to bring the numbers down in balance so that other wildlife and habitat for wildlife can reoccur, and I'm certain that we'll reach that goal.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I've gotten some calls from neighbors from Pennypack about abandoned dumping of garbage, dumping of other materials, even cars. How is that going in terms of Pennypack and other areas in Fairmount Park which have been over the years sort of recipient of those bad habits of citizens?

MR. MIFFLIN: It's outrageous that the park is a dumping ground for abandoned cars. Jim Donaghy can tell you that -- I don't want to pick on a particular park, but whether it's Cobbs Creek or Tacony Park or the others, we've removed hundreds of abandoned --

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Tacony and Pennypack seem to be --

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, Pennypack as well. They're stolen cars, they're stripped and then they're sometimes lit on fire, arson, and rolled down the hill. And it's really difficult to get these wrecks out of the park. Part of this initiative of installing 2500 linear feet of guide rail, putting in gates, working with the

Philadelphia Police Department, increase ranger patrol, town watch. We try to remove them as quickly as possible, and we try to prevent it. It's a tough -- it seems to be just a never-ending issue. And I must say when the City completed their removal of 40,000 abandoned automobiles, there was a concerted effort as well to do that in Fairmount Park. But like anything else, it's a continuum. We can't let our guard down.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: The ball fields on Ninth and Hunting Park, I play some ball there during the summer. And last summer they were really not in the best of conditions. And I went by there not too long ago, a couple weeks back, and they don't seem to be -- I've gotten some phone calls from the baseball leagues that play there in the summer and they're concerned as to how the grass is going to be, the ground and so on. And I know that we have a problem there specifically with dirt bikes.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: How is the coordination between the Police Department and Fairmount? Because I've seen them, I've been there when they come in and if it's raining and the dirt bikes come in and the all terrain bikes, within just one day they can destroy a ball field and make it almost unplayable. How are we doing in order to prevent that sort of vandalism from taking place?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we're working very closely with the Philadelphia Police Department.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Do you have any idea how many dirt bikes, all terrain bikes -- because they're illegal within Philadelphia. How many we have confiscated, if any at all, within our parks, within the Fairmount Park and specifically that area?

MR. MIFFLIN: I cannot give you a number, Councilman, of bikes that have been confiscated or dirt bikes or ATVs. I really would have to turn to the Philadelphia Police Department for that number.

It is my understanding, and you could be totally correct on this, that the ownership of an ATV is not illegal anywhere in Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia County. It is illegal to operate one in Fairmount Park.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Yes.

MR. MIFFLIN: And my understanding, in any public space in Philadelphia, not just Fairmount Park.

I sit on a board at the state level, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and illegal use of ATVs is the No. 1 issue facing state parks and forests as well as urban areas. And our parks are -- they look like a state park.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Well, I've seen them. I've been present when they've done it.

MR. MIFFLIN: At least three districts in the Philadelphia Police Department are now equipped with what we call dirt bikes, motorized motorcycles. Part of the problem is tracking down these usually young people because they can zip in areas where a vehicle or certainly someone on foot or even horse couldn't track them down. So the police now are arming themselves with the same type of equipment as the illegal ATV users, and we're actually seeing an improvement at least in the number of arrests that we're having. The number, I can't give you. But we know that they're focused in Tacony Park. We know there are certain areas -- I guess that's the 26th District. The 18th District out in Cobbs Creek are armed with dirt bikes. The 92nd --

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Hunting Park has to be a target of that.

MR. MIFFLIN: It is. It really is. So we work closely with them. We know one area where they actually bring trailers in and unload the bikes from the trailers and then go into the park. So we're focussing on those particular areas. And we build physical barriers to stop it as well. But sometimes those barriers are actually challenges.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Every summer there's a problem with the pool on Ninth and Hunting Park. How are we doing with that?

MR. MIFFLIN: I think we've done well. As you know, we completely restored the pool. You were there for the opening two or three years ago, I guess it's been.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: More than that.

MR. MIFFLIN: More than that? Well, time goes quickly. From the physical standpoint, the pool is doing as well as any. We have an on going problem with illegal swimming. Some nights there's as many people in the pool at 2:00 a.m. --

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: We're no longer draining it every night, right?

MR. MIFFLIN: No, sir. It's close to a million gallon pool. It would be unreasonable to drain that pool. It will take a three-day recovery on the pool. So police are assigned to the perimeter of the pool, do their best to maintain a semblance of decorum at late night swimming.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Blondel Reynolds-Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning, Commissioner and your team.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I would like to first follow up on President Verna's questioning around the strategic plan. We know that that too was one of the priority recommendations that came out of the hearing last October 31. And you've mentioned what might be called many plans for special projects. Where are we -- let me just say this as well. Of the 1.5 million that was given, you say here that the 1.5 million is designed to support Fairmount Park Conservancy among other items. Could one of those items be support for a strategic plan?

MR. MIFFLIN: Indeed it could and conservancy recipient of the grant has identified a strategic plan, a marketing plan as one of the priorities for the Fairmount Park Commission.

The plan in 1983, and I was part of that process, took two years to complete at a cost of $250,000. We believe that since that time, because of the interim plans and specific plans, some coming from the William Penn Foundation Grant and others as I've indicated here, it would not be necessary for us to recreate the wheel again because we think we know a great deal more now about the park than we did back then. We now have GIS System mapping for all of the park system. We have all of our 400 buildings identified. We can tell you to the detail what is in our historic buildings and other buildings as well. I think the plan today should focus on what we have. Is it the right number of facilities; what neighborhood is it providing services to; can there been economies of scale with other agencies, whether it be the Philadelphia Department of Recreation, the School District of Philadelphia, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA's, you know the gamut. There are other agencies besides Fairmount Park that provide recreation services. So we need to begin looking at those services and come back to this body and to the citizens, I think, with a comprehensive plan to ensure that we're providing the greatest bang for the buck. I'm convinced that we are today. I want to make sure that things are not falling through the crack and that there are perhaps some economies of scale in what services are being provided. That's extremely interesting to the Fairmount Park Commission. At our next meeting in March, Chairwoman Borski, who chairs the Planning Committee of the Fairmount Park Commission, is prepared to begin a dialog on a strategic plan for Fairmount Park.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How do you see that ultimately being funded, public dollars, foundation dollars?

MR. MIFFLIN: As most things, I see it

as a partnership. We have already approached the Commonwealth for a planning grant that could range between 50,000 and a 150,000. The William Penn -- and I shouldn't mention that one foundation, but there are other foundations that we believe would be supportive of such an effort. We'll certainly inquire about City funding as well. My staff has already developed the outline of some of the key points that the strategic plan should include. We think perhaps there's even an interim plan that we could develop. Again, I'd rather not take a two-year period of time and just kind of sit still while we're going through this process, but looking at something that could take perhaps six months or so and come back with, "Here's what we have today. Here are the costs for providing those services. Are there management initiatives that we should look into?"

You may know that for the last two years we've contracted out 90 percent of the mowing that occurs in Fairmount Park because we believe that's an economic benefit to the City. We do the same thing with street trees. There may be some other initiatives that we could consider with profit or non-profit organizations to provide the services that the Fairmount Park Commission is now providing.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You've mentioned, and we all know that the Administration stepped up handsomely with regards to responding to the interest and volunteer coordinators and park rangers, and the foundation community has again come forward. Noticeably absent is the business community. Are there discussions underway at any level to see how -- I'm smiling at my colleague Councilman Frank DiCicco who cares very much, like we all do, about the business community -- but seeing how we can involve them in the future continued maintenance and survival of our parks?

MR. MIFFLIN: I think, Councilwoman, that the corporate and business community is -- it's not that they've been untapped, but I think has a significant potential to advance the mission of the Fairmount Park Commission. And in fact, the Fairmount Park Conservancy which is lead by Fairmount Park Commissioner John Binswanger, certainly has some business experience in the City and has already reached out to a number of friendly business folks who have an interest in the park. We have met recently with Charley Pezzi (ph) at the Chamber of Commerce and have sought an opportunity to come to their regular meetings where we can have a chance to share with the business community the needs and the concerns and, quite frankly, the opportunity for businesses to support Fairmount Park. So I think you're going to hear a lot more from Fairmount Park as it relates to the business community. We've done an excellent job with volunteerism, and I think the City has held up it's side of the equation with volunteer coordinators and the rangers. And now I think it's an opportunity for us to take this system even further with the support of the business community.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The Class 500 dollars included an increase for park rangers. Define what that is means. Currently, we have how many?

MR. MIFFLIN: Twenty-four rangers.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So does that mean additional park rangers?

MR. MIFFLIN: No, it doesn't.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What does that mean?

MR. MIFFLIN: It means that the complement of 24 will continue and, in fact, will be fully staffed. We were facing an issue as of July 1st where the ranger program may have terminated because of a lack of funding. And we were not able to make up the difference in either the private community or non-profit foundations. So the City has stepped up in concert with a small endowment that the Ranger Board administers to fully fund the 24 rangers. So this is, obviously, a valuable service. And I won't go into all the details, but right now we have five or six vacancies of the 24. The rangers themselves were always concerned that the funding was going to be eliminated, so when we new job opportunities came their way, they went for them. And we were somewhat reluctant to backfill them and only offer someone five months worth of employment. So now we will ramp up to the full funding level, and we're very appreciative of that. We could always use more rangers. There's no question about that. But in their existence, and they're not in their 12th year, we have an excellent rapport with Philadelphia Police Department. They've always been the eyes and ears of the Police

Department. Our rangers do not have full enforcement responsibility, but they're a good bang for the buck when it comes to law enforcement in the City because they can summon the police, they work closely with the police, and when necessary, and it often isn't that necessary, to bring in a policeman for an arrest of some type, there's a relationship there. But usually just the presence of a uniformed person who has the skills of interpretation and information and conservation is enough to correct the park violation that that individual or that group may be involved in. So we are very exited about that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Given their tremendous value and referring to the partnership that you say exists with various universities, is there or could there been an internship program with the universities where there already is an existing relationship where we could have interns specializing in park ranger activities to fill that need and that gap?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. And in fact, we are presently doing that. I'm personally familiar with intern relationships with Drexel University, the

University of Pennsylvania, and with Temple University as well. Those internships are in historic preservation. They are in environmental activities and recreation activities. So we do need to ensure that we're taking full advantage of these educational institutions.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And getting young people in the pipeline.

MR. MIFFLIN: And getting young people in the pipeline, exactly.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Moving on to another item that has been raised the past few years I've been here and again was cited and discussed at length during our park hearings and at the bottom of your testimony on Page 1 you list in detail all of which Fairmount Park operates, including several recreation centers. Where are the discussions with regards to Fairmount Park and the Rec. Department looking at smarter ways to facilitate management of the properties?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I think, Councilwoman, we work very close with the Department of Recreation. I think that we have through the years shared our resources to each other. And I know Commissioner Richard is following me here at this table, so he can clearly talk the details with his department. But if you look at the different issues, playground safety, tree maintenance, lifeguard hiring and training, we continue to collaborate on those very specific issues. I think part of the -- and I will not repeat myself. But I think the strategic plan that the park will be considering will, again, look at those facilities that the park issues or that the park is responsible for and ensure that we have the capacity for providing the quality experience that a recreational user deserves. Just by nature, the park staff tends to be more involved in resource management, environmental education, and outdoor experiences. We certainly have more of those than the Department of Recreation; and conversely, they have more active recreational activities. But we have a great working relationship. The Commissioner of Recreation sits on the Fairmount Park Commission Board. We both report to the Managing Director who oversees all of the operating agencies. I feel very comfortable that there is an effective working relationship.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: But again, the need for strategic plan is underscored when we can look to see that opportunity exist for Rec. and Fairmount Park.

MR. MIFFLIN: I agree.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Page 5 of your testimony you speak about Ready, Willing and Able. How do you recruit the young people for that program?

MR. MIFFLIN: I would have to defer to -- and I don't believe he's in the audience this morning, Mr. Hess in the Managing Director's Office on the recruitment issue.

MS. RICHMAN: Hi, I'm Estelle Richman, Managing Director. The Ready, Willing and Able Program is an agency we brought in from New York City who's been operating this model for many years there. They are a program that is designed to work with young men, in this case, who often have backgrounds who may have criminal backgrounds, may have homeless backgrounds who may have a Behavorial Health issue, but in working with them and identifying them and they're getting referrals both from the shelter, primarily from shelters, we have put together what we believe are the primary focus to get them back on the right track: Living arrangements, a job, training, and an opportunity to save money to be self-supporting when they finish the program.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So they're funded by Fairmount Park or by Behavorial Health?

MS. RICHMAN: They are funded by some joint dollars between the Homeless Initiative and Behavioral Health.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It's less than one year old?

MS. RICHMAN: Yes. Actually, it just started up in November.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So it's too early report?

MS. RICHMAN: It's too early to report, although I'm sure that Mr. Hess will be reporting on in his testimony next week. They're on a performance-based contract. This is one of our first ones. We have it, actually, very tight and there's work force development dollars that are being used to support part of the initiative at Fairmount Park.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: My final question for this round is, Commissioner, you list a number of programs throughout your testimony. I'm curious to know where is the community relations or public relations officer responsibility weaved through those programs? How does that happen? What's the role of your community relations officer or community affairs officer?

MR. MIFFLIN: The Park Commission has really two positions allocated for this. One is our public information officer and the other one is the park community of affairs position. The information officer tends to work more in the role of providing information, responds to questions, often deals with the media, supports the Director of Volunteer Services. The community affairs individual tends to cultivate relationships in the community where Friends Groups do not exist. As an example, this past summer when we hosted the International Dragon Boat Races, we discovered that the Asian community in Philadelphia has an intense love for this activity, so we're now working specifically in Chinatown and in other areas with the Vietnamese, with Cambodians and others to continue dragon boat racing on the Schuylkill River. So it's those types of activities.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The function is primarily related to special project related efforts?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

MR. MIFFLIN: I also would like to recognize three Fairmount Commissioners who are here this morning, Commissioner Robert Nix is here joining me and if they could come up and sit, with your approval.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Certainly.

MR. MIFFLIN: Commissioner Binswanger, John Binswanger who was previously mentioned, and Commissioner James Bloom.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We certainly welcome them.

At this point, the Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam

Chair.

Director Mifflin, good morning, and the members of the board. We're glad you're here.

MR. MIFFLIN: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you please describe the overlapping -- for lack of a better word, I'll call it the overlapping responsibility in reference to the street tree program between the Fairmount Park Commission and the Managing Director's Office. Why now then the Managing Director's Office? I understand that NTI is going to providing funds for the program, but could you explain the overlapping relationship?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. I guess sometimes overlap might have a negative connotation. The way it works in practical terms is that the funding is provided through the Managing Director's Office for street tree maintenance. The administration of the day-to-day activities, largely by contractors, is the Fairmount Park Commission's responsibility. It's almost as simple as just a budget or an accounting process where the money is not in the park's budget directly, but in the Managing Director's Office. But the Managing Director's

Office utilizes the professional expertise of the Park Commission in administering the more aggressive street tree program.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, in an effort to keep it simple, why isn't the money just given to you since you're the tree people?

MR. MIFFLIN: I'm really not certain, councilman. We have total access to the funding and deal with it as if it's in our budget. But the decision at this point -- and it's the first year in the program and I'm not certain if anything would change, but it is a seamless cooperative effort.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'll accept that answer for now.

The next question I have is the 24 positions for the -- what's the title called? For the park rangers.

MR. MIFFLIN: Park rangers.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: In years past where there was regular police presence, Philadelphia Police Park Division presence in the park, occasionally I see a mounted unit. Very, very seldom do I see a Philadelphia Police Officer in Fairmount Park. And I spend a lot of time in the upper Wissahickon walk from Northwestern to Valley Green. To tell you the truth, there's times when it's a little unnerving, especially if you're walking down there when it's getting close to darkness. Very little police presence, and I don't think the park rangers are out there late in the evening. I don't know hat shift they work. How do they work?

MR. MIFFLIN: Jim Donaghy is the overall administrator of the program. Seasonally, they work two shifts beginning at 7 a.m. and concluding at 11:00 p.m. I guess that's about April to October. The remaining part of the year they are on mostly day time shift. They work seven days a week, so if you spread 24 rangers through 2 shifts over 9,000 acres, you know --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: There's more raccoons than park rangers.

MR. MIFFLIN: Never counted raccoons.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The point being is that there's word that the 92nd Police District is going to be closed in the near future. I don't know if that's fact or fiction, but the presence of the Philadelphia Police Department -- and we talked yesterday about DROP and the effect that it's going to have on the Police Department or the non-effect. I think there is, honestly, going to be an effect. Do you have any feel for how many Philadelphia Police Officers actually an assigned to patrol Fairmount Park, that 9,000 acres you just described above and beyond the 24 positions which aren't filled?

MR. MIFFLIN: I really can't give you the specific number. The responsibility of the 92nd District does have primary responsibility for the Wissahickon and East Park and all the way down to JFK Plaza. The other park areas in the City are the responsibility of the appropriate Police District. And I'm not able to give you a specific number that's assigned to the park. That would have to come from the Police Department.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I would hope that we would know how well our park is policed.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I testified that we have an excellent working relationship with the Police Department. You know, Councilman, that I've been here when the park guards were part of the police entity patrolling the Fairmount Park

Commission. That was 500-person police force at one time. We clearly don't have those levels in the park today. I think that the 92nd district, which I believe has a complement of approximately 50 police officers, are providing a service that is actually improving with, again, the addition of assigning officers to bike patrol and to motorized bike patrol, so they are being more creative in the way in which they are maintaining the police presence in the park.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Any official word that the 92nd District on Lincoln Drive is going to close?

MR. MIFFLIN: I really can't comment on that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You can't comment or you don't know?

MR. MIFFLIN: I have no information that that will close.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Have you heard that's a possibility?

MR. MIFFLIN: Rumors, but unofficial rumors.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: An issue that we've

been talking about here for years and we keep getting -- we've had a lot of conversation about the responsibility of the neighborhood parks versus the Recreation Department taking care of them versus Fairmount Park. And it appeared that the last time we were here during a hearing that there was some sincere interest between you and the Recreation Commissioner to assess that to see if the Fairmount Park Commission would be better to take care of the neighborhood parks, as I call them. They're not really recreation centers, there's no recreation equipment in many of them. Is there any movement in that area to streamline how we maintain those facilities?

MR. MIFFLIN: I think as I've said earlier this morning, Councilman, that we work very closely with the Department of Recreation. We share resources. To just swap or transfer a park for the sake of transferring, obviously, we wouldn't do. I think we're both looking at our capabilities and our strengths and our weaknesses. This is an ongoing dialog. I think you'll be hearing more about that in the future. But we certainly haven't made any specific decisions.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I don't want to get into the entire issue here, but I'll just craft the question this way. Could you please bring us all up to speed on the situation -- if you've done this, I was out of the room, I'll follow up with you later -- the Pennypack Environmental Center staffing situation? Could you explain the situation and then let us know where we are with that issue.

