COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PUBLIC HEARING

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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Room 400, City Hall

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Monday, April 19, 2004

9:45 a.m.

- - -

BILL 020455 - An Ordinance adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2005

- - -

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
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I N D E X

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OPERATING BUDGET - BILL NO. 020455 - 4/19/04

PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning, everyone. This hearing before the Committee of the Whole will come to order.

Our first witness today will be Mr. Goldsmith, the Managing Director.

MR. PHILIP R. GOLDSMITH: Good morning, President Verna and members of City Council. I am Philip R. Goldsmith, Managing Director. I am here to present testimony on the proposed Fiscal year 2005 Operating Budget for the Office of the Managing Director.

The total proposed budget is $23,021,635, of which $14.3 is in the General fund and $8.7 in the Grants Fund. This represents a decrease of $1.1 million, or 7.65 percent from Fiscal Year General Fund estimated obligations.

Given the cutbacks we have requested of other departments, I believe it is important for the Managing Director's Office to also take the lead in scaling back.

The mission of the Managing Director's Office is to ensure that the City of Philadelphia is a place where people want to live, work, study, play, and visit by ensuring that city services are delivered effectively and equitably.

We try to accomplish this mission by prioritizing and communicating key administrative initiatives, by monitoring and analyzing the performance and progress of those initiatives, and by serving as a catalyst to encourage cooperation, collaboration among city departments. We believe that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

And, finally, we aspire to create a culture that recognizes that the role of government is to serve the needs of our citizens.

We have had, in my judgment, many accomplishments in Fiscal Year '04. Let me mention a few.

During Fiscal Year '04, the city extinguished a persistent subsurface trash fire and removed thousands of tons of trash at the illegal dump site on Hog Island that was there for 20 years. It was an environmental and safety risk and an unnecessary eyesore.

Today Hog Island is clear of debris. It has been greened. Thanks to a grant from the State Department of Environmental Protection and our ability to complete the work on time and under budget, this was done without expending local tax dollars.

I appreciate the support that both you, Madam President, and Councilman Rizzo showed during this project.

The Managing Director's Office frequently coordinates multi-agency responses to major incidents. As you know, one such incident was a fire and explosion at the intersection of Ogontz and Olney at rush hour on February 13, 2004.

Thanks to the cooperation of many agencies and departments, this intersection was able to be reopened in record time. And, most important, there was no loss of life or injuries.

The Managing Director's Office has significantly reduced the amount of city cell phones. As a result, the city removed nearly

1800 cell phones from service and reduced cell phone costs by a projected 60 percent in Fiscal Year '04 over the Fiscal Year '03 costs.

In the Managing Director's Office, our Fiscal Year '04 costs will be reduced by 50 percent from Fiscal Year '03, and 70 percent when compared to Fiscal Year '02. Again, we have tried to lead the way.

Working with Fleet Management, the MDO began the first phase of a citywide fleet reduction plan to reduce the city's fleet size by approximately 400 vehicles.

The first phase, a reduction of 50 vehicles, including sedans and sports utility vehicles, took place on April 1, when employees were instructed to relinquish their cars.

By using Philly Carshare, our employees will be able to obtain a hybrid fuel economical vehicle, when necessary for as short a period of time as perhaps 15 minutes. We are the first municipal government in North America to use this concept. It is a victory for our taxpayers and our environment.

In response to growing concerns about school pedestrian traffic safety, the Managing Director's Office, along with the Office of Secretary of Education, convened a School Safety Zone Task Force.

The mission of the task force is to assess and improve school pedestrian traffic safety zones around the city's public, private, parochial, and charter elementary schools.

The task force consists of representatives of the Police Department, Streets Department, Traffic Court, School District, the Managing Director's Office, the Planning Commission, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and the Mayor's Office.

I will talk more about this task force and its work at a hearing that I think we are having on Wednesday.

In responding to this City Council after the tragedy in New York City's Council chambers last summer, we installed metal detectors on the fourth and fifth floor corridors of City Council chambers and installed Plexiglass along both sides of the mezzanine level of Room 400.

Other security improvements were also made in the wake of 9/11. The Northeastern SEPTA tunnel entrance into City Hall was closed and courtyard fencing was put around to protect our electrical and mechanical systems.

In the near future, you will see additional security measures. But, as we all know, we can never create a foolproof system, particularly in a building where the public's business is being done. But, clearly, we have to do our best to reduce our risks.

With the support of several City Council members, Councilman O'Neill, Councilman Rizzo, Councilman DiCicco, Councilman Mariano, among a few, the Managing Director's Office implemented a plan to crack down on illegal posting of commercial signs on public property, including utility poles, trees, and other city- and utility-owned structures.

To date, over 3,000 illegal signs have been removed from neighborhoods and major arteries. But anyone that drives around our city knows we still have work to do.

In an effort to improve communications with the people we serve, we have contracted with a company called SwitchReach to communicate directly with residents to alert them to city initiatives in their neighborhoods.

SwitchReach uses a predictive dialing telephone technology to call citizens and leave brief informational messages.

For example, we used this technology to alert residents to trash collection changes during Hurricane Isabelle and about parking restrictions during the filming of movies such as National Treasure.

This has been a great innovation that the Streets Department originated and is now being shared by all other city departments. It represents our commitment to tell people beforehand what's going on in their neighborhoods.

We began an honor box management program for the Center City area to enforce an ordinance this Council passed many years ago. These honor boxes have become sidewalk blight, chained to city property, often broken and improperly placed and often filled with garbage.

The ordinance requires that publishers obtain licenses and adhere to standards dictating where and how honor boxes can be placed on city sidewalks.

Working together with the publishers, we have had excellent compliance. We believe our Center City streets look better as a result, and there is still work to do there.

I would encourage City Council to consider expanding the coverage of this ordinance to other areas of the city.

The Managing Director's Office now coordinates a new program called Philadelphia Intergovernmental Scrap Yard Initiative. The city agencies involved include Police, Fire, Water, Commerce, Licenses & Inspections, Law, Managing Director's Office, along with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

An inspection of two illegal scrap yards resulted in the imprisonment of one person, the closure of an illegal scrap facility, the closure of illegal and contaminated housing, and the cleanup of a pile of over 12,000 tires.

Working with the Scrap Dealers Association, the city will be holding a compliance seminar this June to further assist licensees and reputable scrap dealers in meeting their code enforcement responsibilities.

Our citizens should not have to endure illegal and potentially unsafe conditions in their neighborhoods.

Two new sports stadiums were opened this year. The Managing Director's Office, working with many others, helped ease the transition with new parking and traffic patterns.

Veteran's Stadium was also imploded safely without a hitch. While the actual implosion lasted only 62 seconds, it represented many months of hard work among the city, the Phillies, contractors, and our neighborhoods.

This was truly a team effort. And I personally thank you, Madam President, and Mr. McPherson, for your support and assistance.

These are just a few of the highlights of last year. And I thank our city employees for their contributions. I do not believe that city employees get the credit they deserve for the hard work they do.

Too much attention goes to a small minority who don't pull their weight. We are a much better city for the hard work of our dedicated employees, particularly when our departments and agencies work together.

As for Fiscal Year '05 the Managing Director's Office is committed to ensuring that our departments are run in the most effective manner possible and that our commissioners exercise leadership in grappling with our difficult fiscal situation.

In the area of overtime, I have charged Commissioners with improving management of overtime usage. They as Commissioners are accountable for their responsible use of overtime. This accountability cannot be delegated to subordinates.