MR. MIFFLIN: We are reviewing our various options as it relates to the staffing of environmental centers. As you may know, the five-year grant from the William Penn Foundation, the original grant, will conclude on June 30th of this year. The foundation has elected not to continue the funding for environmental educators. So we at the Park Commission are evaluating our various options. We've not concluded that those staff positions will be other than telling those individuals that their funding will terminate on June 30th, we've also made a commitment to them to identify to the best of our ability additional funding sources. Options, quite frankly, include working more closely with the Philadelphia Water Department, which is doing a lot of work in watershed management. The Park Commission and the Water Department have a lot in common as it relates to protecting our watersheds. The newly opened Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Education Center there at 63rd and Katherine actually enjoys funding from outside the City of Philadelphia. We're hopeful that they can continue provide staffing. We're creating a partnership with the Pennsylvania DCNR, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. In fact, their director of environmental education is coming to Fairmount Park on March 18th. I'm taking her a tour of all environmental education centers. The Commonwealth is very interested in supporting environmental education in urban areas, including the Fairmount Commission. Now with full funding for the 24 park rangers, we can provide our outreach programs, particularly during the winter. We continue to have positive discussions with the National Audubon Society who are very interested in creating an urban environmental center in Philadelphia, in Fairmount Park. And lastly, the Fairmount conservancy has identified environmental education as one of its funding priorities. So we have a number of, sort of, irons in the fire, if you will. We are committed to the Pennypack Environmental Center, as we are to the environmental Center in Wissahickon and, obviously, at Cobbs Creek in providing quality programs.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Mifflin, obviously there are a lot of irons in the fire, but it's almost March, and June 30th you're out of money?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we are in that grant. The centers will remain open. They are staffed by Civil Service employees. We've been able to expand the services through the grant. Our goal is to continue to reach -- and I may have testified to this number; and if I didn't, I apologize -- to reach the 53,000 individuals that we reached in '02 in 03. Some of the initiatives I just outlined, I think, provide the footprint or the format as to how we would go about doing that. So it's difficult for me to sit here and say that I feel for those employees who are affected by the termination of this grant. They were hired with the full understanding that this grant was for a five-year period, so there was no hidden agenda here that all of a sudden the rug's been pulled out from under their feet. They knew the grant would terminate on June 30th. We're seeking to extend their good efforts, because we do value their services. As the park director, it's my job to provide services to as many people as we possibly can and provide them in the most economical way. And if I can develop partnerships with other organizations, that's the way we'll provide environmental educational. That's what I try to keep my eye on that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, since we all agree the importance of environmental education and the five-year grant is expiring and the employees knew that that was going to be a five-year grant, how much money are we talking about? Did you ask for since you consider this an important facet of what you do, the educational piece, did you ask for that to be put in the budget? And how much would you need in the budget to make that work?

MR. MIFFLIN: We're looking at five positions that would -- I'm sorry, a total of nine positions, five environmental educators and four administrative assistants, which would come roughly to about $400,000. Part of our initial budget request included three additional environmental educators. So our original in my Operating Budget is for three environmental educators. We just learned in February, earlier this month, the decision of the William Penn Foundation, so we did not ask for the nine additional positions.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Don't you also at the Commission have grant money that's in an account somewhere that you could draw on if you believe that this program should move forward? I believe you manage a significant multi-million dollar account that has money to be used for purposes like this.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, for the record, we administer a number of -- more than 30 trusts and funds and accounts that in total is about $5 million.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's multi-million.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, it its multi-million, but I wanted to get the number out on the record. Most of that, we're only able to, of course, spend the income and they are very definitive and specific to the expenditures. So it's not as if we could pool all of that income and just put it all into environmental education. Where we can, we will, but it clearly would not be available to make up this level of funding.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you tell me why the William Penn Foundation is not interested in -- that might be just the way they run their foundation, five years of this. Is there anything negative associated with their notification that they're not willing to keep this program in place?

MR. MIFFLIN: No, they came back with an additional, as I've said, one and a half million dollars. And two-thirds of that would focus on the natural environment. They've indicated, it's almost once a year or every other year they sit down and develop what they believe to be their priorities for the next funding cycle, and environmental education which was a priority five years ago no longer enjoys the top priority at the foundation.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: My last question, I was asked to ask you this question. A constituent wrote to me asking me about the mansions along the Schuylkill River, the 18th and 19th Century plantations. Could you explain what exactly is occurring with those facilities? Are they being leased? Are they being maintained? How many are there? "The plantations" they referred to them. I call them park houses, but maybe you can tell me exactly what the situation is there.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I think it's a positive situation, if you will. I know that's a very general statement. They're not all protected and preserved as well as we would like them to be basically because these are 17, 18 Century facilities that require a significant amount of infrastructure and code compliance work. When you're dealing in a historic property, that's not an inexpensive issue. Our rule is that we will have each of them occupied in some way, either with a caretaker or with a caretaker and an organization or at a minimum just with an organization. Most of them are non-profit organizations. Some of them have been in our park houses for more than 50 years. The committee of 26, as in 1926, has occupied Strawberry Mansion for more than 50 years. They do an excellent job in helping maintain Strawberry Mansion. Often they're responsible for all the interior improvements, they keep the building open to te public for tours and we literally couldn't do it without them.

The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation

Trust of which you are a board member and capably represented it by staff at our monthly meetings, provides the opportunity for longer term leases for organizations who have the financial capability to invest in both the interior and exterior renovations of these homes. Often non-profits do not have that real financial capability. So in the last 10 years, we've really made a conscious effort to manager our properties as a trust, and I think that's proved to be extremely successful.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The Canoe Club is one that I'm familiar with in Wissahickon, has that situation been resolved with the occupants, the Canoe Club that occupies that facility and do we have a care taker there now?

MR. MIFFLIN: We are actually between caretakers right now. We had a caretaker who vacated the property. It seems like it was a month ago. We're interviewing new caretakers. The reason why a caretaker works in that property, one, it's very isolated; and two, it is it's undergoing major systems renovation and restoration efforts both City dollars as well as state dollars. So the organization that was previously in the building had to vacate during the restoration efforts. And once those are completed, which should be, I believe, this calendar year, we will be offering an opportunity for the group to return.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Director Mifflin. I appreciate it.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning, Mr. Mifflin.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let's stay in the grant area. Let me do a little bit of background and then we'll get to some specific questions.

The William Penn Grant was made when?

MR. MIFFLIN: It was announced in the fall of '96. It began in spring of '97.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And it is scheduled to conclude at the end of this Fiscal Year?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So that's June '02?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And the amount was 26 million --
MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Even? Twenty-six, five.
MR. MIFFLIN: I'll agree to 26.5.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And of that amount you spent how much?
MR. MIFFLIN: By June 30th, we will have spent approximately 17 million.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So that leaves 9.5 unspent?
MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, say that again.
MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: $9.5 million unspent?
MR. MIFFLIN: That is correct.
COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, I assume that when the grant was made there was the full belief at the time, either in the fall of '96 or the spring of '97 that you would spend the entire 26 and a half million dollars; is that correct.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what either problems, barriers, or obstacles did you run into in not being able to spend the full grant amount?

MR. MIFFLIN: We had anticipated that the planning portion of the grant would be completed more quickly than it actually was.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, the what?

MR. MIFFLIN: Planning part, P-L-A-N-N-I-N-G.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I appreciate the spelling. Thank you so much. The planning portion.

So was that a resource issue or additional dollars were going to spent on planning that did not happen? I'm not completely understanding the answer.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, once we began the work of identifying the needs in our watershed and developing restoration plans, we determined that it made sense to do a more exhaustive planning process. And what that included was the retention of the Academy of Natural Sciences which led the initial planning process. And it took longer to traverse the watershed areas and map them and develop the details of the plan, then move on to construction documents. I've identified 459 priority sites. And it just took -- that whole process took longer than our initial aggressive plans. But yet, we think the time was well spent.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, how much would this planning portion have cost or how much would that have used of the remaining 9 and a half million dollars? I guess I'm just not completely understanding how the planning activity or the lack of the planning activity results in essentially leaving 9 and a half million dollars on the table. I'm not understanding that.

MR. MIFFLIN: Really, it was just an issue of timing. What we thought would take one year took three years.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, are you saying that with another year you would have exhausted the 9 and a half million dollars?

MR. MIFFLIN: Probably two more years. We were originally planning to spend about 5 million per year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Your current budget

is what?

MR. MIFFLIN: Our estimated obligations for FY '02 is 13.5 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But we're talking about FY '03 today, right? Isn't it 14.3?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir. I'm sorry. I thought you meant my current budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Your proposed budget is 14.3?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: To kind of conclude this, you received a grant four years ago, four and a half years ago, which was double your regular annual appropriation from the City. Your budget's been about 12, $13 million a year.

MR. MIFFLIN: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: To spend over five years, and the conclusion here is that about 35, 40 percent of the grant remains unspent?

MR. MIFFLIN: I'm sorry. Would you repeat just the last part of your question?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No problem. Your budget over the years has been about $13 million.

MR. MIFFLIN: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You received a grant four and a half years ago which was double the size of your regular operating budget. And at the conclusion of the process, about 40 percent of that grant remains unspent that is now not available to the park; is that all of that factually correct?

MR. MIFFLIN: It's factually correct in that the Foundation has elected to give Park Conservancy a 1 and a half million dollar grant.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that. That's a separate issue from my perspective.

MR. MIFFLIN: And that 26 million was over a five-year period of time.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And over that same period of time, the park has consistently or at least park advocates have consistently -- and I think you in the course of doing your job and being respectful to whatever process has been in place over the period of time and the general notion that department heads or agency heads are not specifically and directly supposed to ask for additional funding, but it's been obvious that people have been asking for additional funding for the park over the years. We are now left in a situation where notwithstanding an incredible grant, 9 and a half million dollars goes unspent, is subsequently pressed by a conservancy created to work with the park and help the park has approached the same funder and asked for either some of those funds or -- I mean, I don't know whether they keep the funds separate, but they have now been the recipient of a million and a half dollars to keep some of those same activities going; is that right?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yeah, that's basically correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So what's the million and a half dollars for?

MR. MIFFLIN: The continued efforts of the Natural Restoration and the staffing that's associated with implementing those improvements. There's actually a breakdown.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there a budget for the million and a half?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If you want to take a few moments to get that together.

I mean, look. I think, Mr. Mifflin, you know and many of the advocates know that I've certainly been a strong supporter of the parks. I have, though, had some level of pause over the past couple years seeing how the grant dollars were being spent or in some instances not being spent, which raises some concerns, I think very serious concerns about the spending of dollars, the making available of resources. And if more resources were made available, what would happen to them? What would you do with them? And Council President, I believe, asked earlier what your original budget request was. Now, I took down that you had asked for an addition will $1.6 million; is that correct?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Of that amount, did you receive any additional funding from that request?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And that was?

MR. MIFFLIN: The money for the five volunteer coordinators.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Which is how much?

MR. MIFFLIN: It will be 161,000 in FY '03. $350,000 for the park rangers. Additional money in Class 200. $156,000 for additional street tree maintenance. And then some incidental money for code compliance work, and I guess that would be in Class 200 as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So what's the total additional money?

MR. MIFFLIN: The net increase is $772,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And if you had received the 1.6 million, what would you have done with it?

MR. MIFFLIN: Spread out throughout Classes 100, 200, 300. Some additional key positions in the park.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Like what?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we did ask for three environmental educators. We asked for a development officer and rec. center facility custodians.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, let me ask this question, it's a two-part question. One, what made you decide to ask just for the 1.6? And then the larger question is what does it cost to run a first-class park system in the City of Philadelphia?

MR. MIFFLIN: I thought the 1.6 request was something that was of critical nature to me and the operation of the park. I thought it was a reasonable request. Again, understanding the budgetary constraints of the City --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I appreciate you taking those into consideration, but that's not my question.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, you asked how I came to 1.6, so I'm giving you my rationale for that request.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right.

MR. MIFFLIN: The second part of your question was, what would it take to run a first-class park system in Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. Fully funded, fully promoted, fully doing the kinds of things that citizens in this City and this region would like to see. Full operations. I'm talking about a place that becomes nationally if not internationally known and is run well and does the things that people want to see happen in a park system. What does that cost?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, in fact, let me answer it. First not with a specific number because I think it's pretty hard for me this morning to give you a specific number. I'll give you a pretty good ballpark idea. First, let me say that that is part of what a strategic plan would provide.

In 1983 the Fairmount Park master plan concluded that the annual Operating Budget of the Fairmount Park Commission should be about $25 million; that was in 1983. If you add for inflation, you could add for all the other good things that have occurred since 1983, you can easily double that. I'm familiar with park systems across the country, Chicago, St. Louis, LA, Cleveland, Tampa, that have budgets that are similar to the number I've just given you. When you compare --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how does their acreage compare and number of facilities and those kinds of things?

MR. MIFFLIN: That's a great question.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I thought so.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, wouldn't expect anything less from you.

Some of them are smaller in total acreage. It's kind of a moving target. New York City has 25,000 acres of park land in five boroughs. We have 9,000 acres in the City of Philadelphia, but we're one-tenth of the total land mass in the City of Philadelphia. So we have a very large system here. Some parks are responsible for stadiums and museums. Their operating budgets of stadiums and museums and theaters and their budget is interwoven with their cultural amenities. Our museums here largely operate, from an operating standpoint, staffing standpoint, independent from Fairmount Park's Operating Budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, say that again.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, the employees who are at the zoo, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the other major cultural institutions have their own staffing components. Their staffing levels are not part of the Fairmount Park Commission's staffing levels. That may not be the case in another city. Those numbers may include folks who work at those facilities. That was my point. So it's hard to compare Philadelphia to another City unless you really do a detailed analysis of who's doing what.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me ask this question. Back in 1983 for that particular master plan and if the recommendation was the funding level should be at about $25 million, tell me if the park's budget had been increased at that time at that level, what kind of park system would we have today? What would that money have gotten us at that time?

MR. MIFFLIN: It would have improved the appearance of our park. It would have provided for adequate maintenance and custodial levels. It would have provided for additional security services, whether they be park rangers or others. It would have provided the park with trades people that would be working in our buildings that I've previously mentioned, historic structures.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have you ever sat down in a private moment away from the many budget directors that you've had to deal with over the years and figured out, whether it's the '83 plan or various other events and activities that have taken place since that time, and made the determination of what the system should look like, how it should function, how it should operate, number of people? I mean, have you had the opportunity to layout a view and a vision, if not a dream, for what Fairmount Park should look, notwithstanding budgetary considerations or any other issue, but that you're the director of the Fairmount Park system and this is the way the system should look and this is what I'm advocating and this is what I'm looking for and demanding, not only from the government, but to provide a service to the citizens of this City; what would that look like?

MR. MIFFLIN: I think it would look like a system that would have close to three times the amount of operating money than it has on an annual basis today.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You're talking upwards of 30, $35 million.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, earlier you had some discussion with some of my colleagues about a strategic plan. And I thought I heard you talk about possibly some corporate money or some money from the Conservancy Grant or doing some other fund-raising or something like that. What do you think a strategic plan costs, to do it well, to do it right? You talked about the '83 plan taking two years, you didn't want to take that long, a lot of things have been put into place, a lot of other plans have been developed other time. How long will it take and how much will it cost?

MR. MIFFLIN: I think you could currently spend $250,000 on a master plan.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how long would it take?

MR. MIFFLIN: It's hard to say, Councilman. I said earlier what I'd like to do is to do a plan that would get us to a level that we're more intelligent about our resources so that -- as an example, I've testified probably more times than you and I remember to the number of street trees that we have in Philadelphia; 250,000 is the number we use. That is literally a guess.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand that.

MR. MIFFLIN: So there's some information that is lacking.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But I want you to be very careful and very specific in your responses to this question. I asked you what do you think it costs to do a good strategic plan. You told us earlier that in 1983 a plan was done for $250,000.

MR. MIFFLIN: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Your response today, 19 years later, is that it would $250,000 to do a strategic plan, notwithstanding inflation, increased acreage, other things that have happened. Now, are you saying that because not as much work needs to be done? Are there other plans that the strategic planning person, organization management person would of access to? I want you to be very careful and thoughtful about this particular number. What do you think the number is?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, obviously, I'd benefit from having an opportunity to spend a bit more time talking to consultants and crunching the numbers and working out the numbers. I feel -- and again, I apologize for being repetitive, that there's some missing gaps of information, but that we know a great deal more about the workings of the park today than we did in 1983. I don't want to guess at the number, Councilman. I gave you a number I feel based on discussions that I've had with some of the senior staff, knowing that what's a reasonable grant request but -- I think the mistake has been that we've waited 20 years to do the next one. So if we could get back on to like a five-year single, that maybe the first one might cost more than 250, but then every five years you do an update and it's certainly less money. So it's a tough number to give you, Councilman. I think the more important thing is what's appropriate for the plan.

And again, if I could just go back to the William Penn Foundation Grant, and we talked about the planning process, we now know a great deal more about 5200 of our 9,000 acres because they focused on the watersheds.

And lastly, I don't know if you were going to return to this, but the 9 and a half million dollars that was remaining, 4 million of that was for development of environment education centers, which both the Foundation and the Park Commission decided that that was not something that we wished to do.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand that, and only because I'm very focused on this other issue. You know that that's a very sensitive topic and not necessarily one that you probably want to have any further discussion about, given that two of the centers were supposed to be located in the 4th District and didn't happen. But we'll go past that for the moment.

Mr. Mifflin, what I'm going to do is I'm going to recommend to the President and ask the President to direct the staff to prepare an amendment to the City Council budget for $300,000 for the City Council to fund a strategic plan for Fairmount Park System, okay?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Madam President, can I ask you to ask the appropriate staff people to work on such an amendment to the Council budget?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: As you can see, one of the staff people is already working on it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

Mr. Mifflin, I have a couple other questions but, Madam President, I know that I was on for a while and there may be other members who need to ask Mr. Mifflin some questions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. There are other members. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you. Good

morning.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Could you tell me, what is the backlog you have on dead tree removal?

MR. MIFFLIN: Councilwoman, there are approximately 6,000 dead and dangerous trees on the streets of Philadelphia.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So what is the plan to get those removed?

MR. MIFFLIN: We have a more aggressive tree removal program with assistance from the Managing Director where we anticipate removing approximately 4,000 trees a year.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Beginning?

MR. MIFFLIN: We've actually begun this past fall.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: How about tree trimming?