By the end of Fiscal Year '04, we will have reduced overtime by $17 million from Fiscal Year '03. For Fiscal Year '05, we need to make further reductions. To that end, several initiatives are underway.

Police Department reimbursable overtime is approximately $6 million annually. The department has circulated new policies and procedures to all officers and tightened administrative procedures to ensure that all police details are billed to the requesting company.

The Managing Director's Office now receives monthly receivable aging reports on delinquent accounts. We are working with the Police and Revenue Departments to centralize billing and collections.

Outstanding bills have been turned over to the Law Department for action. The Police Department has been directed to no longer provide services for those in arrears. 128 companies are no longer receiving such services.

The court system, working with the City Administration, is implementing several initiatives to reduce Police Department court-related overtime.

The Police Commissioner has reinstated court liaison officers, who have greatly improved the scheduling and coordination of officer appearances.

The court system has staggered listings to allow more time for notice of cancellations, implemented realtime data entry in courtrooms to keep scheduling current and accelerated to trying of cases. An upgraded MIS system will allow the courts to further improve officer scheduling.

We will be inviting the courts, the District's Attorney's Office, the Police

Department, and the City Solicitor's Office to participate in a work group to develop a series of recommendations for the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission to further reduce overtime expenditures through improved operations.

I must stress, however, that while the cost of court overtime is charged to the Police Department, it can only go be solved by cooperative and collaborative process among all participants in the criminal justice system.

In the area of grants management, we have established a grant management center in Fiscal Year '04 to maximize the city's utilization of available grant funding opportunities through a collaborative approach with city departments, agencies, community groups, and the private sector.

For Fiscal Year '05, the goal of the GMC is to increase the city's receipt of competitive grant funding in this year of budget cutbacks.

We are about to embark on a unique

partnership with the William Penn Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania. These organizations will assist the city, both government and nonprofit organizations, in building the permanent capacity to obtain an increasing share of grant funding opportunities. We are grateful to the William Penn Foundation for funding this project.

In the social services departments, which are 85 percent funded by grants and other federal, state, and private sources, we are continuing to carefully examine how we use the funding to maintain or enhance core services.

Since 2002, a coordinated approach to allocating grant dollars has been in place. The Fiscal Year '05 Operating Budget contains $21 million of grants and other outside funds that have been targeted to key priorities.

The budget for homeless programs will benefit from $9.5 million of funding for children and families in shelters through the Department of Human Services needs-based budget.

Recreation Department programs received $3 million of TANF funding and $400,000 from the Human Services Development Fund.

The Philadelphia Prison System will benefit from HealthChoices reinvestment funds to relieve its General Fund of $3.6 million for the Forensic Intensive Recovery program, known as FIR, and $1 million from community services and behavioral health grants for reentry services for inmates leaving the prisons.

You will hear more about these programs in the testimonies of the various operating departments.

In the area of special events, the Managing Director has worked with the department staff to identify actual costs for special events. In some cases our costs have not been updated for a decade.

Our true costs will now be captured by department and event and reported routinely to my office.

This information will allow the city

to bill event sponsors for actual costs where appropriate, and to make decisions on ways to manage events to limit expenditures. We have no choice.

From 1993 to 2003, the number of special events receiving city services more than doubled, from 154 to 331 annually. During the same period, the number of events for which the city received no reimbursement increased from 18 to 219, a 1200 percent increase.

In 1997, the costs of all events was $1.5 million. In 2003, the cost of six major events alone was $1.1 million.

In the area of quality of life, our office plays a major role. The Managing Director's Office supports the Mayor's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative by coordinating and implementing quality of life programs.

The Managing Director's Community Life Improvement Program, known as CLIP, was established as a pilot program in the 8th Councilmanic District. It was designed to improve the quality of life in the city's neighborhoods through public education, code enforcement, and abatement of quality of life violations.

The violations addressed by CLIP include high weeds, dumping on private property, graffiti, vandalism, and noncompliance with the trash collection schedule.

Since its inception in Fiscal Year '02, compliance rates in the CLIP areas for nuisance violations has increased from 34 to 85 percent.

We will now expand our enforcement and abatement initiatives citywide. We will begin strategically expanding enhanced enforcement and abatement throughout the city by targeted zip codes beginning this summer. We will have a four-pronged approach: One, education; two, warning; three, enforcement; and four, abatement.

Education will focus on outreach, empowerment, and partnerships with the community. Enforcement officers, inspectors will respond to quality of life complaints and issue warnings to violators.

Failure to adhere to the warnings to correct property maintenance code violations will result in enforcement, which consists of the issuance of a code violation notice, or a License and Inspection notice.

As a last resort, but one necessary, we will abate L & I property maintenance code violations that have not been abated within the specified period.

Property owners will be issued an invoice for the cost of the city's abatement and we will go after them for collection.

We will work closely with City Council to determine which neighborhoods within each zip code will be proactively targeted and for what reasons. We will then address these areas and issues in a coordinated, multi-agency effort to be able to move quickly, nimbly, and efficiently.

I urge City Council to increase fines from $25 to $75. If we are going to get the attention of those who are spoiling our neighborhoods, fines have to cost more than a mere parking ticket.

Deputy Managing Director Tom Conway will be responsible for implementing this program and he will have my full backing.

In vacant lot painting, we will continue with that program as we have in the past. The vacant lot crews will continue to prepare lots for greening and will clean lots based on citywide maintenance schedule.

Because the program has been in existence for several years, with cleanings taking place on a regular basis, the heavier debris that cannot be picked up by crews with hand or light-duty equipment is now not as prevalent.

The Anti-Graffiti Program is also an important quality of life initiative. And consistent with the past five years, the Fiscal Year '05 program expects to provide $68,000 to approximately 375 organizations and businesses for 6,500 gallons of paint and $22,500 for related supplies.

Weed and Seed is a program working

with the Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney's Office using federal grant dollars. This program will continue, and this year we will try to partner with the Citizens Empowerment Zone efforts.

Operation Town Watch is also a very important community program helping us to combat crime.

Given our focus on school violence, operation Town Watch will expand the Safe Corridor Program and use statistical data from the police to initiate strategic volunteer recruitment throughout the city.

This is just one initiative we are using working with the Police and School District to protect our children from the terrible violence that has occurred.

In addition to our public schools, Commissioner Johnson and I, at the urging of Mayor, have met with the archdiocese to pledge our full support and cooperation.

In the summer of 2003, the Managing Director's Office launched Global Philadelphia to improve language accessibility between diverse linguistic communities in the city. Both Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and an executive ordinance signed by Mayor Street in the fall of 2001 require the city to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient individuals.

Census data indicates that approximately 8 percent of all city residents have limited proficiency in English, and surveys estimate approximately 10 percent of citizens utilizing city services are LEP.

L & I suggests that perhaps 30 to 50 percent of people requesting permits and licenses are LEP individuals.

Through an allocation of $180,000 in Fiscal Year '04 and $500,000 in Fiscal Year '05 from a state grant, the Managing Director's Office will coordinate strategic investments to increase language access.

Eight departments are the initial focus of Global Philadelphia: Fire, Police, Health, Human Services, Prisons, Recreation, OESS, and L & I.

These investments will include

translation of vital documents into languages other than English, deployment of interpreters and staff training.

Through Global Philadelphia, in a partnership with community and advocacy groups, the Personnel Department is also involved in an effort to enhance recruitment of multi-lingual staff into the city work force.

I might add that my office will be working with Councilman Kenney, a champion of Global Philadelphia, to make sure that we are coordinating our efforts with other initiatives throughout the city.

This is an issue not only required by law, and not only based on basic fairness, but also an economic development opportunity for the city.