MR. MIFFLIN: We have increased our level of tree trimming. In FY '03 we plan to trim approximately 14,000 street trees.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Are you going to follow the list that you presently have on file? What are you doing about new requests for tree trimming? How is that being worked out?

MR. MIFFLIN: Our street tree office under Jim Donaghy does work on a list of trees that have been developed by complaints and by requests from citizens, elected officials, and others. The requests are inspected and placed into a priority order. We try to do it block by block so that we're not running around just doing one tree at a time. I can tell you that we are in all 10 District Council areas. And by the end of the year, we will have almost equally trimmed 1400 trees in each of the 10 Council Districts. And we encourage you to provide lists to us as well.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: We will. I know there was a previous plan to remove a tree, plant a tree, and we ran into some problem with that in the 9th District. Is that still the same plan?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes and no. Let me give you more information on that. When we remove a tree through our capital dollars, we are required to plant a tree in its place. The removal of a tree does not qualify for capital expenditures. And we remove approximately -- this year between 350 and 500 will be removed through the Capital Budget. And so that same number will be replaced. It's difficult in your particular community, in the Logan area, to replace trees because the residents are either unwilling to have a tree replanted or it's just physically impossible. And I think we work within a ZIP code boundary line of if we remove a tree somewhere in that ZIP code replace the tree. In the operating dollars that we're receiving through the Managing Director's Office, that requirement is not in place. So we can remove as many trees as we are funded to do and not do a one-for-one replacement. So on one hand, we're removing more trees, but we're also planting less.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: And the capital dollars, what you are you doing to address the issue if you can't plant a tree within a ZIP code, so the tree doesn't get removed?

MR. MIFFLIN: In that situation, we would use the operating dollars. So we would substitute that location, which would have been on the Capital list on the Operating list.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So you'll use Capital dollars where you can replace tree for tree.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: And other than that you'll use the Operating dollars.
MR. MIFFLIN: Operating dollars.
COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: The other day the Managing Director talked about removing tree stumps. Now, I've been here a long time, and we always got the message that you did not remove tree stumps, and that has been a problem in removing trees. Now I understand you're going to remove tree stumps?
MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. This year, Councilwoman, we are now removing tree stumps. We have a specific price.
COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So when you remove a dead tree, you're going to remove the entire tree down through the stump.
MR. MIFFLIN: That's correct.
COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: If the sidewalk is damaged because of the roots of the tree, who repairs the sidewalk.
MR. MIFFLIN: Sidewalk repair is clearly not Fairmount Park's responsibility. It's my understanding that it is the homeowner's responsibility.
COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So what are you

going to do to coordinate with the homeowner to repair the sidewalk? If you're going to go out and cut down dead tree, do you can you communicate with the homeowner or just one day somebody shows up, removes the tree, takes out the stump, and there's no communication with the homeowners.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we certainly attempt to communicate. We'll show up the day before and place signs on that tree that it's going to be removed on a certain date. We'll leave a hanger or something on the doorknob, a business card or something, so that there's attempt to get dialog with the homeowner. And we personally have been involved in these situations. We'll even lift the sidewalk physically if we can, because a lot of times the flanges of the root of the sidewalk life. We'll peel it back and rout out the roots of the stump and then re-lay the sidewalk for the homeowner when we can. Now, that's not doing sidewalk work, it's just trying to be helpful to the homeowner and encourage the homeowner to have a professional contractor repair the sidewalk.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: That works if the homeowner is not a senior citizen on a fixed income who couldn't afford to have the tree removed to begin with. What happens when we end up with broken sidewalks -- I know the problem. I'm just trying to figure out how do we make the sidewalk whole. At least some thought should be given to that. We probably won't resolve it today, but certainly we need to be able to think about how we do that. At least let the homeowner know for the moment until we come up with a solution that it would be the homeowner's responsibility for the repair of the sidewalk. And we may have to come up with another solution to address that through some other means because that creates blight. We leave a broken sidewalk in an otherwise stable block, you've created blighted situation.

Let me ask you a question about -- I see in the budget a $51,000 reduction in John G. Johnson art collection. What does that mean?

MR. NICE: Councilwoman, we were behind in our payments to the Johnson Collection, the maintenance of the collection. And in Fiscal '02 we received additional catch-up money to catch up with on those payments. So in '03 we'll need only half that amount so we've reduced it by $51,000 dollars, but actually we do have insufficient money in '03 for the Johnson collection.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Would you, for the record, explain what the payment is for?

MR. NICE: Payments are for the maintenance of the John G. Art Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The payments are made to a trustee which is the first union bank is the trustee of that collection. They provide -- they have an endowment from the will of John G. Johnson to maintain that collection. The City also has responsibility to make up any shortfall that that endowment has with the collection, and that's where the money os provided through the Parks Commission budge to pay the trustee the money any shortfall of the funding.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: I know it's an old, old, longtime, long-going relationship. But how did Fairmount Park get involved in it?

MR. NICE: Basically, the City of Philadelphia is not allowed to appropriate money directly to outside agencies. They have to do it from a department. So basically it was -- because of our relationship with the Art Museum, we have a number of collections down there ourselves, the Commission does. The money was placed in our budget many years ago. When this first came about when the money was first to City and we've been managing it since that time.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: The money was given to the City for the trust?

MR. NICE: The endowment when the art collection was given to the City, excuse me, and the money was given to the trustee, at that time an appropriation was placed in the Park Commission's budget to pay that difference in the cost of the maintenance of the collection.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Does it cost the City money, or is it the trust that's providing for the maintenance.

MR. NICE: The City is paying a good portion of maintenance because of the trust. The trustee does not provide sufficient income to maintain the collection in its entirety so there's shortfall there and the City is required to make up for that shortfall.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Does the City have anybody on the monitoring process of the trust funds to see if the funds are adequately invested? Do we get a return that could maintain the collection?

MR. NICE: Yes. The City through the Budget Office, the Finance and also the Controller's Office looks at the trustee as well as the Park Commission. We do sort of an annual review of the Johnson collection. So a lot of different agencies are looking at it to make sure the money is being spent appropriately. It's being watched.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Not spent, but I meant invested, the return on the trust.

MR. NICE: The original will of John Johnson only provided that the endowment be placed in bonds. And there is a move right now also being forefronted by the City to change the will to place the endowment in equities also. But currently right now, the investment is only in bonds and it generates whatever the trustee purchases in bonds, whatever that income is. But there is a move now, as I said, to change the will and now divest and do some equities.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: How long do you think that process will take?

MR. NICE: We've been working on it for

sometime now, but we think it's at a head and I know the City through the Budget Office and Finance Department and the Park Commission are really pushing hard to get that changed and I know they're currently working on it right now. There's a committee that's working on that to get that changed.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Could you please tell me what the sustainable urban ecosystem is?

MR. MIFFLIN: That's the area in the Fairmount Park system that's -- first of all, it's throughout the park system, mostly in our watershed areas. We would like to have -- and we do have practices that ensure that the watershed areas, the natural areas are appropriately providing the plant material -- that the watersheds are being maintained appropriately with appropriate plant material. I'm sorry, I'm getting my words tangled here. It means in summary that we're looking at our watershed areas and providing te planting of native plant material so that exotics and other plant material which is not appropriate for those systems will not -- are so invasive will not take over the entire area of that park and that through sustainability we can ensure that future generations of vegetation will on itself regenerate and will provide for an appropriate landscape.

As an example, it's regrettable, but or over-browsing of deer in certain areas of the park have resulted in an unbalance in our ecosystem, where native plant material and the regeneration of it is not occurring naturally. So we're taking action to help that. There's certain areas of the park where runoff, uncontrolled storm water runoff comes into the park creating large gullies and washes away plant material and top soil that eventually ends up in the streams. We're trying to debate that phenomenon by investing in our natural areas. So a sustainable area would be something that would be in balance and one with interaction by park staff will, again, continue for future generations. If we did nothing, quite frankly, we would lose the watershed protection of the park.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

Is he in the room?

The Chair would then recognize Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, Mr. Mifflin and staff.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I had to leave the room to go to a press conference so I wasn't really able to hear all the questions. I don't want to be repetitive, but one question I'm sure someone asked -- I'm not sure whether they asked. But I need to ask can we get a monthly activity report per Council District that will tell us the blocks where dead trees were removed. I just feel like I need to have better information about what's going on with dead tree removal because, you know, since I've been here, that's been one of the major issues in my Council District issue.

MR. MIFFLIN: I appreciate your request, Councilwoman. We do provide you now an update on perhaps an annual or maybe a little less than an annual basis. A monthly update would be right now a little bit difficult for us to do given the activity level that we have. We'll try to improve our response to you, but at this point, I could not commit to a monthly response for all 10 Councilmatic Districts.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I do know that we get it once a year, but we need it more than once a year. We may quarterly in less time than a year.

MR. MIFFLIN: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We really need to have it maybe quarterly or in less time than a year. Thank you, Madam President.

MR. MIFFLIN: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome. This is our second go around. The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam President.

Mr. Mifflin, could you bring the Committee up to speed on the recent fire at the Water Works during the construction? And officially let us know if there's an investigation. I know that initially it appeared to be very, very serious, and I'm sure it is serious. Could you just tell us where we are with that?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. We're in the last week of the investigation and the analysis of the cause of the fire. I'd like not to go into details publicly on that matter, as this was -- it would appear that there maybe some litigation as a result of the fire. I'm going to leave it at that. We are estimating the amount of damage at about three-quarters of a million dollars. We are seeking to obtain those funds immediately so that we could begin a restoration effort perhaps as early as this spring so that we could reopen the Engine House, which was really the only part of the Water Works that was damaged and specifically the salon room area of the Engine House is what suffered and the ceiling is what suffered from fire damage. Our estimates are that it could be probably repaired or restored in three to four months. So it's not a long elaborate project. And we'd like to do that perhaps in concert with a restaurant operator so that we're able to really get a good bang for the buck on its restoration effort. We're fairly optimistic we're going to negotiate a lease and do that simultaneously with outfitting as a restaurant and restoring the fire damage so that we could open as early as fall of this year.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you for that. My next question, I want to go back to the tree pruning issue. There are also private contractors that trim City trees. And you know I brought to you in the Bella Vista community the way these contractors treat out City trees. I learned from conversation with some of those people that standards for that once were a fine industry standard are no longer adhered to. Trim as much as you can and do whatever you need to do to our City street trees is the philosophy now. I hope that is not the case. But I was told and it was confirmed to me that the rigid standards that once we did have are no longer being adhered to, at least by those subcontractors. So could you give us a report on how the Fairmount Park Commission manages some contractors that don't work for you and the way that they are pruning our street trees.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. Thank you. And I'll certainly defer to Jim Donaghy who is director of operations who manages more directly than I on the day-to-day street tree management issues. But I'll tell you, Councilman, from my perspective -- and I think we were very clear on this. Certainly, all the contractors who work directly for the Fairmount Park Commission adhere to national standards as well as local standards that have been established through the Fairmount street tree ordinance, and we feel quite comfortable that what's being performed on street trees meets all of those standards. You and I have discussed our unhappiness at times with those contractors who work for the Philadelphia Electric Company PECO Energy -- I forgotten their name is today.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They spent $3 million to change it from Philadelphia Electric to PECO Energy.

MR. MIFFLIN: PECO Energy. Thank you. I should have known that. They do have different standards for clearing around their electrical wires that differ from ours. They have a 10-foot clearance which is required by them, and it is actually approved by national standards. I think what happens here is that we're into street tree populations in the City where the trees are older and in order to get that 10 foot clearance, we're going back almost to the main trunk. And when they're finished, the tree looks certainly a lot different than it did previously. And we are the recipients, apparently, as well as you are in the complaints from folks who are the homeowners of those trees. PECO Energy Company has a cycle of trimming trees that are somewhere around 8 to 10 years per cycle per year -- excuse me per tree in the City, and we try our best to work with them. If there's an egregious mistake by one of their contractors, it's immediately brought to the leadership of PECO Energy and we attempt to resolve it. And if there are bad practices, we do all that we can to stop it. It's not perfect by any stretch of the imagination. We do our best. We're in the business of maintaining aesthetically -- aesthetics in tree pruning is certainly our criteria, and the PECO Energy people have a different mission and that's to provide for energy. And we're not always on the same page.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Mifflin, you indicated that the cycle that they try to do is eight years. Well, based on some of the trimming that I've seen recently, it looks like they're trying to double that.

MR. MIFFLIN: That's the number that they've given me.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, to look at a street and see that the trees are just -- actually, one side of them just taken off, I can understand why people that live in Bella Vista and other communities would be concerned.

My bigger concern is the oversight, and I hope within your organization that you have people going out and monitoring what they do, because if they can get away with it, you know, when there's a crew there if they can bring the tree down back to the main trunk -- I'm not suggesting that they're being violating any law, but I would think that if they can get as much done on this cycle as they can and get away with, they're going to do that. So I would hope that there's some oversight there.

MR. MIFFLIN: There is. And I appreciate your comments very much, Councilman. And we'll continue to work with you and PECO Energy on appropriate trimming.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: My final request of you, if we don't have in place, I would like to see you work with the Police Commissioner on a particular issue. If I ask you this question, do you know how many crimes are committed within the 9,000 acres of Fairmount Park, is the Police Department breaking out crimes that are committed in Fairmount Park? And could you provide to the Chair, if you do that? And does it come out monthly, weekly? I'd like to know how many crimes, theft of auto, assaults, whatever -- what's occurring in the park on a monthly basis or whenever that report is available, because I think that could help us and understand better the need for more park rangers, the need for more police officers in the park. So does the Police Department provide you data on the crimes that are committed within your jurisdiction?

MR. MIFFLIN: They do not provide me regular reports on crime in the park. It's really on a basis that I will call and ask about certain levels of crime because I'm aware of complaints that I've received by park users. And I always get a very efficient and effective response from the Police Department. But to answer your question directly, I would have to direct it to the Philadelphia Police Department.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, what I think would be helpful to you as a manager is to know -- we talk about park rangers, we talk about police. You need a baseline here. We need to know what's going on in the park. Are people's cars that visit Valley Green coming out from dinner and their cars are stolen? Are people being assaulted, robbed of their possessions and maybe worse? So I think you need to know and I'd like to know and whatever the appropriate interval is, whether it's monthly, I would be interested to know what the crime experience is in Fairmount Park. And if the Police Department is not categorizing them today, when it occurs in that 9,000 acres, whether it's a stolen car, whatever, that they should start doing it. I would think that they do. I think it would be helpful to me to better understand and support your budget when it comes to park rangers and the need for police or in the event that there is some truth to the rumor that they're going to close the 92nd Police District and police the park in a different way. So if you could provide the Chair statistics on the crime experience in Fairmount Park, it would be greatly appreciate d.

MR. MIFFLIN: I will request that of the Philadelphia Police Department.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome. Are there any other questions from Members of the Committee?

The Chair recognized Councilman DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you, Madam President. I will be leaving shortly. I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Mifflin. I won't call you Elliott today. And all the other members of the Fairmount Park Commission for a job well done. You're always very responsive to my requests. I know you have a huge, huge problem when it comes to trees being removed, but you've always been there and you're very cooperative, and I just want to thank you.

MR. MIFFLIN: I appreciate the comments. I appreciate working with your office.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm just going to wait a few minutes for Councilman Nutter. He has a question to ask.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I apologize for being late coming back.

Mr. Mifflin, just as you came up in the Capital Budget hearings a couple weeks ago which had to do with maintenance and capital improvements and what the system is that's presently in place to help ensure that our facilities in the park system, which certainly by your testimony are extensive, that they are checked on a regular basis both for maintenance and safety-related items. And I saw in the back of the testimony about the new playground initiative, but also especially given the somewhat rapidly decreasing Capital Budget that the City is experiencing which affects all the departments, the fact that there had been a decrease in capital spending through the '80s which then led to -- because in the government, there's actually really the term "deferred maintenance" is certainly oxymoronic. And so we then spent significant dollars through the '90s when we got in the capital markets to improve a number of facilities during the mid- to late-'90s. We're now starting to see decreasing capital budgets, and my concern is that we will, whether we want to or not, potentially repeat the same cycle of lack of maintenance, lack of capital improvements which then lead to increased deferred maintenance, further deterioration of facilities at a time when we have virtually no money to fix them. In five years we will have a Capital Budget of about $50 million. Whereas, eight years ago, we had a Capital Budget I believe two years in a row of $120 million. We obviously cannot take care of with 50 what we could with 120.

My question is, what system do you have in place that helps to ensure that every one of our facilities is checked on a regular basis for safety and regular operating support maintenance items as well as getting up-to-date information on capital improvement needs and that we actually perform the capital-related items in a timely fashion so as to not end up in an increased cost situation at a later point in time when we basically have no money? What is the system that you have in place?

MR. MIFFLIN: The system that we have in place is a multifaceted system. The first thing that we do -- one of the things that we do, Councilman, and you're also on the Board of the Park Trust, is we seek to find qualified tenants who can help maintain those structures that they occupy. We have over 400 structures in the park system. So the more partners that we can have in place who are capable of helping us, we do, we make a concerted effort.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't mean to interrupt you, but unfortunately I will. At that same hearing, that issue was raised. And I believe I asked at that time for a list of the facilities, tenants, type of agreement or arrangement that we have with them, what are there responsibilities as tenants, what is there responsibility in terms of letting us know what's going on with the facility or the condition of the facility. And I also did ask at that time, are each of the facilities inspected on at least an annual basis.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, we in fact responded to your question, Councilman, on February 14th. I have my draft response here dated February 15th. We sent a list. The response went through normal process to the Council President.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Mifflin, let me

just tell you that wherever the response went, I do not believe it has reached this place yet.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, the response was a joint response between my office and the Capital Program Office. And I know I signed off, if you will, on that response earlier this week.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you know that the response has actually been sent, or did you just forward your portion of it to Capital Program and Capital Program is the responsible party to send it over? We don't have it yet. I will obviously look for it and read it when it gets here, and we can move on from that if the response is not here, but --

MR. MIFFLIN: I understand, Councilman, it's being reviewed by the Managing Director and the Budget Office. Upon the completion of their review, it will be forwarded.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So let me just make sure I have it right. You did your portion, you sent it wherever you sent it, but the response has not been sent notwithstanding the fact that you have a draft of your response dated February 15th, but it has not been sent over to us yet?

MR. MIFFLIN: Apparently not, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: From your draft response, what's the answer.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, what I said was that we should work -- we, the Park Commission, should work with the Capital Budget Office. And they gave us some numbers on what it would cost to do an analysis of our buildings that we have in the park. They're occupied, not all 400 of them are occupiable buildings, but those that are, to ensure that they meet code compliance and to make some estimates of the type of capital improvements that would be required to keep them in safe and in code compliant matter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me make sure I'm understanding this. How many buildings are there?

MR. MIFFLIN: Total through our GIS mapping, there are 400 buildings in Fairmount Park.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 400 buildings?

MR. MIFFLIN: Structures.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Structures.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, is that

exclusive of the list in your testimony when you talk about -- I mean, this is not including the 7 recreation centers, the 11 day camps, the 39 playgrounds, the 113 tennis courts, they're not included in that, are they?

MR. MIFFLIN: The recreation centers are included. I forgot what else you just read. I don't believe the tennis courts are. Whatever the second item --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We would hope the tennis courts are not occupied.

MR. MIFFLIN: The recreation centers are considered a structure. And there was the second one that you read, and I apologize --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Day care centers.

MR. MIFFLIN: Day care centers.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Day camps?

MR. MIFFLIN: Day camps would be considered a building.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. Of the 400 structures, how many are actually occupied.

MR. MIFFLIN: We have lease agreements with approximately 80.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you have 80

leases.

MR. MIFFLIN: Approximately.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. What's going on with the other approximately 320?

MR. MIFFLIN: They run the gamut of picnic shelters and our maintenance buildings where we have staff reporting to, public rest rooms.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's your inspection schedule?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, the 80 lease agreements, we do an annual inspection.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: An annual inspection?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what's the current condition of the 80 leased structures?

MR. MIFFLIN: I can't give you a brief answer to that. They are in various stages.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there a report or a document from your system that would --

MR. MIFFLIN: I would have to go through the 80 inspections to provide a document. The question that you asked in the Capital Budget hearing, I believe we answered which facilities have tenants and which facilities there's a lease agreement to and those which have a caretaker. We did, in fact -- apparently this response is forthcoming. We did respond to those specific questions.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Let's talk about which agency is responsible for what facilities. Now, you and I and actually the Recreation Commissioner had some discussion back on October 31st at the hearing about two items. One was the Recreation master plan and the other had to do with jurisdiction of facilities or structures. At the time, I asked how long would it take to come up with those documents. Your response was you needed to do a little checking back at the shop, check your schedule, kind of figure something out. Commissioner Richard said that he thought he could have something in 10 days. You guys then had some conversation at the table and, I will assume from that, reached some level of agreement.

On November 30, a month later, having not heard from either of you, I wrote both of you a letter asking about that and included the notes of testimony from October 31st at the pertinent section on Pages 132 through 134. I have still not heard anything from the original request on October 31st nor from the letter of November 30th.

Now, Commissioner Richard did call me and let me know that he was not ignoring the request from either October or the letter of November, but that there were some complications in terms of being responsive.

I have not heard from you on this particular issue and so I'm then left to wonder one of two things: Either, one, did you ignore the request? Or two, have you just decided not to respond to it?

MR. MIFFLIN: No, of course I would not ignore a request from you, Councilman Nutter. It was my understanding that your conversation with Commissioner Richard concluded in an understanding that we would return to you after some dialog with the Administration with an appropriate response. I thought that covered the response from both of us.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, Director Mifflin, today is February 27th. The hearing was on October 31st. I believe that that was four months ago. I have no information. I have not had any additional contact since the contact with Commissioner Richard. And so I now need to better understand what's going on. Is there a response that is being developed on these two particular issues? We have a Charter issue, Section 5-600, and we have this facilities issue. What's going on?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I think that it was, again, my understanding that Commissioner Richard had a conversation with you -- I hope you ask Commissioner Richard this question, obviously, because I was not party to the discussion.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I've got a similar line of questions for Commissioner Richard. You happen to be here. I mean, we can have the two of you up here together. We can get the Managing Director. I want an answer to the question.

MR. MIFFLIN: Okay. I think your question is a very good one. I think, as I've testified earlier today -- and you have submitted and suggested a change in the Park's budget for a strategic plan. I think these are all issues that --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let's make sure we're very clear. I did not make a recommendation for an increase in the park's budget regarding a strategic plan. I'm recommending an increase in the City Council budget to fund a strategic plan. And we will have some discussion about the scope and the nature and potentially who and all of those conversations. It is not a proposed increase to the park budget. It is a proposed increase to City Council's budget to fund such a study.

Madam Chair, can I have Commissioner Richard and the Managing Director so I can try to get an answer to this question, please?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Certainly.

MS. RICHMAN: This is Estelle Richman, Managing Director. Councilman, would you repeat the question?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Sure. Madam Managing Director, a previous hearing back on October 31, 2001, Councilwoman Reynolds-Brown as Chair of the Committee had hearings about park and recreation related issues. I asked a question back at the time about the fact that in Chapter 6 of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter at Section 5-600 there is a requirement that there be a coordinated recreation program for the City. Coordinated by the

Recreation Department, supported by the Fairmount Park Commission, which also requires that any recreational facility in the park be made a part of the coordinated plan as overseen by the Recreation Department, although they may be staffed by the Park Commission. I asked the question as to when there would be compliance with that particular section of the Philadelphia Code, since it had been established earlier in the hearing that there was not such a coordinated recreation plan in accordance with that particular provision of the Home Rule Charter. That was the first question.

The second question was, there's been an ongoing debate and discussion in the government for many years, preceding Commissioner Richard to his predecessor Commissioner DiBerardinis and Director Mifflin about the fact that the park system has recreation facilities even though generally they are really in the open space management business. The Recreation Department has passive parks when they are really in the active park recreation business. Both of them have staff that do the other's business, if you will. In my particular view and some view of others, neither of them do the other thing that well and that the Recreation Department primarily should be in the recreation business and the park system should primarily be in the park business. That would require a switching of jurisdiction of some of their respective facilities. I asked the two gentlemen at the table when they could begin a discussion and have a plan for the proposed switching of jurisdiction for the facilities. Commissioner Richard said he could have a plan in 10 days. Mr. Mifflin said he needed to check his calendar. I had a conversation with Commission Richard who told me that there was some complications in terms of getting an answer to that particular question. We are now four months since the request. I have no answer to the question. We're in a budget hearing. I'd like an answer to the question.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Point of information for Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Councilman Nutter, you were out the room on some City business, and asked a similar question about that. And I believe Mr. Mifflin already answered the question. So I'd like him to, for Councilman Nutter's benefit and for the record also, restate the answer to that similar question earlier today.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Councilman, for bringing me up to date. I'm sorry I missed your question.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Mifflin, could you restate -- I basically asked you a similar question today and you responded to it.

MR. MIFFLIN: Can I have the stenographer replay my answer?

My response to you was that I felt that both agencies were working in a cooperative manner or sharing resources, and I listed a few of those specific examples. And I did, in fact, say that part of my opinion and part of a strategic plan would include the Department of Recreation and the Fairmount Park Commission and others, the School District of Philadelphia and others who provide recreational opportunities to ensure, which is mandated by the City Charter as part of the Recreation Coordination Board, that we would in fact provide that level of dialog and that level of planning and that level of response to this question. I don't -- I have spent a great deal of time, personal time -- and again, I apologize, Councilman, if it was inappropriate not to respond in writing to your communication. I take pride in responding to all of your communication. I was under the impression that it had been resolved in your discussion. But I can tell you personally that I've spent a great deal of time of looking at both agencies because I've had the benefit of being here for a while. And I believe that both are working at their full capacity. There's no question that there are more program people in the Department of Recreation on a percentage basis and more resource managers in the park than program on a percentage basis. That doesn't necessarily mean, in my opinion, that the departments are not without their abilities in the lesser of the areas. I mean, as an example, the park has nine recreation centers. We provide an myriad of recreation often in concert with the Department of Recreation, but in fact, the staff that are assigned to the facilities come from the list of recreation leaders that Civil Service list that the City provides to us. I think the folks there are equally qualified as they're brothers and sisters who work at the Department of Recreation.

The issue may be, can we -- and Commissioner Richard used the example. Can we right size both departments to make sure that in fact the correct number of facilities are there for our citizens? And we can figure out who should best run them, quite frankly. You know, as a manager, I can understand where as an elected official there may be some confusion or you want to ensure that we're getting the greatest bang for the buck. But I quite frankly think we are, given our resources. But I also agree with you totally that a review of our respective delivery of services would be helpful.

Basically, Councilman Nutter, that's what I would have said to you had I thought that the written response would have -- and I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I appreciate that. I'll respond after Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Mifflin, we started this dialog I think when Commissioner Richard first arrived last year. We got a lot of favorable comments that in fact there should be.

Councilman Nutter's letters are four months old. My initial discussion is a year old. And it appeared Commissioner Richard and you were going to get together to resolve this. It appears today that we're nowhere, that the Recreation Department is still doing what they do and the Fairmount Park Commission is still doing what they do. And I think what we're trying to get here is -- you used the term the "biggest bang for our buck." Yeah, that's what we want. We want it to be as efficient as possible. If you should be doing it and the Recreation Department not doing it, that's what this whole discussion that's a year old is all about, at least as far I'm concerned. So just not responding to the budget questions a year ago and then not responding to the issue that was communicated in writing, that's why we're having this conversation today. It appears that the issue of who's best to provide the service is being ignored.

Thank you, Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Director Mifflin, let me say this. Had I heard that response at the time, I would have strongly disagreed with your particular perspective. And half of the disagreement as least comes from two examples. A number of years ago, McMichael Park which is in the East Falls Section of the City at Midvale and Henry, that park had always been the jurisdiction under the Recreation Department. And almost from the start of my time here in Council, my constituents complained bitterly about the lack of attention to that park. It is a completely passive park. The only piece of recreation-type equipment is apparently this thing that I guess the City must have gone through back in the '50s, it had one of these turtles. It was the only piece of non-grass, non-tree thing in McMichael Park. And it was completely ignored by the Recreation Department -- this has nothing to do with you, Commissioner Richard, you weren't here at the time -- primarily because Recreation people want to be involved in recreation, and there was no recreation at that site. We did transfer that particular facility from the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department to the Fairmount Park Commission. You do a good job on turf maintenance and we virtually had no complaints since that time. The Recreation Department was not in a position to mow the grass on a regular basis. It would never take dead trees out of the place. And if a tree fell, not only did no one hear it, but no one did anything about it either. The moment it transferred to the Fairmount Park system, I haven't had a problem since.

At the same time, at Carol Park, which also completely fell apart under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department many, many years ago, there was also no recreation type activity, although it was a neighborhood park under Recreation. When the neighbors got together over there and first cleaned it up themselves and then got a grant from PHS and then got some Recreation money and that now there is recreation activity in that park, the Recreation Department does a tremendous job at working with the Carol Park neighbors and other people over there because there's now something going on there that is pertinent to their job. There is play equipment for kids, there's a track, there are a whole host of activities over in that park.

People do what they like. And if you have people in your department who are assigned to jobs that are really not within the general jurisdiction of the entity, I think some of them spend a little less time worrying about it.

We're going to talk in a little while about Poppa Playground. It's a big recreation facility. It probably should be under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department because that's what it is. And now I'm looking at a $750,000 bill to get the place straightened out because of deferred maintenance, lack of attention, lack of program which the constituents complain about bitterly over there as well. It probably should not be in your jurisdiction because it's a rec. center that happens to be surrounded by a park. That's what I'm talking about.

I'm not complaining about the people. I'm not complaining about what they do. Park people do park work. Rec. people do Rec. work. And you guys need to figure out how to make the two work better. That's all I'm saying. I'm not criticizing the effort of the people. They need to be doing their jobs and what they were hired for and what the mission of their department is. That's the issue.

So Director Richman.

MS. RICHMAN: Commissioner Richard

wanted to speak first.

MR. RICHARD: Good afternoon. Vic Richard, Recreation Commissioner. It's a real pleasure to be here.

To answer everyone's concern, and if I can go back to the hearing that we had in October, I laid it out on the table. First of all, in order for me to be an effect chief executive officer, I have to be able to give my staff and all executives from the top on down clear and concise directives and also provide them with the tools that they need in order to be successful. Once that's done, then I have every right and capability of expecting them and holding them accountable to produce the highest quality product for the citizenship.

The same goes in turn for me. The issues that have been presented in the past and that's being re-presented today are issues that are long overdue and old. And in order for us to address them, somebody needs to come to the table or put in writing, say, "We need to get this done and get it done."

Now, I'm going to go on public record to say there's no strategic plan needed to accomplish this. A lot of work was done back in '95. I've had one very brief formal/informal meeting with my executives and Mr. Mifflin's executives, and that was months ago. The 10 days that I gave you, I do have the rough draft. It's in my possession and it has not duplicated and it is a rough draft. The bottom line is we as an administration and as City Council and everybody needs to make the tough decision and stop dillydallying around with it. If we're going to make the change and take the parks from the Recreation Department, you need to say it and give me the directive and let me do my job that you brought me here to do. And the same thing with the recreation facilities back and forth. The job really isn't that hard. You need a plan, organize, approach the business, you need the right people around it, and get the job done. The people that's on the bus that don't want to participate, you put them off and you replace them.

So I am very humbled about being here again. I enjoy the challenge. I think the job is fun most of the time. I must be a little stupid because I enjoy dealing with stress and headaches, but that's my adrenalin rush. We can do it. It's not that hard to do it. Somebody just needs to let us know what you want done and then afford me the opportunity to either prove myself or disprove myself. Thank you.

MS. RICHMAN: Councilman, I will commit to you that I will have document in front of you in a month, April 2nd -- I don't know whether I want to present everything on April Fool's Day, April 1st -- that will not only have an integrated plan from both the commissions that has again been done in cooperation with the Fairmount Park Commission, but will also have an implement date when you can actually see the change, so a plan with an implementation schedule. It will be sent to Council President that will be passed on.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you. And the document that we're anticipating receiving, this is about jurisdiction of facilities?

MS. RICHMAN: It will sort out the facilities and give you a rationale if there's anything other than -- if there's a plot of land that has recreation on it that the determination is it will stay with the park, there will be a rationale on why that decision was made. Otherwise, it will basically -- it obviously makes sense that the Recreation Department that has standards for programs, that implement programs, have staff for programs do those that look and walk like rec. programs and the park does those that look and act like parks. There may be exceptions in that. And where there are exceptions, there will be a rationale for why we believe something belongs in what doesn't on the surface look like.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me also encourage you in the course of that process -- I thank you for the commitment. Let me also, though, encourage you in the course of that process to talk with at a minimum the Councilmembers who maybe affected by this. Other members may have a different view on some of these issues than myself. I can only speak to the issues that are primarily in the 4th District. Other people may like things the way they are. I don't know. Or they may have a rationale that makes sense for something staying with the other department. When you do it, my only request is make sure that you get a good survey of information from people so that there's not a switch and folks don't even know why it's going on.

MS. RICHMAN: I will make sure that we try to be as inclusive as possible. There are obviously friends of their various advisory groups and commissions that also need to be a part of that. And that's why I'm not picking up that we'll have it to you in too short a period of time because I think it is important that people who are invested in whether it's the Recreation Department or the Commission have an opportunity to see what we're doing.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Councilman, may I ask a question? I'm expecting or I'm hoping you're going to tell me that you're expecting us to create uniformity and continuity with what we're going to present?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The short answer would be yes; although, what do you mean by that?

MR. RICHARD: Well, you were just talking about making sure the transfers or the possible transfers of the jurisdictional properties quite naturally be inclusive. But in order for us to do this right, there needs to be continuity and uniformity in the process. I believe you are asking us also to create a more efficient work system. And in order for that to be achieved, there needs to be continuity and take the redundancy and the overlap of the different services or the maintenance that's already presently in place.

MS. RICHMAN: To the extent possible we will try to address that. But I don't want this to get too complicated so that we don't get you at least the first level. Maybe giving you some vision on where it's heading, but to give a plan on how this particular problem will be approached.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, let me ask the second part of the question which has to do with the Charter provision that talks about a coordinated recreational program. When can we expect a respond on that particular issue? Or are you planning to do all of this as a part of this April 2nd document?

They're two different things. I think the April 2nd document has to address recreation facilities and parks and parks that are under recreation.

If I can get this other issue, though, on your radar screen. It will require certainly the intervention and the involvement of the Managing

Director in developing this coordinated plan for recreation regardless of who has what facilities.

MS. RICHMAN: That's correct. That I do see an additional task that we may be able to accomplish within that time frame, but I'm not sure without working on that little bit more I want to give you a commitment date on that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. Okay, thank you.

Madam Managing Director, while you're at the table, can you give us a little more information on the Ready, Willing and Able Program? I know you answered some questions about it earlier.

But before I ask you that, the work that's being done -- and it appears that it's primarily focused on Kelly Drive; is that correct?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. We have moved on to other locations as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The work that's being done, was that work being done by other people at a different point in time before Ready, Willing and Able came?

MR. MIFFLIN: Not really, Councilman. Ready, Willing and Able has been able to take us beyond what we would have normally done with our staff, so we really look at this as 17 additional staff members.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And Director Richman, at least from the newspaper account, it seems to indicate that the entity Ready, Willing and Able has a contract with the City?

MS. RICHMAN: Yes. The contract is actually with the Dow Foundation which is based out of New York which operates programs in several states called the Ready, Willing and Able Program. The City has a contract with the Dow Foundation to provide services for 70 men who are homeless, who have possibly criminal backgrounds and who have substance abuse problems. Our goal of that program, take these folks, to house them, make sure they get a residence, to train them, establish a transition to a normal productive life-style from one that involves abusive substances or living on the street.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So this is in the '02 budget, that contract?

MS. RICHMAN: This contract should be in the '02 budget and continues into the '03 budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And whose budget is

it in?

MS. RICHMAN: It would be in the budget for OESS, the Office of Emergency Services and Shelter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what's the amount of the budget, do you recall? Or contract rather?

MR. MIFFLIN: While the director is looking up that information, Councilman, could I actually take the opportunity to go on record to say that I am a hundred percent supportive of this effort to look at the strengths and weaknesses of both agencies. I always have been. I think it makes good government sense, good management sense. And I obviously commit to you the full support of my office in accomplishing this matter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

MR. MIFFLIN: You're more than welcome.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I appreciate it.

MS. RICHMAN: Ellen, the fiscal person is looking it up. I have a general ballpark. Let me tell you how this was put together. We did some rearrangement of some shelter dollars within OESS. We also applied for a grant within PWC, the

Philadelphia Workforce Corporation, which is paying for the Workforce training part of this and the stipend part of this. And that transfer was about 750,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So PWDC is actually paying the stipend part?

MS. RICHMAN: That's right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What are our dollars paying for?

MS. RICHMAN: And our dollars are paying for the shelter piece of it and the support piece of it, case management and shelter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And these are people who are already in the OESS System? Where do they come from?