The Managing Director's Office directs the operations of the Office of Emergency Management. While emergency management historically focused on major fires and other such emergencies, the world we live in has changed dramatically the nature and urgency of this work.

OEM actively seeks federal homeland security funds to support the city's increased terrorism preparedness and homeland security costs.

An urban areas security initiative grant is being used to fund a regional communications inoperability project and to continue equipping and training Police and Fire to the threats of terrorism.

In Fiscal Year '05, the urban area security initiative funds, which are expected to total $24 million for the region, will be used to address various command and control and security and government continuity issues. And we will continue to fight for Philadelphia getting its fair share, which means more money of the regional dollars.

The objectives of the Managing Director's Municipal Energy Office are to promote the efficient use of energy at city-owned facilities, to reduce energy costs, and develop and promote sustainable energy strategies.

In a memo dated April 5 to all commissioners and department and agency heads, I asked them to take a more hands-on approach to save energy, including turning off computers, printers, copiers, and of course lights at the end of the day.

Each office will be sent a monthly update on electric usage at their facility. Departments that do not reduce energy costs will be penalized with less money in future budget allocations.

And I have no doubt that Councilman Rizzo will ask me why the lights were on on Ben Franklin Parkway at 3 o'clock on Saturday afternoon. And I have asked the same question, Councilman Rizzo, and I hope to get an answer soon.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Do you want to know the answer? I think they were working on them, testing them.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Thank you.

Over the next few weeks, you will be hearing testimony from the departments for which I provide oversight. Some of the cuts may seem painful and some may seem inconsequential. We are leaving no stone unturned.

Let me assure you that we are committed to maintaining and improving core services. But to do that, it may mean weaning ourselves from noncore services that we can no longer afford.

There is nothing being done here that has not been done elsewhere in the private or public sectors.

In fact, I believe our medicine is not as nearly as bitter as the medicine that has been used in other cities; such as, New York and Chicago and Pittsburgh and Detroit and Cleveland and Minneapolis and Baltimore.

During the roaring 1990s, it was easy to overlook some of our challenges, but fiscal times have changed at the federal, state, and local levels throughout this nation.

For Philadelphia to increase its competitive viability, I believe the time has come to take tough but prudent actions, and it is our commitment to work with you to make these adjustments.

At this time I will respond to your questions and suggestions. Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: For the first go-around, each Councilman will be given five minutes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Managing Director, we had this conversation many months ago. And I know it is something that's bothering you, not just my concern.

I visited a specific community this weekend, and I noticed that the utility mark-outs were worse in this particular community.

What I mean by the utility mark-out -- I know you know what I mean, but for the rest -- the spray paint that's used, red for electric, water, telephone, cable.

The entire block that I visited was just overwhelmed with these markings. And this particular area is an area that I understand is going to be facing a major overhaul, including new sidewalks, et cetera.

But I think the problem citywide is something that I believe you have an interest in, and I know it concerns you, that we really need to get the utility companies

And I understand, coming from the utility industry, how important it is to make sure that safety is number one, so people don't strike these wires or underground facilities.

But it seems like it is so overdone lately. I don't know whether it is issues of liability, or what. And I'm not sure that the paint that they are using is a paint that has a few months of life associated with it.

But it seems as though the mark that they put on -- I wish I could figure out how I could get the paint to stay on my shingles as it does stay on the sidewalk.

But something really has to be done,

because the city is really starting to look bad with all this -- I say, with all these markings.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I agree with your comments, Councilman.

And since I have become Managing Director, I see a lot more things that bother me that I simply ignored before I became Managing Director. And this is one of them.

We, actually, will be having a meeting with the utility companies within a week or two discussing another large problem that we have, and that's that we don't dig up our streets one after another.

So the Streets Department comes in and does work, and the Water Department comes in, and Comcast comes in and does work, and then PECO, and PGW. It is a serious problem, and we will be proposing legislation to this chamber about that.

But we plan to sit down with the utility companies to discuss this issue, and I also plan to raise the issues of the paint.

But I think it is a shame when you

go down to -- it is a shame in any area. But when you go down to some of our tourist attractions, and we get done putting up great facilities there and so forth, and you just see this on the sidewalk or in the streets. It doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

So I am sure that our technology has progressed in a way that this issue can be dealt with.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I have asked the Administration, at least the Mayor's Office, last week -- I will ask you, I will ask the Police Commissioner -- in reference to the state police patrols on the Expressway, are we prepared, if we don't get paid the close to $6 million annually, are we prepared, or if they don't assume that responsibility, are we prepared to pull those police from the roadway?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I have discussed that with Commissioner Johnson. And based on his comments, I would be very reluctant to see that done. I think that becomes a safety issue for our citizens. And I don't think our citizens should be punished because we are not getting what's due us from Harrisburg, particularly when it comes to safety.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That doesn't give us much room to bargain, though. If they know that you are not going to pull the police, I think that you might take that money out of your Five-Year Plan today, if that's your position.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, that may be, and we will have to find ways to cover that. But it is an area that we will continue to discuss.

But I have raised it with the Police Commissioner, and that was his first reaction. But there may be another way of going about it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You talked about the Mural Arts Program. I guess it is called the sun dial that's in the center of the City Hall courtyard, it was put there maybe four or five years ago. Very beautiful piece of work.

I don't know if the Mural Arts Program handles it or not, but it is totally faded away to the point where it, again, looks like it is just not kept well. There is a lack of detail.

I know there is a lot of construction there. Could you tell me what the plan to refresh that is? Because that's the center of our city. People walk by there, tourists, and it looks like we have just abandoned ship there.

What exactly do we plan to do?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I do not know. I will get back to you with what we plan to do there.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you. I will wait for the next go-around, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Mr. Managing Director, you indicated in your statement that you are now prepared to expand the CLIP program initiative citywide, and you will be expanding enhanced enforcement and abatement through the city by targeted zip codes beginning this summer.

Can you tell us what zip codes that you are thinking of targeting?

MR. GOLDSMITH: This is something that we will do in conjunction with sitting down with City Council.

So Mr. Conway and his staff should be having meetings with all City Council people or representatives to discuss which zip codes they think are most urgent for us to go after and what particular violations in those zip codes they think that we should focus on.

I think, obviously, if we try to do it all at once, we won't be successful. So we want to grow into this.

But this will be done in a collaborative process with City Council.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we have a time frame?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We plan to start this summer. So hopefully these meetings can take place so we can start to get the targeted areas.

PRESIDENT VERNA: In the Mayor's revenue estimates contained in the budget and brief, your office is estimated to generate $10 million in strategic marketing fees.

Explain what that is, how will we generate these funds, and who will we generate the funds from?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I would prefer that -- my office is not responsible for that initiative. I can speak generally about it, but I'm not an expert on it. And that's, I think, being handled out of the Finance Department.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.

PICA has issued a paper on the Police Department which contains some rather harsh criticism.

Would you comment on the issues of poor management and lack of oversight and unnecessary personnel rules.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I think --

PRESIDENT VERNA: I know the Police Commissioner is coming in, but I thought this was a question that you would certainly have some knowledge on.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think the work rules are an issue of collective bargaining and the arbitration process that we will go through.

I think the Police Department is -- and Commissioner Johnson is hard at work making a lot of changes in the Police Department. Some of them that will address a lot of the issues raised in the PICA report.

And I think Deputy Commissioner Fox, who is now head of operations there, is doing gang-busters in looking at ways that we have to better utilize our personnel and so forth. I think the Police Commissioner will be able to address those.