MS. RICHMAN: For the most part, the intake piece that we're working with is coming out of the Ridge Avenue Shelter, the Men's Shelter on Ridge Avenue, as well as people who have completed their sentences at the prison who we know if they don't get work and they don't have somewhere to live, go back into prison. So we also see it as part of how do we begin to get these folks who have a very difficult time getting jobs and very difficult time finding someplace to live. How do we begin to help them restructure their life so that we don't end up with them as part of that recidivism number you heard yesterday.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How long do you anticipate the program is going to continue?

MS. RICHMAN: The program or how long do people stay in the program?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No, the contract or program.

MS. RICHMAN: The contract, as most City contracts are, is cut for a year. But we have them on what we call one of our first performance-based contracts, which means that we are holding them to a level of accountability in order to renew the contract.

Let me not go too much further. But I think those are appropriate questions for OESS. They can go into the detail on that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No problem.

Mr. Mifflin, two last questions. One, in addition to your City-funded budget, how much in the last Fiscal Year and for the upcoming Fiscal Year, how much money does the park raise from outside sources?

MR. MIFFLIN: If you set aside the William Penn Foundation Grant for this conversation in answer to this, Councilman, it's approximately $2 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that from individuals?

MR. MIFFLIN: It's really been a combination. Some years are higher than others. We just on September 8th celebrated the completion of the restoration of the Water Works. That was 11 million over a three- or four-year period of time.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Does that somehow impact the 2 million that you just mentioned?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You're saying some of the dollars that were raised for the Water Works you're counting as a part of the $2 million that the park raised?

MR. MIFFLIN: Probably not in this instance because that actually went to not-for-profit organization so it would not include that. But just direct dollars come into the Fairmount Park Commission from either other levels of government, grants or from individuals or cooperations or -- it's approximately $2 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So that was in FY '01, are you saying?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you have a development person or development office or development operation for the park to specifically raise money for the park?

MR. MIFFLIN: We do. It's a very small office. We lost our full-time development officer, just moved onto another job. And we're in the process of taking the former historic preservation officer, making her the development officer and then backfilling that position. So she along with our deputy director for planning have been doing largely the development work of the park. We hope to fill what will soon become the vacancy of a development officer.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's your goal for the upcoming fiscal year in terms of fund-raising, not capital related, just operational support for the park?

MR. MIFFLIN: We seem to -- again, some

years we have better than others, but the goal would be at least maintaining the minimum of $2 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you have a plan for that?

MR. MIFFLIN: We don't have an overall development plan because the Fairmount Park Conservancy is the new group and we're working in concert with them and they have a plan of raising $10 million in five years.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. We can talk a little more.

My last question for the day on parks, how many bathrooms are available to the public in the park system?

MR. MIFFLIN: They're available on a seasonal basis, a large number of them, because they're not staffed during the winter months. But there's close to 20.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many are available on a full-time basis? I mean, you don't, you know, at that moment you don't really want to worry what season it is.

MR. MIFFLIN: Like right now?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Possibly.

MR. MIFFLIN: Probably half of that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So 10?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes. These would be rest rooms that would be accessible from the outside of a recreation center. I'm thinking of like Lloyd Hall as an example which the rest rooms are open to the public when the building may be closed.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, all right. If you're an East Park, West Park, Wissahickon, Pennypack user, how many do you think should actually be available for the amount of people that use the park system on a regular basis throughout the course of the year? And what's the condition of these facilities? I mean, is it a place where you'd only go at 12:00 noon? What happens at 6:00 in the evening? Are they lit? Who checks them? Is there stuff there that needs to be there?

MR. MIFFLIN: As I indicated earlier, and largely because the number of people increase using the park in the warm season months so we want to have our full complement of 20 rest rooms available to the public and we will ramp up using seasonal employees to staff them. So I believe that the 20 are adequately staffed. They're not open 24 hours a day. They're open usually seven days a week, dawn to dusk primarily.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many do you think we should have available on a non-seasonal basis?

MR. MIFFLIN: It's almost never enough. I'm a little concerned about giving you a specific number. I can tell you I will agree with you that there are insufficient numbers of rest rooms. Part of the problem, not to belabor this, is that we can't run sewer or easily sewer or water to certain areas of the park because of the topography and the geology without a great deal of expense. So we will supplement that with portable rest rooms. And our budget for portable rest rooms has been increasing just about every year for the last four or five years. So we're trying to meet the demand by providing portable facilities. We could easily double the number of permanent rest rooms, but I will not open a rest room unless it's staffed because of vandalism.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. Let me just put on the record, and we'll have further conversation, I made reference earlier to the Poppa

Playground situation in terms of the cost estimated by your office of three-quarters of a million dollars. We're also seeing escalating costs related to renovation of Hermitage Mansion. The original estimate was $61,000 to kind of put a Band-Aid on it. That then escalated to 300,000. And most recent estimate is a half million dollars. Again, I think I cannot too strongly emphasize the need to get into our facilities at the earliest possible stage to know what's going on with them and not end up three or four years later with all these half million dollar renovation projects because now the places are a complete and utter mess. And I understand you don't always get on the capital side all the dollars that you need. But given the number of facilities that you have in comparison to some other departments and the age of some of these facilities, we have to do a better job at getting more up-to-date information on the status of our facilities before they get to a point where -- I mean, no one is going to give me three-quarters of a million dollars to fix a rec. center, certainly not in one year for now a half million dollars for a mansion. You just don't get those kinds of numbers out of this Capital Budget process. Wherein, a couple years ago probably for a couple hundred thousand dollars we would have headed off a bunch these kinds of problems.

So I just have to strongly emphasize to you we need more attention on both the operational maintenance side, make sure we have the right personnel doing what they're supposed to do as well as attack these capital issues in a quicker fashion.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I certainly agree with you, Councilman. And each facility is unique in and of itself. And the Hermitage is an example. It's a historic structure and costs escalate because of the historic significance of the building, regrettably. It may be wise to build new construction. We were asked to develop what we thought would be a cost to repair and improve it and I'll be delighted to speak further with you on the details on that, Councilman. I think correspondence suggested that there was opportunities at a nearby recreation facility.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

MR. MIFFLIN: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Since the Managing Director is here, maybe she's aware. We're discussing the 92nd Police District. Is that going to be closed, Managing Director?

MS. RICHMAN: I don't know. Not that I am aware of, but I'd be glad to make the inquiry.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you please?

Back to Mr. Mifflin. On tenant-occupied park buildings, and I'll use the Museum of Art as an example, why is the Fairmount Park Commission responsible to take car of the grounds? Why is that? Why do you have from your budget take care of the areas around some of these occupied leased or leased arrangement buildings that you have throughout the park? In many cases, you are the caretaker for that facility.

MR. MIFFLIN: I think it's acknowledged that the Fairmount Park Commission has the expertise maintaining a landscape, and particularly the landscape around the Museum of Art. I believe the very qualified professional staff inside the building focus their efforts on the art protection and preservation efforts, and the grounds which are just that of a landscape nature are the responsibility of the Fairmount Park Commission. There are a number of events that occur at the museum on the grounds of the museum that are City-sponsored events. The Park Commission is always a partner in those events. So the ongoing maintenance and the landscape improvements quite naturally fall on the Park Commission. The Art Museum is actually in Fairmount Park, so it's a part of our 9,000 acres. And in a cooperative agreement with Corporation of the Art Museum, we've been able to have them maintain the interior while we're responsible for the exterior. It seems to have worked very nicely since the late 1920s. The landscape at the museum is also a focus of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has helped us in planning improvements to the landscape, so we have also reached out to other partners.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I don't want to point just to the Art Museum. This is fairly consistent throughout the Fairmount Park when you have tenant-occupied facilities; is that correct.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, it is. Again, many of the tenants are non-profit and they are providing an invaluable service in maintaining the building and often do not have the expertise or the financial wherewithal to do the landscape. When we get beyond the non-profits, when we get to the profit makers, when we do the deal, when we negotiate the lease, I would hope that the maintenance that you provide is factored in there.

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, it actually. And I was actually just think of an example as you were speaking. We executed an agreement, as you may know, with the Wellness Foundation. This is a group that works with cancer victims and their families. They have taken over Ridgeland Mansion in West Park. And the defined premise of the property actually includes quite a bit of the landscape, at least a couple of acres immediately around the building. So this is an entity that had the financial wherewithal to go beyond the footprint of the building, so we're about ready -- we're near doing one with the group that wants to occupy the Ohio House, and we'll look at ways in which they can help us with the landscape as well.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And maintain it to a standard that you describe in the lease.

MR. MIFFLIN: Absolutely. I think the next extension after we restore the buildings is to do the historical gardens with the houses. The Art Museum helps us with Mount Pleasant and Cedar Grove and we have other partners as well. But the interpretation of these historic landscapes is a vital part of what we do.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: To end my conversation with you, and I think I've said this before, I want to thank all of the staff of Fairmount Park Commission and the Commissioners because, again, I remember when you had a staff -- I don't want to exaggerate -- may three times of what it is today. And it amazes me that you do what you do with what you have. Today was a lot of back and forth, but I do want you to understand that at least I understand the situation that you're in trying to deal with 9,000 acres. I have trouble with a half acre.

MR. MIFFLIN: I appreciate your comments

very much, Councilman. I'll make sure that the commissioners -- the commissioners serve voluntarily without financial remuneration and are a very dedicated group of individuals.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They come to Council and they're introduced so that makes it worth --

(Laughter.)

MR. MIFFLIN: They can speak for themselves. Yes. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President. I have two quick follow-ups.

You mentioned that there's lots of information shared between your department and the Department of Recreation. Does this include the playground safety program and the standards? Is there uniformity and some level of consistently in that area across the department?

MR. MIFFLIN: It certainly will, Councilwoman. We have developed this new level of playground safety criteria very recently. We completed the training. There was a training session last month or within last two months. And at least 20 members of the Department of Recreation attended that training session. So both agencies are being trained in playground safety.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And then finally, you mentioned in your opening testimony that you contract out the mowing responsibilities?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How is handled, through procurement?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, it is.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

Are there any other questions from Members of the Committee?

Thank you very much, Mr. Mifflin.

MR. MIFFLIN: My pleasure. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: At the request the stenographer, we're going to take a 10-minute break. And upon our return, the Art Museum will be first and then the Recreation Department. Thank you.

(Brief recess.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. The Committee of the Whole is now back in session.

We will now hear from the Art Museum. Thank you for your patience. I understand you have a fund-raising luncheon today.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Good afternoon, Madam President.

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

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I'm Anne D'Harnoncourt, Director of Philadelphia Museum of Art. And we're very pleased to follow our colleagues and partners at the Fairmount Park Commission in serving Philadelphia, all of its citizens and all of its visitors and really grateful for the opportunity to testify before Council on behalf of the museum's request for 2.25 million in the forthcoming Operating Budget. I'm here with my colleagues, Gail Harrity, Chief Operating Officer of the Museum; Cheryl McClenney-Brooker, Director of External Affairs; and Robert Morrone, Director of

Facilities and Operations. And we're not only here on behalf of the museum, but also on behalf of our new Chairman of the Board Gerry Lenfest who I think many of you may know him and also our Chairman Emeritus Raymond G. Perelman who is not only Chairman of the Executive Committee, and both of whom are really passionate advocates and supporters of Philadelphia and of the museum.

You have our written testimony and I know you may have some questions, so I'll just hit a few high points to say, which I hope no one in Council have escaped knowing, that this year and next year are enormously significant in the history of the museum. We're celebrating our 125 anniversary in ways that we hope will have particularly lasting impact on the lives of Philadelphians present and future.

One thing we're doing is trying extremely hard to attract significant gifts of great art to the collections, whether renaissance, ceramics, impressionist paintings by Monet to power images by Jacob Lawrence. These will enrich every single one of the museum's programs and the experience of every single one of our visitors and the public for generations to come.

In our exhibition program, I'd like to single out two among a series focusing on Philadelphia treasures. Dox Thrash, an exhibition which just closed. The first major museum exhibition of this pioneer African-American printmaker. And we are immensely grateful for City Council's resolution in his honor introduced by Councilwoman Blackwell last week. That was a particular thrill. And one of the missions of this museum in Philadelphia is always to send our local heros out to other cities, and the Thrash show will be going to Chicago in the near future.

Another great hero, Thomas Eakins is now in Paris enjoying a very warm reception from the French audience who usually only like French art, but they like Mr. Eakins. And it's in part being very useful as the focus of Philadelphia's international tourism effort, which is being undertaken. The museum is a very happy part of it undertaken by the Convention and Visitors Bureau and GPTMC. And on the international front also we're partnering with the Great Museum of Modern and British Art in London to present a great modern painter who was an influence on an enormous number of contemporary painters working today both in Philadelphia and around the world named Barnett Newman.

If we're to take a forward look, and I will do it very quickly, what we are doing is we are building on our long-range plan formulated and approved by the trustees approximately three years ago and our comprehensive master plan for our absolutely amazing building and complex of buildings. And these really are keystones of our anniversary celebration because you really can't go forward to serve Philadelphia for the next 125 years unless you know where you want to go. And the first great step was one that City Council helped us to take, the acquisition of what is now called the Perelman Building. We're beginning the process to retrofit it for museum use as part of our long-term plan to expand the public space for these growing collections and for our programs and visitors.

I know this isn't Capital Budget hearing, but I can't say how important the capital funds from the City has been and will be in coping with the huge infrastructure that is the great historic building of the museum of the Rodin Museum and the Perelman Building.

We're also working very hard to deepen our education programs which are now, I'm happy to say, really world renowned as well as nationally awarded to serve both large audiences and very in-depth needs of the kids and particularly in Philadelphia. We are, as you can imagine, searching for support to help make up for the loss of two full-time School District teachers who worked with us to reach thousands of kids a year. We serve about 75,000 and we try to do it not in a superficial way, but in a deep way.

And finally, in terms of our program for next year, we've got a number of major exhibitions planned, one which also celebrates local heros. That's the name of the show itself, across the United States how the arts transform communities. And the example from Philadelphia -- there are examples, I believe, from 12 communities, I'm not quite sure of the number -- is what has been happening in the Village of the Arts and Humanities in North Philadelphia under the leadership of Lilly Yae (ph) and her remarkable group of community leaders who have come forward and have quite literally changed the landscape as well as mindscape in that small very intense community where she has worked.

The fall will bring an exhibition of additions to our collection, which mean so much to our future audience. And then next spring just about this time, we will be hosting a great exhibition of "Degas and the Dance." This wonderful French impressionist artist who was so deeply interested in ballet and dance, a field again which Philadelphia is particularly rich, we anticipate hundreds of thousands visitors both from Philadelphia and from across the United States as well as a very substantial expense for this exhibition because we are appealing to corporate sponsors and foundations. But if the past is any record, either the Cezanne exhibition or the van Gogh exhibition, we never succeed in fully funding great projects like that so we can't do any of this, our future dreams or next year's exhibition, without the City's invaluable operating support which we received, as you heard in earlier in testimony, since the City constructed our great building which was opened in 1928, and we are deeply, deeply grateful. The support has been flat for seven years at 2.25 million. We need to say that during the same time the security and maintenance cost have risen to 5.8. So we've got a shortfall of about 3.5. And you can imagine the effects of September 11th which hit New York museums and cultural institutions very heavily were also felt in Philadelphia.

So it's my fervent hope and that of have all my colleagues that the Council will sustain the current level of funding and might also consider the possibility of additional support for security and special costs related to Degas exhibition as you did for Cezanne and for Delacroix through some form of transfer ordinance or something during the year if that would be possible. We received also additional support for other exhibitions from the City for Goya and for Rome, for example.

We've had a fabulous 125 anniversary. We're trying to ensure that the next 125 years of the museum do everything to make a great City greater to contribute substantially to the beauty and quality of life of the citizens, attract hundreds of thousands of visitors, millions over time from across the world to partner with other institutions. And as I looked around this Council room earlier, I saw a number of them represented, whether it's the free library, the School District of Philadelphia or the park to build even deeper and broader programs in the museum, in the classroom, over the Internet, all for Philadelphia and for the world. Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. You state in your testimony that the museum's City budget has been frozen at the same level for the last seven years and that in the past the City used to pay for the museum's operating costs for security, maintenance, and custodial services.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: That's correct.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: What are your current operating costs? I know you did mention them.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Those costs, are approximately, I think, it's 5,830,000.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Over the last seven years, what would you say is the total amount the museum has had to pay in addition to the City's contribution?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I'm not I can quite do it. It's well over 10 or 12 -- I'm asking my financial wizards to my right here.

A minimum of 2 million a year. So it's almost like 14.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. What is the Form and Art Program and does this program interact with the School District of Philadelphia?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: The Form and Art Program is an award winning program for blind and partially sighted people and for adults. It is not a program for school children. And it is aimed at making those adults able to enjoy both the museum's collection. There's a selective sort of touching of sculpture and we also are devising ways in which to translate even the experience of a van Gogh painting into something into a kind modulated board which somebody can touch and realize how the paint surface works. And they produce an extraordinary group of their own works of art in response to what they see and experience at the museum and actually are able to sell them as well. So there is a cultural benefit, there's a deep educational benefit and sometimes for some of the participates there's a financial benefit.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Sounds wonderful. You mention in your testimony that the support you received from the School District has terminated. May I ask why and who terminated it and for what reason?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I hope I'm going to be correct on this. I will ask Cheryl McClenney-Brooker to help me if I am mistaken. But essentially, we had, as did a number of the other cultural institutions across the City, the Franklin Institute, the Academy of Natural Sciences, I believe Atwater Kent Museum, to assist the museum in reaching in depth the children of the School District in Philadelphia full-time teachers on the School District, part of the School District roster. And with the recent -- this was before -- actually this happened, I think, at the end of last June, something like that. It's a program that was in place for over 50 years. It was just enormously helpful because these were teachers who knew and were deeply immersed in the district itself. They knew their sister and brother teachers as well the students in many of the schools over time and they helped our education department in its mission to reach all of these children that come through our doors. And essentially was eliminated simply because those teachers were needed in the classroom because of a shortfall in the budget of the School District. So it was not that -- they were just pulled back into the district's function.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think it's a wonderful, wonderful opportunity for the youngsters.

Have you been in touch with the School District of late to inquire if they're going to put the service back?

MS. D'Harnoncourt: Our Head of Education Marla Schumacher who has been at the museum for over 20 years and interacted both individually with many of the teachers and School District, as well as the leadership there, we're kind of constantly in touch with them and making it clear that not only would we be immensely eager to have this very invaluable function restored, but also that we are eager, whatever the vicissitudes the School District goes through, to be partners with them in there creating new materials for kids, new ways for kids to be involved with art, new ways for kids to learn from art. We're producing, for example, a series of teaching posters. We just did a series on five objects in the museum made by women, whether an anonymous quilt maker -- in fact, I think the quilt maker we knew her name -- or a contemporary artist. We have posters on Asian, on African-American, on impressionism, on medieval. These are permanent, very sturdy double-sided posters that can go to the classroom before the kids come to the museum. And they are teaching materials for the teacher to make the most out of their visit to the museum. So we are doing everything within our power to prepare kids before they come, to prepare teachers. It's the loss of the teachers themselves is really tough because our replacing those teachers with our staff -- you can never replace their expertise, but our replacing them with our staff is a substantial budget increase which we at this point cannot afford.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Ortiz.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Very shortsighted, but it's the ripple effects of what we're suffering in terms of how are kids are getting shortchanged throughout.

Isn't it a fact that the museum actually brings in more revenue to the City of Philadelphia than most stadiums do?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I don't know that I can take on the stadium question.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I'm not asking you to take it on. More visitors come to Philadelphia because of the Museum of Art than they do because of the Phillies or the Eagles.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: What I can tell you is that approximately -- we estimate that sort of year in, year out the economic impact on the City of Philadelphia is about 80 million of the museum's operation. In years where we are unable to afford to have an extraordinarily popular and expensive exhibition such as Degas, it's a larger impact.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: When we had Cezanne and the van Gogh, the impact in terms of -- because this is way we got to talk here. If we were talking about giving money to some wealthy individuals to get richer and develop a stadium, we have this place full of people saying just give them the money. But for the museum that actually gives to the nation but brings people, we don't have that. What we do is cut and cut and cut and make it more difficult for them to be able to function.

So the Cezanne exhibit and van Gogh exhibit, what was the economic impact on the City of Philadelphia of those two?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: The conservative, and I think it's always wise to give you that, the economic impact of Cezanne was approximately 122 million.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: And that's on top of everything else that the museum --

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: That was on top of all the educational opportunities -- that was just part of the year. We had 778,000 visitors to the museum during the Cezanne show. About 525,000 of whom went to the exhibition. And really, any exhibition that we do that receives national attention, major regional attention, contributes to the -- has an economic ripple across the region. And what's interesting is it's not only, oddly enough -- and this maybe sound like an irony. The effect on the museum, even though it's fabulous, even though we're full of visitors and people are in our shop shopping and doing all those good things and looking at all our collections, the percentage impact on the museum is much less than it's ripple effect and the effect on the community as a whole.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I'm talking about restaurants and all of --

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: And other museums, other everything.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I mean, it is very shortsighted what we do in terms of this. And I think we don't pay attention to -- 14 years ago a colleague here said that, "Well, that's only for rich people." Really misses the aspect of what this museum has meant to Philadelphia and to the image of Philadelphia. We as a City has stop reciprocating in the same manner. We make it harder for you to actually make money for the City of Philadelphia. And the reason I'm saying this is that if we continuously give here to other individuals that don't -- they take the money and leave. And it is so shortsighted that what we do, the stagnating, not being able to raise the contribution. Because anything that we contribute, the City of Philadelphia gets it back many times over. And I would wish that you will one time -- I think what you have to do and give us is an analysis, real good analysis of the economic impact of this museum, not just the aspect that the prestige that it brings us, but the real money aspects that this museum brings to Philadelphia. And when you compare what we do to stadiums or the Eagles for the fans, I mean, these are other things that have very little contribution to us. I'd like to see that.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Well, thank you, Councilman. I'm very grateful and very encouraged by your remarks and, certainly, we will -- we might prepare for Council for the future kind of a chart that does show that. I think that the economic impact of the museum, it's a point you've tried to make over the year. We have more information now and we can make it more clearly and more eloquently. I'd like to think that the museum has three important impacts which are intertwined. One is quality for life all the citizens of Philadelphia, the second is the educational impact, and the third is the economic impact, and they go hand in hand. We also recognize that the City has major financial issues, but to the degree to which the City is able to invest in the museum and in its activities, we endeavor to return those investments throughout the region.

COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: That's the way I think we here would like to begin -- I'd like us to start looking at it as an investment on our economic and future, because as we make that we attract a grouping of people that go to the museum, I believe, probably spend more money than the grouping of people that go to see an Eagles game. They go to the restaurants, they go to the neighborhood, and they usually come from outside of Philadelphia, a lot of them. If you can put together on the Cezanne and a projection on Degas, which I imagine is going to be quite similar in terms of its economic attraction. We have to do that because we just do not understand the investment that we lose when we don't take care.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: We will be delighted to prepare such information for you in particularly Degas.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you. I want to talk about a program that I may have missed, but since being here and you giving us the opportunity to come visit has really -- I've learned a lot about art. I'm wondering if there's a program -- many people come to the museum, and I'm going to try to express myself as best I can here, they're not as sophisticated as they would like to be and understand. Really, I come to the museum and I don't really appreciate my visit. And you talked about the kids. I don't appreciate my visit because I don't really understand what I'm looking at. I don't understand difference between this and that. It's pretty. I say, "Gee, it's old and it's nice." Could we have a program or do you have a program -- I'd take it if you had one so I could enjoy my visit, that's that and that means this. You know, you all take for granted, and I say that with respect because you know. And there's a lot of folks that hesitate going to the Art Museum because when they get there they don't really appreciate -- and I'm telling you from my own personal experience.

I don't really have the same appreciation because I'm not really knowledgeable what I'm looking at. And again, if there could be a program like that, I think a lot of people would come and want to learn. And you used the word the kids experience coming to the museum. I would love to learn more about what's there. I think you're getting my point.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I am, Councilman Rizzo. I'm actually grateful to you for asking the question because I think one of the things the museum needs to do is even get out more word about what we do as well as increase what we do because we, in fact, have -- we try to have a big variety of ways in which any visitor can get into the museum, get into the collections, look at things, whatever level of interest they have, whether there are wonderful guided tours by 500 volunteers who are very knowledgeable about the collections. They expect every visitor just to come as they are, whether they're art historians or they're just people coming in and wanting to know what that is and what this is or how it got there, and they can do that. We have quite a wonderful program now of audio guides where anybody can take -- if they don't want to in a group with somebody leading them, and there's somebody available pretty much around the clock anytime you come, there are audio guides that you can take and wander into the galleries and look at almost anything around the museum or at least any gallery and have a sense of information about it. There are also some courses that are taught by museum staff, and we interact a lot with the local colleges to have spotlight tours, for example, every Wednesday night on a specific aspect of the collection. So there's no one-stop shopping, I would say, simply because there's so many times people come, so many ways they want to learn. And I'm just getting a note to say we're also, which has been fabulous, our newest program is to invite some of the junior and senior members of Philadelphia School District schools and other schools around the community to come and run a team docent program in which the teenagers actually take you into the medieval galleries and show you what they want to show you. So they are not talking up, they are talking just across person to person, and it has a wonderful effect on our visitors. So we'd actually be very glad to provide you with a summary of what we do, particularly for our adult visitors.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Director, I heard what you said but, again, I want to the get real basic here. You come into the museum. There's some things that are painted with paint. There are other things that are drawn. They are other things that are photographs. It would be nice to understand the different categories of art for a person that has no knowledge, had know schooling, didn't have -- you know, I went the Settlement School and painted water colors and I knew that you put one color with another and it makes a different color. But I'm talking about just understanding the different types of art. Because when I walk into one of the galleries and I see something, I didn't realize it was a picture.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Understood.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I thought it was something that was drawn. I didn't know that you had pictures -- well, I do now -- in the Art Museum. So what I'm talking about is the very, very basics because I've talked to some people, matter of fact, I couldn't make a particular event and I was going to provide my tickets to a person and they responded in a way that had me ask this question, "Well, I wouldn't understand what I'm seeing there," and that's why they didn't go.

So I'm getting right to the very basics because maybe you assume that when we come in there we really understand what you're showing us.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: It's a terrific question. What I can say is we try to assume nothing, either that people know everything, they know very little. We try to give them any ability at the museum, either through somebody who spends time with them in the galleries or buy material they could read if they wished to and take away and come back again. The main thing we want to make sure people know is that questions are what it's all about. And we may not have the answers because we sure don't have the answers to everything. The one thing we love to do but at the moment we don't have space to do and what we're looking forward to is this kind of rearrangement of places in the museums to do a little orientation film for people who come in and they can just get the museum, in a way, summarized, it's a huge place, and what opportunities they could have. And right now, we don't really have any place to show such a film except our auditorium which is also full of school kids or art history classes or lectures or other things. But it's real goal we would love to achieve.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: An example of a question that was asked, when you come there you see art that's donated or shipped from another museum or an individual, his name, donated by. Just that kind of information, a lot of people are standing there wondering, how did that get here? It says its own loan from. And I asked that question, and you can obviously figure it out that it's on loan. But just knowing and understanding how that works, I think would be very interesting. There's a lot of people that think they know, but I don't think they really know.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: In fact, someone asked a question in the press conference about the Cezanne exhibition after it was over and we were announcing economic impact right here in City Hall and someone said, "Well, what's the next collection you could borrow?" Whereas, in fact we spent three years putting together by pleading with people who owned Cezannes all over the world to lend them to Philadelphia for three months. These are all great questions. They're questions that we had a lot of people in the museum who are interested in answering. And in fact, most of them could answer them for anybody coming in the door, but we need to figure out how to make sure that everybody knows that the questions they come in with can be answered without embarrassment, without anything by it because you have three questions, somebody has five questions, somebody else wants to know something else, so we can't necessarily anticipate but we want to the be able to respond.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: When you see something that's donated by and the name of an individual, does that necessarily mean that it was donated to our museum or could it have been donated to another museum who in fact is making it available to you?

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: If all it says it was donated by, it means it was donated to Philadelphia. If it's in the Cezanne show, it will say Art Institute of Chicago given by Mrs. Mugwump or Mr. as the case maybe. We actually have in a couple of places in the museum, but we could always have more, places where we explain even the labels. The labels are the little placards. We try to give people a short sweet group of facts about each thing, not necessarily the same fact about each thing because that gets boring. You don't always want to know about the donor. Sometimes you want to know how it's made, whatever the case maybe.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I use that as an example.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: That's a good question.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The next time I go now I'll know the answer to that question. But I was trying to explain what my experience is and probably the experience of some other folks that might make their visit more enjoyable. Thank you. You do great work.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Well, you're very welcome. And thanks for those inspiring questions.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. First, I actually want to commend my colleague for his openness and expressing his true feelings. It actually takes, I think, a fair amount of personal self-confidence to admit what you don't know or what you don't understand. In many instances some of us, maybe many of us, from time to time try to cover up what we don't know or actually act like we know it even though we don't. I, as well, generally have no idea what some of the artwork is. You can read the little description down the bottom. And so if you end up having that kind of course for either the uninitiated, the uninformed or the completely stupid, I'd be glad to sign up.

We also did, though, learn something here today and, Director D'Harnoncourt, I look forward to the watercolor exhibit of Councilman Rizzo's materials.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The Councilman has agreed that he will lend them to the Art Museum. He will require they be returned. I think that one day which I'm driving as you go toward Kelly Drive there, that big sign maybe one day it will say, "The Rizzo Exhibit," and it will have all the Councilman's drawings from when he was eight years old. I'm sure it will be an astounding success, maybe not at the level of Cezanne, but many of us at least here in City Council will go and we will pay money to see those drawings.

(Laughter.)

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: I heard it here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Other than that, I just want to thank you for what you do. Please keep up the good work and I look forward to the next exhibition. From the little girl in school today, my daughter has enjoyed a couple visits now to the Art Museum. She is always excited when she knows that she's coming to the museum. And actually, she can explain what some of those things are and she tells me about them. So you do a great program with the young people who have the opportunity to come to the Art Museum. And I think actually Olivia may have been in the Art Museum more times than I have, and she's 7 tomorrow. So thank you very much.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Thank you very much.

And maybe she can bring you next time.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Members of Council fully enjoyed our visit to the Art Museum. It was very enjoyable. Thank you so much.

MS. D'HARNONCOURT: Thank you.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Recreation Department is next. Good afternoon. Identify yourself for the record.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Good afternoon, Madam President. Thank you for having us back. My name is Vic Richard, Recreation Commissioner for the City of Philadelphia.

To my right is Deputy Commissioner Carapucci; to my immediate left is Deputy Commissioner Mary Platt-Coles, and to her left is Deputy Commissioner Carlton Williams.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you have a copy of your testimony. Give it to the stenographer. If you would abbreviate, we would appreciate it.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: For the record, we're requesting $40 million in the general fund. That includes the increase of $843,000 over '02 that was due to negotiated wage increase and 10.6 million in the grants. Total operation is for $50 million. I'll be more than glad to accept any questions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Wow. You were very short.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: If I can tell you

one other thing --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please do.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: The number one priority in our department and operation is the maintenance division. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. Can you tell me how many of your employees have applied for the Drop Program and when they would be eligible?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I believe the first round of employees in the Drop Program go out in October of next year. I may be off a few, but I want to say 24 employees. I might be off a little. I'll be more than glad to give you the whole rundown to date.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. I asked that question because I do notice that in the budget you're going to be getting five less full-time employees.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Five less full-time employees were -- I believe last year some employees were on a grant program in the Latch-Key Project. Also, we are looking at not replacing --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: These were in

the general fund?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Right, in the general fund. They transferred out into permanent. What we're looking at is not to replace some employees in the operations.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: When you say you're not going to replace some employees, how many employees do you contemplate not replacing?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Presently with what the budget reflects and how many people the budget will be able to support, it's five to six employees over the course of the twelve months of the '03 fiscal year.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I guess it was two months ago I got calls from my constituents indicating to me there were rumors that some recreation facilities would close. Is that true or false?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: That it's a rumor?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are we going to be closing some recreation facilities?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: My formal response back to you, Madam President, from your letter to me was that I do not have the authority to close any facility, and that all of us will be working together. It's only a rumor. I have no immediate intentions of closing any facilities.

Once again, for the record, I don't have the authority to close them.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All right. If that rumor should occur again, I'd like you to be in touch with the District Council people.

I agree with you that the ability to maintain your infrastructure is your number one priority in order to accomplish your objectives. I also believe that the ability of the City to provide for the appropriate maintenance of its facilities is critical as we approach our debt limit and our shrinking capital budgets. Do you agree?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Definitely. Once again, for the record, there's what's deemed the cost of goods and the value of the dollar. They're either going to correlate and go hand and hand or one is going to be greater than the other.

In order for us to maintain the balance, the Administration, City leaders, City Council, anybody involved has to make sure that those all balance out.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Does your FY 'O3 budget provide for the maintenance needs of your Department?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: There's no cuts within the Department relative to me losing any present level of service throughout the City. So the answer is yes.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You feel that what has been budgeted is adequate?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: For what is expected, no.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: When you were approached by the Administration, did you explain to them what your needs were, and if so, what kind of response did you get?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes. That's why I believe I might be a handful of operating budgets that didn't take the cut in order to maintain the pre-existing level of service. In order for --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Was that the three-percent increase?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: The three-percent increase was totally due upon the negotiated labor rate that took place December of '01, and also that will take place again December of this year. So there were other issues involving cost to stadium relative to risk management issues. Also, liability insurance, prevailing wages that needed to be addressed in contracts relative to the stadium were other issues.

There's also other issues regarding risk management and proactive training within the Department that need to be addressed; some are, some still won't be.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: In the Administration's five-year plan of your Department, and it would be non-stadium activities, goes from 593 positions in FY 'O3 to 542 in FY '06. How will you be able to provide both the required maintenance and programmatic requirements at that reduced level?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: If I'm understanding the question, calculating the years in my head, it will be because we will absorb, either within the Department or other City departments, the operational staff which is approximately 27 to 30 people at the stadium. That will be --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's not the question. I'm saying non-stadium activities. The

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five-year plan shows that you have 593 positions in FY '03 and it will go down to 542 by FY '06. My question to you is how will you be able to make or provide both maintenance and programmatic requirements at that reduced level?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I'll reiterate. Some of those jobs will be employees within the department that are in my total number of employees, unless I'm not understanding, that will attribute out from the stadium. The other piece --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It does not include the stadium.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Let me continue. The other piece will be employees that are presently on the payroll that the City is working on. I don't know the name of the consultant. I know as an entire entity, we will sit down and take a look at reconstruction within the ranks of the employees.

Now, your question to me is how will we be able to maintain the certain level of services? It's very hard to maintain some of the level of services now.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think you'll need a magic wand if that's what's being proposed.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I'm already using that. Within the higher ranks of the organization, there's --

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Why doesn't Mr. Dubow respond to that question?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I'll give him the mic, too, but I also need to finish.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think I asked Mr. Dubow to respond.

MR. DUBOW: Rob Dubow, budget director. The Commissioner is correct that the reductions that are shown there are tied to the drop plan and our plan to work with Parente Randolf to look at how to restructure the Department to do more with less.

One of the things that we've said all along is that we anticipate that there will be some departments that do better than the numbers we have in the plan and some that don't take as big a reduction as shown in the plan. So those numbers, while they allocated the numbers evenly across the departments, are likely not to be the way it finally shakes out.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Time will tell.

Commissioner, when was the last time your

Department did a facility assessment study?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Are you talking about a full assessment of every facility?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think that's what I asked.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I want to say two years ago. We're in the process right now of revamping what's already on the books, and the maintenance standard operations procedures as well.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to go back, first, in the budget book to Page 383, under Fiscal 2003, Obligation Level. It's $40 million in general funding, 10.6 million in grants. I think earlier in your opening statement, you made reference to a total budget of $50.6 million; is that correct?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The 10.6 million in grants, can you tell me -- I know they're sprinkled throughout this book in a variety of pages. Can you tell me generally the source of the $10 million in grant funds?

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COMMISSIONER RICHARD: The biggest bulk of the $10 million in grants, six-and-a-half million is a federal grant. That's for the summer food program when we feed the young children during the summer day camps. That's $6.5 million. Another big chunk of the 10 million is $1.4 million is to the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant. Then it's broken down.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do we use the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant for?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Presently some of that money is being used for the new Teen Center Initiative. And the rest of the money is -- I want to say part of Safe and Sound, I believe. I don't remember the rest of it. I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Could you provide to us back through the process that we normally utilize a full schedule of what the grant dollars are, the actual breakout for them, the service that's provided?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

Does the Department do most of the either grant writing or, we'll call it inarticulately, grant searching? Who is out kind of scowdering the universe trying to get grants?

MR. RICHARD: We do a lot of it. But then also before Ms. Richman became the managing director, Director of Social Services bringing in the entire Social Services group and better utilizing the resources that the City had. It's kind of half and half, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Does the Department also -- we had some discussion earlier with regard to Family Park. Does the Department do its own fund raising-related activities?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, very minimal.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there like a development person, or is it more on a happenstance, somebody might want to make a donation?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: We have both. We have a gentleman on staff, Mr. Fagan -- that's when we actually formally go off the mostly State and Federal money. Whenever we do have opportunities to get private dollars, Mr. Fagan is also part of that initiative as well to secure money.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do you think the private fund raising was last year?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I wouldn't want to guess. The other part, too, is the Mural Arts Program does an outstanding job as well. But I'll provide that to you. I wouldn't even try to guess.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: There's some fund raising done for the Department. Mr. Fagan, I guess, is primarily going after dollars for the Recreation Department and its various programs. And then the Mural Arts Program does some of its own fund raising. I assume those dollars stay with the Mural Arts Program?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you have a sense of what the fund raising by the Mural Arts Program is from a numbers standpoint?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Jane.