I believe that reports like the PICA report, or any other report that comes out like that, are always useful. But we also have to realize that it is always difficult to compare one city to another city unless you really know what's going on and how that city functions, and so forth.

But we take those suggestions at heart, and we are making changes. And I'm sure the Police Commissioner will talk about those.

PRESIDENT VERNA: On Page 90 of your

detail, you reflect three full-time positions at $2.5 million for FY '05. Can you tell us how we get one of those jobs?

Can you explain how the vacant lot cleaning program is budgeted? When MOCS was in for their general budget testimony, they were asked what funds they received. They didn't mention the $2 million they received from the MDO's office.

Please explain how these funds are used and why they are in your budget.

MR. ANTHONY TORRE: Good morning, Madam President. For the record, my name is Anthony Torre. I am the Director of Administrative Services for the Managing Director's Office.

We have allocated to this division three individuals that work within our departments. The other costs associated with this element are from the MOCS, L & I, and Fairmount Park.

Those costs are transferred into the Managing Director's Office through an expenditure transfer. So those positions do not show up in our budget.

We actually use the services of other departments to accomplish our mission.

PRESIDENT VERNA: But they are not actually your employees?

MR. TORRE: No, they are not. They are employees of other departments; we just pay for their services.

MR. GOLDSMITH: The question you asked about the three people and the 1.5 million --

PRESIDENT VERNA: 2.5.

MR. GOLDSMITH: 2.5. If you total that, it is actually 41 people that are in that number.

If you see, they have crew chiefs. And if you go down the left-hand side there, you will see those numbers there.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That's rather unusual, to be budgeting it in this fashion, but it is what it is.

On Page 65 of your detail, you are asking for $90,000 for an equipment scheduling survey management program. Please explain what it is and why it is needed. Page 65.

MR. GOLDSMITH: This equipment scheduling survey, can someone from my staff explain that.

Kent Miller from the energy office will explain what that is.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

MR. KENT MILLER: Good morning. My name is Kent Miller, I am the Executive Director of the Municipal Emergency Office.

This project is part of an initiative that the Managing Director recently started, which is to promote energy conservation by the operating departments.

And one of the things that we want to focus on is a better scheduling of their heating and cooling equipment, turning the air-conditioning off in the evenings and on the weekends, turning the heat down, turning the lights off.

And this contract will allow us to collect information on what the scheduling practices are at a number of city facilities.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Didn't we just

have a discussion like this last year at budget time, about conservation of energy, about closing the lights off as we left our offices, et cetera, et cetera?

I recall your being here. I could swear.

MR. MILLER: Right. I don't remember that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Whether it was you or someone else, we did speak about it.

MR. MILLER: Well --

PRESIDENT VERNA: That has not been an ongoing program that we have been trying to have?

MR. MILLER: Well, it is something that we have been working on with the other departments for some time, but there's more to be done.

We have over 450 buildings in the city inventory. It is a big job. There are lots of facilities and lots of people who are involved in making these decisions.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So what kind of equipment are we talking about?

MR. MILLER: Well, these are -- well, we are talking about the heating equipment and the air-conditioning equipment. We want to improve the scheduling of those so that they are only on when they need to be.

But we need to know about what the current scheduling practices are, and this is what we are going to try and find out.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you think we would be saving $90,000 or more?

MR. MILLER: Probably much more.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Much more?

MR. MILLER: In fact, if you look at the utility budget, which is in the Department of Public Properties' budget, you will see there is a very significant reduction, I think it is about a million dollar reduction, in the utility budget for next year.

It is pretty ambitious. But, yes, I think we will easily find these savings.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. My last question, and then we will go on.

Mr. Director, on Page 21 of your detail, you are requesting $2,250,000 in grant funding for the Jackson versus Hendricks settlement.

What is the source of this funding, how are the funds used, and what are the terms and duration of the settlement?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me turn to someone from my staff. Ellen Steiker will answer that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

MS. ELLEN STEIKER: Good morning. This is Ellen Steiker, Deputy Managing Director.

The 2 million, or 2.1 million, Jackson settlement fund was part of the settlement of the lawsuit.

It is carried as a grants account in the Managing Director's Office. It is managed by a committee, which includes the plaintiff's attorney, David Rudovsky, and other appropriate staff from the city government to look at ways to improve services for prisoners leaving the system. It's focused primarily on jobs and other kinds of reentry programs.

It is one-time funding, it is being

handled very carefully because it is only one-time funding. And, so, the committee has actually been working for over a year; but a very small amount of the funds have yet been expended, so they have been reappropriated.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So we still have over $2 million in that fund?

MS. STEIKER: Close to that, yes. Although, more of it has been committed by now.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Good morning, Mr. Managing Director.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I wanted to go back to this Page 90 in the budget book. I didn't understand the answer.

There are four lines, the last three of which involve what appear to be 128 positions. The first line would seem to indicate, are these three new assistant

Managing Director positions for FY '05?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; that's what we currently have.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So tell me about Lines 2, 3, and 4.

MR. TORRE: Councilman, those are employees of other departments that we use --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You may need to identify yourself.

MR. TORRE: Anthony Torre, director of administrative services.

Councilman, those are the employees of other departments that we use to accomplish our mission in the vacant lot program.

Those costs are incurred by the department where they work, and then they are transferred to us through an accounting transfer.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why is that? I mean, why wouldn't you just leave them in the department?

MR. TORRE: Because I think we want to show -- to be consistent, we want to show the costs where they are actually incurred.

And they are actually incurred in this program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And are all of these employees presently on the payroll?

MR. TORRE: Yes, I believe they are.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And are these Civil Service positions?

MR. TORRE: I believe the -- and we can have, maybe, Tom Conway attest to this -- but I believe the L & I believe and the Fairmount Park Commission are Civil Service people, and probably the MOCS people are not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you feel pretty confident about that?

MR. TORRE: We can ask. Yes.

MR. GOLDSMITH: The budget director is nodding his head yes, so I feel confident.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: With regard to Line Item No. 4 and the MOCS, the president did ask the question from earlier, how do you get -- how are these jobs made available?

I mean, are they advertised, is there a test? I mean, how does it work?

MR. TORRE: Councilman, to be

truthful with you, I can't answer that question.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get back to you with an explanation.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So you are carrying them costwise in your budget, but we're not sure how they got there; is that what you are saying?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I would rather be precise than speculate with you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I can appreciate that.

So this is the vacant lot cleaning program. Now, do we bill the property owner for the service that's being provided here?

I am assuming this is a service; right?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me ask Mr. Conway to get up.

MR. TOM CONWAY: My name is Tom Conway, Deputy Managing Director of City of Philadelphia.

Yes, we do bill the property owners for the cost of the cleanup. After you do an inspection of the property, a violation is written through L & I. L & I is responsible for the billing process, as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how many lots do you expect to clean in FY '05?

MR. CONWAY: I believe it is around 17,000.

After the initial cleanup three years ago, a lot of the owners come into compliance and take care of the lots themselves now.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 17,000 lots?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get you the right number. But your question is, how many lots we expect to clean, Councilman?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay. We will get back to you with that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well how many did we clean last year?

MR. CONWAY: Roughly 12,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And what was the total billable on the lots? What did we bill for those services?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get back to you with that information.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I might as well ask this question, how much did we collect out of the billable?

Who would actually know the answers to these questions?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I have some of it here. I am just having a tough time putting my fingers on it. But as soon as I put my fingers on it, I will give you the answer.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right.

There was mention made in the testimony that the lots are cleaned on a citywide maintenance schedule. Is that schedule available?