MS. GOLDEN: Jane Golden, Department of Recreation, Mural Arts Program. Last year we've raised in private funds close to approximately 800,000. This year we have 672,000 that we've raised. Some of the funds come from large grants for art education programs. Some of the money is from mural tours, calendar sales, small donations. It's really a range.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You're saying the last fiscal year was 800,000? Are you saying fiscal year to date is 600,000?

MS. GOLDEN: That's correct, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's '01 and '02. Okay.

Commissioner, let me ask you, on Page 3822, first, how many deputy commissioners do you have?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Three, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who are they and what are their responsibilities?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Deputy Commissioner Carapucci is over programs. Deputy Commissioner Mary Platt-Coles, to my immediate left, is over administration and development. Deputy Commissioner Williams, to the far left, is over the maintenance facilities management, the Dell East.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, I'm actually somewhat memory challenged. You came, my recollection is, the spring, early summer of 2000?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, sir. May.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: May of 2000. When you arrived, were there deputies in place at the time or did you subsequently make the appointments?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: They were in place.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All three?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: There's a new one at the table since then, Ms. Coles.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When you arrived in May of 2000, Mr. Carapucci and Mr. Williams were already deputies, you became Commissioner, and subsequently you brought on Ms. Coles?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: She replaced another Commissioner that was in place already.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Subsequent to your --

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: There were three commissioners in place; Mr. Carapucci, Mr. Petrowsky, and Deputy Commissioner Williams was brought in in April of 2000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Again, just so I'm clear, once you became Commissioner in May 2000, a deputy left and then you promoted or hired Ms. Coles?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Ms. Coles began her tenure in October of '01.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You appointed her Deputy Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: On Page 3822, tell me what is the Pre-school Project?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: That's an initiative that we began last year in order for us to try and create a revenue stream for the City. We're working on improving and creating and attaining accreditation from the State in our pre-school and after-school programs. If we are able to accomplish this, there's a money denomination -- and I'm sorry, I don't know that number -- that the State will partially reimburse the City for the services to these children.

A lot of it has to do with the physical plant.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is this an entity called the Pre-School Project? Is that like a company or contractor?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: No, sir. Really, it's the terminology that was used. It's the pre-existing Top Rank Program. It's also tied in together with the after-school program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where are these after-school programs?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Mr. Carapucci.

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MR. CARAPUCCI: Bill Carapucci. We're trying to equip four facilities with the standards that the State would use. We've met with the various people in the capital budget to make some adjustments to the facilities. Two of them that we probably could get up this fiscal year are Simons and Hawthorne, because they're relatively new buildings and they meet most of the codes.

We have two more planned, Dendy, and that's in Council District 5, and Max Meyers.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where is that?

MR. CARAPUCCI: In the lower Northeast. We're trying to do these four to see if this works. This would be like a pilot program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Simons is up in the Northwest, I know. I think that's in the 8th or 9th. It's the 9th. Hawthorne would be --

MR. CARAPUCCI: District 1. Dendy is 5. I think Meyers -- I don't know where it is now.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm trying to figure out what I'm not getting. So we're going to do pre-school and after-school programs proposed at these facilities?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We're already doing

after-school. We're trying to bring it up to the standards of the State and trying to generate a revenue stream. There's a lot of issues involved with this. If it works, we probably could expand this.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So, I mean, obviously we need to have as many pre-school experiences for our young children as possible. Without getting into a lot of detail about prior to those kinds of activities, I'm assuming as the government, we're obviously going to try to be price competitive, but I'm assuming also sensitive to the ability of people to pay and have different rates in different neighborhoods, depending on who's attending?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Every one of our programs is price sensitive. We make it meet the needs of the particular community. So if you're in a community that cannot pay, they'll pay a very minimal amount. If you're in a community that has a better ability to pay something, it goes up a little bit. In all cases, they're always a minimal cost. We treat the entire ten areas of our City equally.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who is going to staff this? Will these be public employees?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We're going to hire four seasonal employees, one for each facility. We have one already there. So these sites will have two, what we call, rec specialty instructors. One is already on board because we have after-school programs there already. Once this program goes into effect, there's money in the budget to hire another seasonal person. So they'll have two besides the regular Department of Recreation staff.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When you do your seasonals, I thought they were generally six-month people. At some point, won't you only have one?

MR. CARAPUCCI: After-school program has an exception. I guess about five years ago, the Civil Service Commission allowed the after-school seasonals to work nine months. They work September through June. Summertime, we hire the summer staff.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

Commissioner, tell me who was recruited in FY '02? Which deputy commissioner was recruited and what services were needed for recruitment purposes?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Ms. Coles.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I was under the impression Ms. Coles was already here.

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COMMISSIONER RICHARD: No. Ms. Coles replaced another deputy. She was recruited the end of last year, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You were not already in the Department?

MS. COLES: No, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where did you come from?

MS. COLES: Pittsburgh. City Parks.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Very good. Welcome. Was it a tough recruitment?

MS. COLES: Not for me.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Commissioner, tell me about Page 3839. HSDF Youth Access Centers, what is that?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Human Services Development Fund. It's part of the Welfare To Work Project. Mr. Carapucci will expound.

MR. CARAPUCCI: We have around the City eight Youth Access Centers that are open expanded hours. They have expanded services. Besides the regular recreation staff, they recruit staff from the neighborhood to expand services.

For instance, I can name a few,

Feltonville, Meyers, Lawncrest, Simons, Gathers. There's a couple more. I think we have seven or eight total. The purpose is to expand the hours of operation also to work with other agencies. For instance, at Meyers at 58th and Kingsessing, we have a program there where we work together with the Health Department.

Also, in some of these centers we are working with other agencies to do some of the new things this Administration has brought in. For instance, the test for sexually transmitted diseases. We're working together with other agencies and expanding our hours. We're giving the local community an opportunity to get involved with the playground and some employment.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Seven. I think seven.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You named five. Do you remember the other two?

MR. CARAPUCCI: McVeigh, and there's one other one. Grays Ferry. How can I forget that?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sure they won't let you.

MR. CARAPUCCI: Believe me, they won't.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Feltonville is obviously in the Feltonville section. Meyers is in --

MR. CARAPUCCI: Southwest Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Lawncrest is lower Northeast?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Right. On Rising Sun Avenue.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Simons, we know about that. Gathers is --

MR. CARAPUCCI: Councilman Clarke's district.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: McVeigh?

MR. CARAPUCCI: I think McVeigh is in Councilman Mariano's district.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Grays Ferry is in --

MR. CARAPUCCI: Council President's district.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you have any plan to expand or increase the number of these?

MR. CARAPUCCI: If we had additional funding, I'm sure we can do more with it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me point out to you -- you said Meyers was in Southwest in the

Kingsessing section?

MR. CARAPUCCI: 58th Street. 58th and Kingsessing.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's fairly Southwest. Let me make mention that, I think if you plot these out, you'll find a big hole over on the north western side of the City; West Philadelphia, both parts that are south of market, and all of West Philadelphia north of market and the Overbrook section.

MR. CARAPUCCI: I'm aware of that. Again, I think our budget is for about $350,000. We stretch that as much as we can. Originally we used to do five sites with that kind of money --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What would you need to do another one?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Approximately $50,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If you had an additional $50,000, where would you do it?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Probably West Philadelphia or Northwest.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You're a very smart man. Could you narrow it down a little bit?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Well, Sheppard would be a nice facility, or Kendrick.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You are a survivor. I'll give you credit. It's 50,000 a center?

MR. CARAPUCCI: 50,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Commissioner, I'm going to need to work with you during the course of this budget process and our good friend, Mr. Dubow, and the managing director, to try to figure out how we fill at least part of the hole we're experiencing here in terms of the western side of the City, West and Northwestern portions of Philadelphia to make sure there is a certain level of fair coverage for this kind of proposal.

I would ask if you would talk to the budget director, finance director, and managing director during the course of these hearings to see how we might be able to make some adjustment to allow for a new center.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Tell me about Page 3842 and the Robert Wood Johnson Grant.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: It's a grant program that falls under the Safe and Sound.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All of that money is

for Safe and Sound?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes, all of it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is the total amount of the grant?

MS. COLES: 518,671.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I thought I saw that number somewhere. That's on Page 3841?

MS. COLES: 3842.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's the total total amount, or just the amount for this year?

MS. COLES: Yes, that's the total amount for '03.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is the total total amount of the entire grant and the timetable for its use?

MS. COLES: Could I defer to ASD?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I was under the impression this was a multi-year grant.

MS. RICHMAN: This is Estell Richman, managing director. The CEO of Safe And Sound will be testifying on Monday. We'll bring her full budget and what the revenues are and how they're disbursed. The revenues really cover two departments. We will have an opportunity on Monday.

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It will be in connection with the DHS testimony on Monday morning.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's the other department that's recreation and --

MS. RICHMAN: Right. While the staff are hired through here, the money flows through DHS. We felt that to give you a full understanding of that budget, where the money has come from, how they go would give you an opportunity to talk to the person who controls it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Fine. Any of my questions around that would be more programmatic and just what it is, what it does, that kind of thing.

Commissioner, two last questions: One, on Page 3881, there is again a listing regarding Executive Cert Services. Was that --

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: That was the same one-time expense, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So the total is 22,000?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I believe it's 17.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: On Page 3822 there's a listing in FY '02 for $5000. Then on Page 3881 there's a listing for $17,000.

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COMMISSIONER RICHARD: One was in '01 and one was in '02.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In '01 it was $15,000.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Correct. I'm looking at '02 as five.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. On Page 3822. On Page 3881 for '02, there's a $17,000 listing.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: I would have to check. I believe it's 17. It may be more. But I can get back to you. I can have the invoices pulled.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last question: Page 3882 is paint. For the current fiscal year, how many murals do we anticipate are going to be either painted or repaired?

MS. GOLDEN: Jane Golden, Mural Arts Program. For the upcoming fiscal year, we are anticipating 125 murals will be complete. In the fiscal year we're currently in, I think we're actually going to be completing 150 murals.

The reason for the drop is that we're being conservative because a part of what we do is based on private funding. Because of changes in the climate, there's just been a downturn in how much foundations are giving. I'd like to be conservative. If we could raise more money and do more work, we'll be very happy.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Ms. Golden, for the private dollars you raise, is any of that money used to purchase paint and other supplies or paper, scaffolding or anything, or is that primarily for artists and whatever funding is required to deal with the various artists?

MS. GOLDEN: I would say it's used for everything to staff, scaffolding, mural paint. We raise a great deal of money for our after-school and summer program. Two-thirds of our art education budget is funded privately. I would say it's used across the board. It's incredibly valuable. We're very appreciative that we get support from the City so we leverage public funds with private dollars and quadruple the work we'd do normally.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I know the demand continues. We've had a number of mural projects in the 4th District. They've increased over time. I do deeply appreciate that.

I think both yourself and the Commissioner and managing director are to be complimented for the work the Mural Arts Program does; the fund raising, as well as the attention that needs to be paid on the City's side to make sure we support the program as much as possible whether with regard to the salary issues or supplies and equipment.

It doesn't make much sense to have people in place without the tools to do what they need to do. With that, I will commend all of you. I appreciate the information. I think there are probably a couple outstanding information requests. If you can get them to the Chair as soon as possible, I would appreciate it.

Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're welcome. Councilman Dicicco and I do have a 2:30 meeting. Councilwoman Blackwell will Chair the rest of this hearing.

Before I leave, Commissioner, I want you to know that I have found some of your employees to be very loyal and very dedicated. They are certainly a pleasure to work with. Whenever you call, they're always there to respond to your call. Whenever they can be of service, they do it without any hesitation. I want you to know that I really truly appreciate what they do for my office.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Good afternoon. I just basically want to say thank you for your leadership in the Recreation Department and say that I certainly appreciate your quick response to requests or concerns. I don't have a lot of questions.

I want to say to you and your staff, you've been certainly most cooperative, most attentive to the recreation centers. When I've called or made a request, you have responded immediately. I want to say that on record, that I really appreciate all of you for your hard work and your dedication to what you do, and for the children and young people of Philadelphia.

How do you determine where the centers will be? I'm glad we have Simons and Lawncrest, which is in my district. There's so many more. I know there is a dollar figure associated with that.

If we could find additional dollars to have these programs in other parts of the City, and specifically more in my district, it would be helpful because we have so many young people doing nothing after school. If we could provide that service, it would be real good.

Do you look at the truancy information? Do you look at the increase in criminal activity in young people? How do you come to determining where you will put the flow of funds?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Thank you for having us. Thank you for the question.

The concept is a result of almost a year's worth of work in May of last year from the Youth Violent Reduction Program Initiative of the entire City. In that last big symposium that we had, the challenge that was presented to the Social Services Group directly from the Justice Department and the police as well at the table saying, Well, what are we going to continually do? Am I going to continually go in here with the DEA and undercover police operation and just lock up everybody? Can you all come to the table with us to put a preventative piece in there and to stop recurrence and hopefully to deter?

So the concept for that was really born. What it is, we take pre-existing facilities -- the data that's used to determine and dictate the part of the City directly comes from the juvenile justice system based on arrests and type of arrests by these young people, and also from the stat numbers that come from the Police Department. Those are the biggest areas that have been looked at in why we dictate what part of the City to begin this program.

It's geared directly to the 13 to 17 year-old age group. The primary focus of the program is to just get them to stop hanging out, chilling out, loitering, whatever, in the neighborhood or in an unacceptable place, also for them not to be tempted. If you'd like, I'd be more than glad to give you more information.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: That's fine. Thank you very much.

I want to ask about the Dell. In the past, we've had some top-notch, quality entertainment. I'm an avid Dell goer. I attend concerts. In the past we've had Gladys and Nancy Wilson. I haven't seen that caliber -- not that the other performers are not great. I enjoy them all. To get to the level of a Gladys or Nancy Wilson or Temptations, what do we have to do to get back to that?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Your request is noted.

MR. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. I'm Carlton Williams, Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Recreation primarily responsible for the Dell East. I have noticed you a couple of times at the Del throughout Dell shows. I want to thank you for your support, as well as other members who attend.

To answer your question, that has been a significant problem over the last couple years. The cost for quality talent, such a Luther Vandrose and so forth, has risen dramatically. We did an assessment, I submitted a plan to the Commissioner, for ways to improve ticket revenues and ticket sales to bring back those quality entertainers.

The key to the Dell is the quality of talent would dictate the number of people that come to the show which will ultimately increase revenues. Once we continue that cycle, we'll be able to maintain the number of people and quality of talent that's necessary to keep the Dell going without additional revenues.

The other area we're looking at is sponsorship where we want to try to announce a full schedule of shows on time so that the public can know about it, begin purchasing season tickets, and sponsors come in and market their products at the Dell to over 6,000 or so people that can be housed at the facility.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: You're welcome. Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, Commissioner and staff.

I, too, want to thank you for your attentiveness. I think we have a pretty good working relationship with the Recreation Department. I just have a couple questions.

To followup on Councilman Nutter's concerns about lack of a teen center in his district, and I certainly want to voice concern that there's absolutely no teen center in the 8th

District. I was wondering what makes a center ready to house one of these recs or teen center?

I know at one time we talked about the computer programs in recreation centers and security was an issue. A viable after-school -- a viable and active after-school program was a factor. What are you really looking for, rather than a new building like Simons? We don't have any new buildings; ours are old, big and need repair.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Well, let me address the teen center piece. It's approximately, for us to do one teen center, $125,000. The number one piece that we need to know in the room right now is that this isn't recurring funding. This is one-shot funding and money that's coming in from the Juvenile Justice Block Grant.

My mission, being a good Commissioner -- if I'm going to be a good Commissioner is not to create something that the City can't maintain, or for me to build a white elephant, to create a program, something that's also of substance. So if we can only do a handful of these, that's going to be all that we can do.

I want to make sure I clear this up.

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The biggest cost up front in the program is the cost of the goods; the materials and equipment that we're bringing in.

Now, I need to take a moment to back up and brag on the Department, because we don't really get, I think, the credit for the amount of work and the changes that we made. Since October of '01 to date, we have transformed within the Department with our own people eight facilities that did not go out to bid on capital projects.

I'm very, very proud of what we accomplished. The four facilities that we've transformed within the Department looks like a Simons facility now. We proved to ourselves the quality and the level of acceptance and type of the job that we can turn out. Once we're dictated by the crime stats of what's going on, then we look for the most conducive building without interrupting pre-existing program. How will we best be able to serve the vast majority of the community versus the minority?

Some people know sometimes that I'm not going to make them happy. I'm not afraid to let them know that my ultimate goal isn't to make everybody happy, but to make the tough decisions from a business standpoint. That's the proper way to do it.

Can we do one in your district? I'm sure, yeah. But the first thing we need to do is look at the crime statics, not just to do one, and where we can make the most impact of creating a social setting for 13 to 17 year olds to come and hang out. The teen center is like their own little nightclub.

I'd love for you to come out and we'll take you to one. There's 50-inch TV, big screens, brand-new, state-of-the-art DVD players, wall-to-wall stereo systems. Some of them have brand-new, state-of-the-art cardiovascular and workout equipment, pool tables, ping-pong tables, automated bowling machines. It's like walking into a mini Dave & Busters. The reason it was created that way is we went in the community and asked the kids what would we be able to do for you that would make your life better, just to attract them off the street.

The other piece of the program is intentionally not regimented structure. Our ultimate goal is to attract that group just to come off the corner to hang out. We want them to dictate back to us what would they like us to give to them from an educational component, whatever the issue may be, job readiness, whatever. We just got it cranked up. I'd love to continue to expand it. I also need to be sensitive that we be able to maintain it once we create it; not to create something we can't keep.

The rec's piece, I might turn the microphone over to Barry Hamlin, who is really leading the initiative through Ms. Neff's office. I want to say we have presently four facilities that are up. That piece is even a higher-ticketed piece item to create that technology piece.

Once again, when I gave the okay to start this, I told him if we can only do five facilities in the whole City, they're going to be the highest quality, and that we can maintain them. It's not something that's going to fold and we won't be proud of after.

Barry, do you want to add to the rex piece?

MR. HAMLIN: It's almost the inverse

on the rec side because the highest cost is the ongoing recurring and maintenance cost. Really the highest cost deals with finding appropriate staff to maintain the facility. It's actually different from the teen center because we estimate it will cost about $288,000 to maintain that facility of that quality for a five-year period of time.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Is that one of the answers to the digital divide?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Yes. The rec is the digital divide, yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: A year ago, the interest was to do as much as you could with the whole issue of digital divide; am I not correct?

MR. HAMLIN: Yes. Again, remember the rec is actually the second phase of the City's digital divide program. Placing the computers, which we already have in the libraries, is the first phase of that. The ultimate goal is to use every public facility to include the Housing Authority. And those places where we can provide public access, we will.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The Youth Access Centers are still in place?

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MR. HAMILON: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Let me ask you a couple more questions about the teen center. Are the children required to attend? To me, it almost sounds like day treatment that comes out of the Department of Juvenile Justice when Social Service programs open up day treatment programs for adjudicated youth or high-risk youth.

Are they assigned to come or can they come voluntarily? If you're not referred from the First Judicial Court or Juvenile Probation Department or Police Department, et cetera, can you just come because you live in the neighborhood? Is it open to anyone, or are children specifically assigned to come there, required to come?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: It's an open house. We want to -- the kids come in, they sign up, they get their photo ID taken. Part of the security piece is when the young adults come in to hang out, they have to turn in their ID when they come in. We'd like to know who is in the place, how many we have in order to keep that environment safe as well. But our ultimate goal is to have all of the kids interact amongst themselves to create a social environment just for them.

Part of the initiative in the symposium was that the young people congregate and hangout in shopping malls or alleyways because they really don't have their own formal place to call their own. They're not old enough to be an adult and they're too old to be a kid. This is their own speak easy, hangout, that's specifically created for them.

The dual purpose is the safety component, and also them to continue to grow and enhance themselves in a social atmosphere as well. The other piece, too, is we are asking and looking for, you know, kids that have made a wrong mistake to come. And as much as we can mix that group together, we will mix that group together; hopefully they can influence one another.

So you know, too, in these teen center components, there's two jobs that come with that. They're like little community outreach, whatever. But we have just employed four youth. I think the oldest is 21. At one facility, I want to say Rivera, that facility has two males. They're both in the makeup of the neighborhood and the clients.

You have an 18 and a 20-year-old that actually is going out and bringing the youth off the street to come and say this is what we have. So it's not like you have someone my age, older or younger than me trying to interact. We do have the adults there. We have the older peers interacting with them in order to create the environment and let them run their own social setting.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'm really glad to hear the Department is addressing some of the idle time of teen-agers. Because as you're out driving around, they are congregating on corners, in the playground, outside when it's cold. There doesn't seem to be enough organized activities. In some sections of the cities, there are. In parts of my district, we have Y's, boys clubs, PAL's and rec centers. Other facilities, churches are having youth activity in the evening. In other parts, there's really nothing for young people to do.

If this is a way to address that, keep them off the streets, out of trouble, it's really a good idea. Maybe there are other ways we could get more of theses centers up and running. Maybe through some of the faith-based community and other kind of private funding resources and other foundations.

Thank you. We'll try to work on trying to get some things happening in neighborhoods. Part of my district, we do have the high incidence. We're involved in Safe And Sound. We have several different Juvenile Justice Programs in different parts of my district. We'll do whatever it is we need to do.

Thank you. It sounds like a very good program. I've been one of the Councilpeople that asked what are we doing for the age -- the population that you've targeted? After-school programs, mostly elementary schools go to that. I'm glad to hear we're moving now finally into doing some other things for teen-agers.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. Before I call on Councilman Rizzo, let me tell my colleagues that I have visited such a center. Obviously, it wasn't in my district. It is just about the most exciting place I've ever been.

You're an absolutely exciting

Commissioner. And your Department, from your deputies down, are great. I was so pleasantly surprised and overjoyed that the participation by community people, the adults, young people and just that in Philadelphia we've reached an age we can do creative programming like this.

I really, really think that, Mr. Richard, you're an asset to our City, to young people everywhere. We're glad we have you here. Thank you to your entire Department.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Councilman Rizzo?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Along with being put on the list for the Art Museum, I want to be put on the list to go visit one of the teen centers also.

Councilwoman Blackwell basically covered the area I wanted to cover in congratulating you. You guys have a tough job. It's not as exciting as the Fire Department, Police Department, but the service -- Vic is smiling. Some days I guess it's hotter than being the Fire Commissioner.

My point is the good work that you do -- we don't hear about all the good work everyday.

It's a tough grind to be in that recreation environment. Again, this Councilmember wants to say thank you for all that you do and the people that work with you.

We had some tough times in the last year. I thought that maybe since we're getting close to summer, that you'd give us a little briefing on the situation with the lifeguards. I know you were kind enough to send an announcement to my office indicating that you were going to be employing additional lifeguards for the pools.

I know that there's probably at least -- I don't believe that that investigation on the tragedy that occurred last summer has been formally announced, the result of this investigation.

Are we in good shape? Are we on the right time line to get ready for summer? The pools are all going to open. Based on the temperature of this winter, we might have a very, very hot summer. How are we doing with that?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Thanks, first of all, for the support day in and day out. It makes a difference. It makes our job a lot easier knowing we're going in the same direction. Thank you and all of the Councilmembers.

Prior to the challenges that we faced last summer, we were already planning to implement different procedural and operational things relative to aquatics. Earlier that year, our aquatics director was sent off to Miami, I believe, for a seven-day National Aquatics Management Institute. Also, we developed last summer, prior to our incidents, an aquatics facility walk-and-talk audit control checklist.

There was also talk which we are about to do this year -- and I'm not going to go in total detail because we're working out the rest of the kinks. We're going a step further than just training the aquatic staff itself. There will be a formal training for all of the managers in the rec centers relative to the aquatics. They went through an orientation. This one will be more in depth dealing with more water safety aspects, chemical of the water and other things as well.

The other issue relative to background checks and also drug screenings and substance abuse, these were all things that I had already proposed to implement prior to. We're diligently working on finishing that piece so we can implement it. I feel very comfortable.

I also need to say that I'm already proud of what the Department presently had in place and the training that was already taking place. Unfortunately, in any large organization you always have a couple apples in a basket you need to work with.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You might have to help me with this. There are some arrangements between the School District and the Recreation Department on maintenance of some of the pools. I just dealt with one. The heater broke and the School District said, We're not fixing it or vice versa.

Can you explain, based on the condition right now that the School District is experiencing -- the financial condition the School District is in, can you tell me do you have many of these complicated arrangements that you're going to have to deal with that could impact your budget?

We need to know that. If someone else is going to be creating problems for you, we're going to come to you to solve the problem. I think we need to know up front, is there a financial burden you're facing we might not be aware of?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: That's a good question. I'm not an I-my-or-me-type person. In order for us to continue to move the City, the first thing we've got to look at is it's all the same citizenship. It's all going to be the same money. My bottom line is what do we have to do to address and correct the problem? What is the minimal cost? What is the long-term cost? How can we get it fixed at the most economical -- where it doesn't reoccur and we don't stop the pre-existing program?

Whether it's in the school building, a City building, if the Recreation Department people are working in there and there's something we can do to go in to immediately address and correct the problem, to reinstitute the service that was disrupted, that's the approach I'm taking.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Let's speak on the formal arrangements. Again, maybe --

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: On the formal side with the swimming pools, to my limited knowledge, our responsibility is to staff and operate all of the facilities. I am not totally astute, and maybe Mr. Dubow may be relative to the maintenance side.

I do know that we sent our maintenance people and respond to things accordingly as fast as we can, not to disrupt service.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Deputy Carapucci is personally involved in this. Maybe he can explain the scenario that I dealt with a few months ago when there was a pool that couldn't be used because the heater went down. The water temperature wasn't acceptable. There was a debate whose responsibility it was to fix the situation, the School District or the Department's responsibility.

MR. CARAPUCCI: We have seven indoor pools that are on School Board ground. Over the years, our responsibility has been to staff them. The maintenance of the pools, all the major systems is the School Board's responsibility. Now under the new system, I don't know how this will work. Hopefully it will be the same as it has been.

Our maintenance people do not go into School Board ground and work on the pools there. We're not permitted to do that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: This is something we've got to hash out. If you're responsible, guess who is taking the shot when the community is up in arms that the water temperature is -- it's not fair to you to have a maintenance responsibility that is not being carried out.

Today we need to talk about transferring that maintenance responsibility funding to you. You can't be responsible for operating seven indoor pools. If something breaks, you're at the mercy of the School District. We need to get some commitment how we'll deal with this.

Could somebody address this issue beyond the Recreation Department?

MR. DUBOW: It may have happened and I may be aware of it, but we need to understand what our agreement with SRC is on this subject. I'll find that out and get back to you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Fair enough. When I sit here, I try to look down the road anticipating dealing with this one issue. It took a lot of interaction between Recreation, my office, the School District to get this problem resolved. There was no heat in the building. These kids are training and going for whatever the programs are and they had to stop their training. That's not the way we should be doing business.

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MR. DUBOW: I understand. I'll look into it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. Any more questions?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We thank you very much. Camp William Penn is next. We thank you very, very much. After that we'll have Atwater Kent Museum and that will be it for the day.

Thank you for all you do for our City. We're ready for your testimony when you're ready.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Good afternoon again, Madam Councilwoman, and all the distinguished Members of City Council. For the record, Vic Richard, Recreation Commissioner. Also for the record again, Deputy Commissioner Carapucci, Deputy Commissioner Platt-Coles and Camp William Penn director, Roland Chandler.

Camp William Penn is requesting a total of 329,000 in general funds appropriation for fiscal year '03. This budgets supports three full-time employees and 69 seasonal employees that the staff will need to open the camp and run it successfully again in the summer of 2002.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Any questions?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Why no capital budget for Camp William Penn?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: We haven't addressed the capital budget issue, but we are in the process. If I may, I believe we've just been able to transfer $40,000 of money within the Department towards the Camp. And that will go to about 300 brand new beds and mattress -- 400. They corrected me. I think the total number is 429. But the immediate hit that we can do is 400. Wendy Robinson in our Stores and Procurement is working on that now.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: 40,000 additional money?

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Correct. That's pre-existing money right now that we're working with.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I believe the Camp has greater capacity to bring more of our inner City kids for this overnight experience. From what I understand, we could handle more. We could lengthen the stay. We could add an additional encampment. I think somebody really needs to sit down and look at that facility to see -- since it's a seasonal activity, we ought to be trying to pump out as much as we can there, do as much as we can. It's a matter of money, what we can do.

I would love to see -- I think that experience for a young person, and I visited there, boys and girls, is without a doubt -- and I believe there is another category age level that we don't address that we possibly could there. So I think that maybe we really need to take a real good hard look at that.

I can tell you one thing: That experience can change a young -- really have a big effect on the young people of our City, boys and girls. Getting away from mom, you come home and you really appreciate mom and dad a whole lot more when you have to do it for yourself for a couple days. I would love to see you squeak every bit of activity up there. I'll tell you, it's a beautiful facility.

I know you are one of the first Commissioners who has spent a lot of time back and forth to make sure it's well maintained, well staffed. I know you can only do so much. If it's a matter of money, we really need to know, or maybe that's the level that you would prefer to operate. If it is a matter of money and you could do more, today we'd like to know that.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Well, I want to thank you. I'll also say that the Camp is a sleeping jewel of the City. I had recognized that and the staff as well. I am not satisfied with the present level that the Camp is operating in. Those are some of the issues that we're addressing.

If I may go in brief detail, we had a great activity day and overnight experience and a team-building experience with our management, along with the work force within the Department. We bussed employees up and they worked and had a great time. They totally rehabbed one of Roland's infirmaries and one of the other Camp sites. We're looking to continue to go in that direction.

We don't fully utilize the potential of the Camp. The Camp should be open longer. If not for an overnight experience, the next piece in the phase we're working is with the juvenile justice system along with the school system as well to creating outdoor clubs and environmental clubs and let them use the facility and bus the kids up there. It's 671 acres with a seven-acre lake. The City should use it better. It's my responsibility to get us to that level.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: When it's 90 here, it's about 75 degrees there.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: It's approximately a 10- to 15-degree change in the temperature.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Again, I'm sure this Council realizes the value of Camp William Penn. I would like to see it promoted more in the media to let parents know that this Camp is available.

In my opinion, you're right, it is a beautiful facility. Again, there's a lot of kids that don't have the opportunity to take the same vacation to Wildwood or Cape May that I had. That, in many cases, is their vacation.

Whatever I can do and the rest of my colleagues can do to make that facility more efficient, more effective, we're here.

MR. CHANDLER: I'm Roland Chandler. I'm director of Camp William Penn. I would like to thank you for your support. I also enjoyed your visit last summer.

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COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I certainly enjoyed what you grow there, the fruit. They have a nice little garden up there. To see the kids eating it and -- the food was great that you serve them. The entire environment is good. The kids have an opportunity to visit there. It's just wonderful.

MR. CHANDLER: It's always been our main purpose to provide not only a safe experience, but high-quality experience as well, to do the best that we can to give the kids a memorial time. And those memories do truly last a lifetime.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Director, what I noticed also and picked up on is you have a medical staff there. Some of those young people you have an opportunity to give them a good look-over. If you see anything that's problematic, it's dealt with.

In many cases, the first time in a long time some of those young people have had a trained medical person, nurse, be able to look at them and identify any medical conditions that they may have.

They have to take a physical before they go, Councilwoman Miller just reminded me. I love the structure. It's good.

COMMISSIONER RICHARD: Councilwoman

Miller's picture is on the Camp office when she was a camper there.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: When I was a child, I went to Camp Will Penn. I loved it. Every year I loved it. I thought it was one of the best experiences. I think every young person should go. I've been back. I have a daughter that went. She cried like crazy. She thought I was punishing her by sending her away.

Anyway, I think it's a great experience. I had some staff that went a couple years ago when you had all-day encampment for Councilmembers. That may be something you want to consider doing again. Since you had it at that time a few years ago -- some of my volunteers also went with my staff -- they keep calling me every year to see if you'll have another all-day kind of -- you know what you had a few years back, an open house. People really enjoyed it. It's great.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I was really impressed. I don't want to take too much more time. The budget is lean. They got to the point where they actually harvest their own lumbar from fallen trees. They had lumbar cut to rebuild the decks. You talk about a maintenance staff that's very creative; harvest the trees to make the immediate repairs up there.

It's certainly an effort that you've taken on there. I think we could do more to make that job up there a little easier, make some improvements in the lavatory facilities. Glad to hear about the new beds. Congratulations. I'll stop up this summer again.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. Thank you, gentleman and ladies. Thank you.

Atwater Kent Museum. This is our final group for the day. We thank you for your patience.

Good afternoon. Identify yourself for the record.

MR. RASNER: My name is David Rasner. I'm former Chair of the Atwater Kent Museum, which is the City of Philadelphia's history museum. Before I make my formal remarks, I've listened to Commissioner Richard and I've dealt with him. Before he leaves the room, I want to say to the Council that he is a fine gentleman of quality, of dedication. His staff and he are extremely well prepared and do what has to be done for the citizens of Philadelphia. I thank him.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you. We agree.

MR. RASNER: Joining me at the panel here is Jeffrey Regan, who is curator of the Atwater Kent Museum, and Barbara Lewis who is the City Museum Administrator. I'm pleased to present this testimony in support of the museums proposed FY 2003 operating budget of $249,289, which is a five-percent increase over the prior fiscal year.

I'll keep my remarks brief. You can read what we've submitted. The Atwater Kent for the past two years has gone through a restructuring of itself. We tried very hard to retool and refine the infrastructure of the museum and to make it more relevant to the citizens of Philadelphia.

We still have our Phila Kids Summer Program, which is a three-to-six week program during the summer where we host over 200 children during the summer. With the help of the Commissioner, we now have a graphics laboratory at the museum. Verizon also participated in that development. Apple also dedicated some computers and lines.

We are, I think, one of the first fiber

optically up-to-date museums in the City of Philadelphia, which has really been good for our museum which has been a sleepy little museum for the past 60 years.

Basically the request we're proposing or supporting here is for salary for six City employees. The museum has an 18-staffed museum from an educational director to a program director to development director. We're pleased, often proud, we're still here being the City of Philadelphia's history museum.

We're trying to interact, interface with the School District of Philadelphia, and again with the communities of Philadelphia, Kensington and elsewhere, to be a part of the fabric of the City of Philadelphia. That's the testimony in brief.

If you wish to ask questions, I'm here for questions.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. I'll say we're very pleased to read your testimony and to see how many great programs you have, how you interact certainly with schools, with the community and all the various new programs that the museum has. You've come a long way, as they say.

THE WITNESS: On a very modest budget, I might add. We have a dedicated staff, dedicated Board of Directors. We're like the little engine that could. We're trying very hard to stay on the map and be vital to the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Councilman Rizzo, I think you'll have the last word on the matter.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you. I'm basically passing on remarks. My colleague, Councilwoman Reynolds-Brown, asked me since she had to take care of other City business to basically restate what the Chair said, that she's appreciative, especially of the children's programs. Which you know she has a great interest in.

She mentioned, I lost my note, Balch Institute. Maybe you can explain it. She told me to make sure I mention this relationship or working relationship that you've developed with Balch Institute.

MR. RASNER: We're trying to interact, interface with all the institutions of the City of Philadelphia. I find it, and I hope maybe City Council, and this is just a suggestion -- the City of Philadelphia has a rich legacy of culture institutions in this City. We've all read about the Civil War Museum. There's the Atwater Kent, HSP, there's the African-American Museum, a lot of museums that require City support, City activity and need to interact with each other.

When I came on board at the museum, which is about ten years ago, I found that museums had their own little -- there was very little cooperation between museums to make them all integrate and be vital to the City of Philadelphia.

The Balch recently is now part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on Locust Street. Their facility on 7th Street is in question as to what they want to do. It's up for sale, as a matter of fact. That's right across the street from the Atwater Kent Museum.

Our museum in terms of physical plant, space is obviously, I think, too small -- my colleagues would agree with that -- particularly in light of the fact that about a year ago, we negotiated a contract with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and acquired their 10,000 objects, which includes the Wampum Belt. I negotiated the contract. I'm pleased to say I didn't spend a dollar for that. It was done, I think, in a very professional and trusting way.

In fact, it's the first of its kind in the United States that two institutions got together and did such -- made such a contract.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We need you on procurement, too. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. We thank all here. We'll recess this hearing until Monday, March 4 at 9:30 a.m. Thank you all.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing 2/27/02 meeting of the Council Committee of the Whole was reported fully and accurately by me, and that this is a correct transcript of same.

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Lisa C. Bradley, RPR
and Notary Public

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MAUREEN BRODERICK, RPR

(The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to any reporduction of the by any means, unless under the direct control and/or supervision of the certifying reporter.)