MR. GOLDSMITH: It will be made available to you, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, if you could forward it to the Chair, I would greatly appreciate that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will do that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman, while

you are on that issue, may I just ask a question?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Sure. Absolutely.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I do notice that we have 87 people assigned to your department from MOCS. Are they part-time or full-time employees?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Both.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That are cleaning lots.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Some are full time, some are part time. We will give you a breakdown on that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Since I interfered with your line of questioning, you could ask one more question.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I get, like, three minutes back, right, it is like double the time.

All right. So you say you bill for the service, L & I is responsible for billing, but you don't know what the total amount was or how much we actually collected in the last

Fiscal Year?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We have it, we just are not able to put our finger on it right now.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You are trying to put your hands on it. Okay.

Let's talk about the testimony on Page 2, very quickly.

You have convened a school safety zone task force. Who is on this task force?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Representatives of the Police Department, Streets Department, School District, Traffic Court, Archdiocese, Planning Commission, and the Managing Director's Office.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Did you have any thought that you might want to involve someone from City Council?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. We are going to be reporting to City Council on a hearing this week, and obviously will be telling you where we are going and obviously interested in any recommendations.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I think I

would say, with the greatest respect that, I mean, somebody around here might either know or care about school safety.

But I think, I mean, it is this kind of effort that, if people really cared what we thought about it, we would be involved in the front end, as opposed to waiting to hear what everyone else thought about it.

It is just a concept.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In that regard, though, the Capital Budget, while you are trying to step up the efforts in this regard, the Capital Budget seems to indicate that there is $100,000 less for the upcoming Capital Budget in the flashing lights this year as compared to next year.

Is that helpful to the upgrade of school zone safety?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I think the school zone safety issue involves more than flashing lights. There are a bunch of other things that we are looking at in terms of traffic design.

We are also looking at the adequacy of the number of crossing guards we have, and so forth.

So I think we would have to look at the entire amount expended and what we would recommend should be increased. So I think that's just one small part of that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that, and I would agree. It just seemed like the two initiatives were in conflict with each other.

How many crossing guards do we have?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We have 1,034 authorized positions. At any given time we have vacancies, illnesses, vacations, et cetera.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how many corners need to be covered?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, this is what we are doing, Councilman. I have directed the Streets Department, the School District, and the Police to -- rather than starting at how many we have, I would really ask them to take a fresh look at how many we need by surveying all the corners there, and come back within 30 days.

Because I do want to have that answer while we are going through budget deliberations; to see how many in fact we really need, and then see where there is a gap. It may turn out we need more, may need less.

And then also take into consideration that there are days where we don't have someone where they should be because of an illness and so forth.

So if we came back with, let's say we needed 1,500 corners, we may need more crossing guards, just like you need substitute teachers and so forth. So that's the analysis we are going through.

And I have asked, you know, this task force had a meeting last week, that's one of the things they are going back and hopefully have the answer.

And that's, obviously, something we will be sharing with City Council because it is likely we may have to adjust the budget in some way, shape, or form, depending on what these answers are.

So it is a comprehensive look at everything.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you. My time expired.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you Councilman.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Good morning, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Good morning, Mr. Managing Director.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I am impressed by the work that you have started to do with your fleet reduction program. I think it is commendable.

As you work to reduce the city's fleet, is there any impact on parking spots?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Are you asking for one?

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: No; I have one.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, you know, parking is another issue.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: If we need to give it up, I will give it up.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know.

One of the things we are, frankly, doing is, we are having discussions with the Philadelphia Parking Authority.

I believe that we are entitled to 200 discounted spots at the Love Park parking lot. And we are dealing with them to define what a discount is that we think is appropriate for us.

So I think if we can get that number at the right amount, that will help ease some of the parking issues we have.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: If you are going to remove cars from, for example, 15th Street, are we going to rent those spaces? Have you thought along those lines?

MR. GOLDSMITH: 15th Street.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: 15th Street, between Arch and JFK.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't think we have any plans to do that.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: But if you are removing cars from your fleet, I suspect that you won't have your cars on that -- with the reduction, you wouldn't have as much cars there.

And what are we going to do? Are we just going to make them available to the public for free, or do you have any --

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. We will have to see as this program unfolds.

But the parking spots on 15th Street, as well as on JFK, are designated for authorized employees; they are not designated by car.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I understand that.

But with your fleet reduction, you are going to have less cars.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: What happens to those spaces that are going to be available? Are we just going to make them available for the public to come and park, or are we going to charge them for parking?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think it is a legitimate point.

And we also spend a lot of money, I forget the exact amount, throughout the city on parking. And it may be, to the extent that we get spaces opening up on 15th Street, is to take cars out of our garages, where we are paying money, and put them on 15th Street.

So we will have to look at doing an analysis of all that.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Concerning -- regarding the collection of reimbursement and reimbursables from the Police Department and overtime, do you have any numbers regarding the overall level of reimbursable overtime? And how successful have you been collecting the reimbursement?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I believe that there is --

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: You made mention of this back in March.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. I believe

there is about a million dollars of delinquent money that's owed the city. I think approximately $223,000 has been collected, and we are pursuing the others.

And we will give you more details on that, if so desired.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Managing Director, how long did it take you to collect the $223,000?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know. That comes out of the Law Department.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Any ideas? Three months, six months?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know the answer.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Will you get that information for us, please?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get that information, sure.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: When did you become the Managing Director of the city?

MR. GOLDSMITH: February 3, 2003. It is seared in my head.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: 2003?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Not 2002?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No, 2003. I have just been here 15 months, 16 months. It seems like forever, I will tell you.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: In the little bit over a year that you have been at this position -- and I must admit that you and your two predecessors who have served under the Street Administration, all three of you have been very qualified individuals, at least from my point of view and what I know of you and your two predecessors.

But I know that you get these reports. I don't know what they are called. But I know you get these updated reports that tell you how your money is being spent; for example, in the Police Department.

At some point you had to see, probably early on, when you get these periodic reports, that the overtime costs in the Police Department were starting to bust or burst the surplus of this city.

How did you react to that? Did you

send a memo to someone, and to who? I mean, how did you react to, you know, that fact in front of you that this overtime was starting to put a big dent in our surplus?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me, if I may, just digress for a minute while we are talking about the number of Managing Directors.

Someone told me the other day that from 1952 do 1980 there were five Managing Directors. From 1980 to now, there have been 11. So I don't know what that says, but it tells me something.

To be honest with you, I did not receive reports on the amount of overtime; that is something that we have just started. Because overtime is a cost of doing business, but it can also be too costly.

But we have been, as I had said in my testimony, we project a $17 million reduction in overtime in Fiscal Year '04 over '03. So that's -- it is about a little bit over 10 percent.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So you don't get a report on how the budget is being used by the Police Department on a regular basis?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; we have, I think there are quarterly meetings with the Budget Office and the operating departments on how they are performing, yes.

But I am now asking -- I am now asking for more in-depth reports on the issue of overtime.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of order.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman, your time is up and Councilman Rizzo has a point of information.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Managing Director, could you clear something up?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I am confused.

I constantly hear that the setup now that the Administration Secretary of Safety -- does the Police Commissioner report to you or doesn't he?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I believe the Police Commissioner reports to the Managing Director under the city Charter.

I think all commissioners, in the

end of the day, report to the Mayor. The Mayor is elected by the people, the Managing Director is not.

But the Police Commissioner and I meet on a regular basis. And I believe under the city Charter, the Police Commissioner reports to the Mayor.

But every Mayor that I have known has always had a special relationship with the Police Commissioner, because I don't think there is any more important issue in the City of Philadelphia than public safety.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So does the Police Commissioner report to you?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Fire Commissioner?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: All the other titles that have secretary, Secretaries of education --

MR. GOLDSMITH: Secretary of Education does not.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Just the

operating departments?

MR. GOLDSMITH: The operating departments do, Secretary of Housing does not.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I have some more questions, Madam President.

So who does report on a more periodic time frame, who does the Police Commissioner or whoever is responsible for that in his office report to who about how the money is being spent in the Police Department?

If you are not getting -- I always thought that you guys, Managing Directors, had this binder that you went to to see how -- you know, and the papers that are put in the binder, on how the money was spent that week or in the last couple of weeks.

So if it is not you, who is the Police Department reporting to on their expenditures?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Those reports go to the Budget Office, and the Budget Director and

I meet probably every day on a whole bunch of issues.

What we are doing now, there are some issues that I am taking, you know, more hands-on interest in. And overtime is one of them because of the cost of overtime and because of the budget situation that we find ourselves in.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Mr. Goldsmith, so when you came to the job in February of 2003 -- and correct me if I am wrong -- and you saw that the overtime in the Police Department was eating up at our surplus, did you and the Budget Director talk about that, and what did you do about it?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't recall. I think that -- I don't believe that at that point in time, when I first got here, that I was as aware of those issues.

But the budget issues and the performance of the operating departments is something that the Budget Director and I have had -- we have meetings on with the operating departments.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So you are saying that you did not look at that when you first came on the job, but you are looking at it now?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Absolutely.

There are a lot of things that I didn't look at when I first came on the job. I was just learning the job. I didn't have any training period. I came into a couple of snow storms and everything like that.

And I am getting much more equipped about this job. And there are a lot of things that I am looking and doing now that I didn't do, like anyone going into a new job.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So the Mayor nor anyone in the Mayor's Office told you that the protection of taxpayers' money was not the number one priority of your job?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Now, I think the number one priority of the Managing Director is the performance of operating departments and so forth, working in conjunction with the Finance Department and the Budget Office. We marry the cost of providing quality services.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Ramos, your time was up some time ago. I am afraid you are going to have to wait for the second go-around.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President. Good morning.

Good morning, gentlemen and lady. I have a couple of questions about the operations. But before I do that, I would like to ask you a question about your staffing.

How many deputies do you have?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Five deputies, down from seven.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: How many assistant deputies do you have?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Assistants are -- 20 assistant -- that have the title of Assistant Managing Director.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Assistant Managing Director?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: How many do you have? How many Assistant Deputy Managing Directors do you have?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Assistant Managing Directors would be 20, and 5 Managing Directors, Deputy Managing Directors.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: 5 Deputies and 5 Assistant deputies?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. The title would be Assistant Managing Director and Deputy Managing Director.

There are five Deputy Managing Directors, 20 Assistant Managing Directors.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. Can you, before you leave today -- I am assuming you don't have a level under that, or do you, under assistants?

MR. GOLDSMITH: There would be secretaries and analysts and things like that.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. Can you, before you leave today, get me a chart, staffing chart, starting with yourself, the deputies and the assistants, and give me the duties and responsibilities of those individuals?

One of the things that has been somewhat confusing to me is who reports to who.

I know that in some instances you have people that have relationships with the MOCS who actually report directly to the Managing Director's Office or deputy in the Managing Director's Office, but not to the head of the MOCS.

And similar types of situations throughout the government as it relates to the Managing Director and some of the service deliveries. And I am not really sure who reports to who or who is ultimately responsible to who.

So if you can get me a chart that tells me who reports to who, who is responsible for what, that would be extremely helpful.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure. We can do that.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Vehicles. And I want to, like Councilman Ramos, compliment the

Administration for attempting to -- in aggressively seeking to reduce the fleet.

What I would like to ask you is the criteria associated with determining fleet reduction.

Who, in terms of employees, has the ability to have a vehicle during the course of the work day, a vehicle overnight, how the vehicles are utilized during the course of the day, what process is set up to determine who gets what vehicle during the course of the day and who gets to take it home.

Talk to me about that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me tell you, and we will get you more detail. Let me tell you how -- we have gone through this particular process.

We went out and, with the support of Public Financial Management, developed a number of criteria in looking at whether our automobiles were being effectively utilized.

And, for example, one of the criteria that was looked at was how much usage they were getting. And we were able to do that by getting the gas mileage that each car used during the year.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Did you say you went out and did what? You hired somebody?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Public Financial Management was doing that.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Who is that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Public Financial Management is a consulting firm, which is located in Philadelphia, PFM.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: PFM?

MR. GOLDSMITH: PFM, yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: When did you hire them?

MR. GOLDSMITH: When did we hire them? I will have to get you the exact date.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Can you include the cost of the contract?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure.

July of '03, and we will get you the cost.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: July '03.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Can you get me

the cost of that contract?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Go ahead.

MR. GOLDSMITH: So looking at what other cities have done and so forth, they have developed criteria, trying to determine whether the cars were being adequately used.

And some of those criteria -- and we will get you a list of the complete criteria -- was the mileage, which we determined by gas.

So if someone was only filling their car up a couple of times a month, it led to the question of, why did that individual have a full-time car.

We were looking at the cost of maintenance of those cars, a number of other criteria which we will get you.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Excuse me. Fleet Management wouldn't have that information?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, fleet will have all that information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Wouldn't Fleet

Management know the cost of maintaining a vehicle?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. And they were the ones to provide all the information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So why did we hire somebody to go to Fleet Management to ask them what the cost of maintaining a vehicle was?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We were trying to establish a process that helped us determine what the criteria should be, what other cities have done.

We were looking at what other cities have done to reduce their fleet, as well as the private sector, and so forth. PFM brought a particular experience to that level.

Fortunately, our Fleet Management has the capacity and the capabilities of providing those types of information because of our automated fuel system and the records that we have.

But in designing the program and the criteria, we felt it was important to have a consultant that could help us do that.

After we established the criteria, we sat down with every department and said, this is what we have found about your cars: Here is the car, this is how many miles are on it, this is the gas, et cetera, et cetera, using those criteria.

And then sat down with each department head, or whoever was assigned by that department head to sit down with this group that was doing this analysis.

We started out with what I will call the staff departments, as opposed to the operating departments. So we started out with things like Procurement, Finance Department, Managing Director's Office. But we have not gone to the operating departments as of yet.

And then each department was able to say -- if we said, based on our analysis, here are five cars we see that don't meet the criteria, we can't justify having a car for this, a full-time car for this department, each department was given a period of time to get back to us and tell us why they thought they needed the car.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Did PFM do all this work, or was it some of that done internally?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; this was done by both fleet, the Managing Director's Office, and the Budget Office.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So what exactly did PFM do? Did they access the information and turn to over to the city, and then you did your analysis? What did they do?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know the answer off of top of my head. I would have to get you the precise role that they played.

But I think they helped us do the analysis, once we got the information helped us organize it.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Did they get the information or did we get the information?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. We got the information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: We, the city, got the information and then turned it over to PFM, or did they get the information and turn it over to us?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; I believe we got the information.

They probably had some computer program, software programs, to organize the information in a way that we thought we could compare each department in a fair and objective point of view.

So it was -- but I will have to get you more details as to who played what role in this.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right. I know my time is up. I will follow up on the next round.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, Mr. Goldsmith.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I want to have some followup questions to the expanded code enforcement, quality of life program.

One of the biggest constituent

service areas and calls that we get are about quality-of-life-type crimes, I will call them, out in neighborhoods.

And I just have some questions regarding how -- I know that everyone says this program has been very successful in Council District 6. And I just have some questions around the process and what helps make it successful or not successful.

In your testimony, you said that CLIP addresses high weeds, dumping of private property, graffiti, vandalism, and noncompliance with trash collection schedule.

What are you doing, or is it a problem -- it may not be a problem in District 6. I know it is a problem in my area. And it just seems very, very hard, very difficult, to do anything about, and that's just about the fact that people don't like to clean up after their dogs.

Have you encountered those kind of problems out there? And, if so, what are you doing? And are these people getting citations or is there abatement? What's happening in that area?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me ask Deputy Managing Director Conway to talk about that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Dogs in their backyard, not so much on the streets.

MR. CONWAY: With regards to dog feces, there is a major problem with it at playgrounds, so on and so forth. We would have the signs posted with the Streets Department to inform the people to walk their dog on a leash, to pick up after their dog.

With regards to it being on private property, we would issue a code violation notice. We do not abate dog feces.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I know you might want to laugh, but this is a really major problem in my district.

I just got a six-page letter from a constituent dealing with this same issue year after year at the same location.

And at some point, I am really a Council member that calls for stronger enforcement. And I agree that maybe we do need to raise the fine from $25 to $75. We have to do something to get people to comply.

But it is really a big issue. In the summer people are complaining they cannot open their windows. And many parts of my district has large back yards, and it is really, really, really a nuisance out in the neighborhood. I am sure other districts have that similar type problem.

So that's problem that I would really like you to -- maybe we can figure out what we can do to get people to clean up behind these dogs and clean up this dog feces.

MR. CONWAY: If it was one specific location that was a problem property, we would forward that information to L & I, try and get it into a court system, enforce the property owner to clean that up. But that would have to go through the courts.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All right.

Speaking of the courts, one of the questions I have had is that, if you have had to take anyone in the CLIP test area to court, how are the courts handling this?

We have a big problem in our

district -- I'm sure in other Council districts the same -- with short-term dumping and just dumping, period.

And one of the complaints from a couple of the police officers that I spoke to that are on that type of duty, where they are monitoring these short-term dumping sites, is that they really don't -- that the MC judges do not take it serious when these people are brought to court.

And the attitude is just about, oh, why did you bring this here to me. I mean, this is like a nuisance type of hearing they don't want to be bothered with.

Have you heard that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We have heard that. In fact, I have asked the City Solicitor to help us work on that issue, and actually just sent him a memo outlining the problem that we see from our end, and see if we can't come up with a solution to it.

But I think it is a problem that we have heard many times.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: These

short-term dumping sites are really, really bothersome to people in neighborhoods.

I was at a community meeting the other night, and I couldn't believe the number of sites that people gave me. And, you know, people are using that sort of as a trash collection yard.

I mean, you would almost think it was a city yard, where you could actually bring your trash to. And these places are all over my district. I am sure they are all over other Council districts.

I also want to talk about the vacant property, the vacant lot program.

Can you give us an inventory of the equipment? And how is this vacant lot -- is it divided up by neighborhood, by sections of the city? I guess in terms of their storage yards.

Because one of the problems in my district in particular is, when the crew comes out to clean, they don't have the adequate equipment, the large pieces of equipment, to use on some of the lots where they may need a front-end loader or some of the other types of equipment that's used to effectively do a good job.

So I would really like to know that, what equipment do you have, and how is it divided up citywide?

Because I think the people that come out in the area that I serve are getting the short end of the stick, they don't really have adequate equipment.

MR. CONWAY: The vacant lot program is broken down into three separate zones, basically about 10,000 lots per zone. With regards to the equipment, we can get you a breakdown of it, what's assigned by zone.

What happens is that the surveyor will go out, take a look at the lots in the area, determine what type of equipment is required, report back to the supervisor.

When we started the program, we did need a lot of large equipment, such as front-end loaders, dump trucks.

As the program progressed, it has become more of just litter and high weeds on the lots, so we don't need as much large equipment.

But we can get you a breakdown of what's assigned by area.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I agree that some of the lots you don't need the large equipment, and it has gotten into more of a litter removal kind of program.

But there are some lots in my district that need the large pieces of equipment, but it has not been available. So, therefore, we still have -- and if you want me to, I can give you a list of exactly what I am talking about.

MR. CONWAY: If you would provide us with a list, we will get the equipment out there that is required.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All right. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

Just following Councilwoman Miller's thought in terms of the short-term dumping.

I notice on Page 55 of the budget detail, you state that the city will spend 150,000 in federal grant dollars for police overtime for surveillance and arresting graffiti and short-dump offenders.

If we have police that are assigned to do surveillance around short dumping, why is it that we can't seem to catch the dumpers, when we report constantly the same locations where they are dumping?

MR. CONWAY: The funding for the graffiti and the surveillance is for the local law enforcement block grant dollars. And that is used to reimburse the Police Department to do surveillance at locations. It is usually out of the neighborhood services unit. And the Police Department --

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: That doesn't answer my question.

If we are using the police to do surveillance around short dumping, why can't we catch the people that are short dumping, if you have a chronic location, as Councilwoman mentioned, and we have reported at times?

You can't seem to catch the guys. And if we have money that's being spent to provide surveillance for that, there ought to be some return for the dollars spent.

MR. CONWAY: I don't have the answer for that. I don't know how many short dumpers were arrested within the last year, but I am sure the Police Department would have those figures.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Maybe they will be able to give us that information, at least for these police who are doing the surveillance.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will try to get you the information.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Well, they will testify, I am sure. They are here and may have an answer for it.

Or why are the federal funds being used and not General Fund dollars allocated for the Police Department for this?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, we try to use

federal funds and state funds to help us, particularly at a time when operating dollars are pretty scarce.

So if we can get grants, we would prefer to do that. It is simply a question of economics.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So there is no -- although the dollars come out from your office, there is no report back to you around the effectiveness of the expenditure of these dollars?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I have not seen one. I would certainly ask for one.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: We would like to know how many short-dumping perpetrators are arrested, and where, to determine if the money is well spent.

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's fine.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: According to -- you may have answered this question. I am sorry if you have.

You talk about the quality of life section, the CLIP program, to be expanded in targeted zip codes this summer.

I imagine you will work with the Councilpeople on selecting those zip codes?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's correct.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: How does the expansion of this program in targeted zip codes impact on the ability to provide these services to those areas not in the zip codes?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, what I see as the targeted zip code approach is, where we are going to be, I will call, proactive because of the nature of the issues in the zip codes that you would identify in your councilmanic district, for example. And there we are going to have a much more systemic proactive approach to it.

In other areas we will be, as we are today, more complaint-driven. So if you have issues in another zip code, or something like that, and we receive a complaint, we are going to deal with that.

But I think that there are certain areas which we are trying to identify, saying, because of your knowledge of that district and what's going on in particular problems, this is where we want to be proactive and we have to take a more aggressive approach.

But for other issues that come up, we will respond as we do today.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: You are going to create a problem for us, because we have to make a selection of where it is in the program. And then the other residents of our districts, you know, get upset because they don't get the program, and why don't we have the program.

And that's all you hear when you go out to a community meeting, why did you select that community over another.

You know -- and you know how I feel about the whole program. I think that enforcement should be citywide.

MR. GOLDSMITH: And we plan to make it citywide. But we plan to do it, you know, proactively where we see a problem.

You may have a zip code that you have identified for high weeds, for example, and another zip code you have identified for something else.

But some zip codes simply don't have the problem that require us to put the resources there, but they may have another type of problem that we want to address.

So we want to just get a little more targeted and surgical on it, because we don't have the resources to just blanket the whole city to do it.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: And I agree that, but the constituents don't believe that. They all believe that they have the worst problems in their neighborhood.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I have been out there, and I understand. And sometimes they think their neighborhood is the only neighborhood.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: You, on Page 24 of the budget detail, the city will receive a grant to respond to threats of biological terrorism. Under this grant, the city will enter into a 452,000-plus personal services contract.

Who will receive these contracts? I noticed they were -- also this money was appropriated in 2004. Who were the contractors? And will those contractors receive the contracts in 2005, carry over?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me ask Mike Nucci to handle that, if he can.

MR. TORRE: Councilwoman, on this particular grant, we are not sure this money is going to come in. The money has been trickling in from the federal government for biological threats and terrorism.

So this is money that we may get next year. This is not cast in stone. And the money is used to be appropriated among categories at this point in time, but no specific identities for any of the dollars.

We just kind of spread it in there and hope we get the money next year.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Has the federal government given you any indication that it will come in, for you to put it in the budget?

Have you applied for it?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Introduce yourself. Sit down and introduce yourself.

MR. MICHAEL NUCCI: Mike Nucci, I am

the Director of Emergency Management, part of the Managing Director's Office.

That particular budget item is the Metropolitan Medical Response System, I think you are referring to.

We have gotten in the past in the neighborhood of $250,000 a year. And, basically, that was to replace the pharmaceuticals that expire for our MMRS team, that's Metropolitan Medical Response System.

Which, basically, in layman's terms is the three decon teams, decontamination teams, that are within the fire department; and the emergency medical services, which has the anecdotes for nerve agents, things like that.

They expire in about 30 months, that's the shelf life of these things. So that money is to replace the expired pharmaceuticals.

We expect that probably for next year that particular program will disappear and will all be rolled into the whole homeland security program.

What's happening at the federal level, a lot of these smaller programs that have been going on for a number of years are being kind of rolled into one big program.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Well, why would this money not be appropriated under the Police Department?

MR. NUCCI: Under the Police Department?

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Or the Fire Department. Why is it in the Managing Director's department?

MR. NUCCI: Because my office is responsible through the state and the federal government for coordinating all the homeland security funds.

So what we do is get lists of what the Fire Department needs, what the Police Department needs, and then the money gets appropriated accordingly.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam President. Councilman Nutter had raised some issues relative to school pedestrian safety.

And I just wanted to make sure that everyone knew that on Thursday at 2:00 p.m. the Joint Committee of Legislative Oversight and Public Safety will be conducting a hearing to discuss this.

We have experts coming in from Phoenix, Baltimore, and Florida, three governments that actually do a very good job at school pedestrian safety.

They are going to come in and tell us what they have done, and we are going to try to get our arms around this a little more.

I know the Managing Director has been looking at the issue and going to make recommendations, also. But I just wanted to make sure people knew that that hearing is at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday.

I want to go back for a moment to questions that Councilman Ramos was raising relative to overtime.

There are regular cabinet meetings,

aren't there?

You attend regular cabinet meetings. How often are they held?

MR. GOLDSMITH: They are now being held once every two weeks. They had been held once a week.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Once a week for the 15 months that you were there?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And who attends those meetings?

MR. GOLDSMITH: The Mayor, Chief of Staff, Secretary of External Affairs, Secretary of Planning Commission, Managing Director, City Solicitor, Commerce Director, Police Commissioner. I think I have got everyone.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And in that 15-month period, the issue of overtime never came up?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I am not saying it didn't come up.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It was discussed.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We discussed a lot of different issues at cabinet meetings.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, relative specifically to overtime, what was discussed?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I can't recall. Because generally it is not those types of meetings.

The Mayor would also have meetings with the operating departments in clusters, that we would get together on a regular basis and discuss issues.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Would the finance people also be there?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So on the small cluster meetings, was the issue of overtime raised?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Issue of finances were raised, issues of overtime were raised.

And then we would have, I believe, quarterly meetings with the Budget Director and his staff, the Managing Director and his staff, with the individual operating departments to go over their budgets.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I wouldn't be overstating if I said that the issue of overtime is a serious issue relative to our $227 million deficit; is that a fair statement?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think overtime is an issue that needs to be addressed, yes.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But it is a major issue in this 227 hole? I mean, it is pension issues, it is overtime --

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't want to minimize the issue of overtime, because I think it is an important issue.

I wouldn't say it is a major issue that has created the issue we find ourselves in. I think health and pension costs are more.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I know they are more. But how much did we spend on overtime in that 15-month period?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We spent $134 dollars in Fiscal Year '03. We are projected to spend $117 million in this Fiscal Year.

So I think, you know, we have

decreased the overtime. And I think the Police Department has also decreased the overtime, when you look at their numbers.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I am not discounting the fact that overtime is an issue you are trying to deal with and that you are reducing it.

But I can't believe that of the 134 million I think in '03, the smallest businesses in the city, when they do their analysis and sit down and look at their quarterlies or look at their monthlies, they do look at personnel costs.

And I can't believe that no one in that room of intelligent people, whether in the larger cabinet meeting or in a smaller cluster meeting, ever said, wow, do you know what we are looking at here, and do you know what we are going to be looking at next year if we don't get a handle on this now.

I mean, to me, that that discussion didn't happen scares more than the fact that we spent quite crazy in '03 on overtime.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I have,

unfortunately, given the wrong impression. Those conversations took place all the time.

If you sit in the meetings with the Budget Director and his staff with the operating departments, every line is gone through. And it is gone through in terms of what's going on in their department, both fiscally and how is it -- how does it align itself to the service measurements that we are trying to get.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So the department heads were aware of the problem, but no measures were taken to deal with it until after '03?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think measures were taken.

I think if you look at Fiscal Year '04, which I would be glad to provide you, you will see a significant reduction in the Police Department overtime. You will see a $17 million, almost a 10 percent, decrease in overtime.

Some overtime you are going to have just because you are going to have it. And what we have to do is gauge the appropriate amount of overtime.

We have the Greek Picnic. The Greek Picnic is a million dollars worth of overtime. The Mardis Gras last year was $177 million -- $177,000 of overtime. This year we decreased it to $138,000.

These are events, unfortunately, that, to some extent are outside of our control. Now, how we man these events and how we deploy them are things that we were working at.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But those events weren't the bulk of the overtime in the Police Department, were they?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think when you look at --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Wasn't Safe Streets really the bulk of the overtime in the Police Department?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Safe Streets is a good chunk of the overtime.

And I think if you look at court overtime, which we have discussed, is a good chunk of the overtime.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I just find it incredulous that we saw this coming and really did nothing to stop it from happening until after we are in a hole for $227 million.

As a member of the Board of Directors of this company, despite the lack of information we receive, I find it very difficult to believe.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Let me move a minute to the CLIP program.

It is currently operating in which districts now?

MR. GOLDSMITH: 6, 7, and 10.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And how was that decision made, to operate in 6, 7, and 10?

Who made the decision on 6, 7, and 10, as opposed to 1, 2, and 4, or 8, 9, and 1? I mean, how did that happen?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me have Tom help me out a little bit, and then I will take it from there. Because CLIP started before I got here.

MR. CONWAY: When the Mayor's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative was unfolding, basically we worked with different people to find out what the quality of life problems were in their area.

Councilwoman Krajewski's staff and the Managing Director's Office worked on a plan together to come up with the CLIP concept.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So that was for 6. How did 7 and 10 get it?

MR. CONWAY: Well, after the 6th Councilmanic District was swept, we geographically just moved into the next Council districts.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Geographically south is District 1. Geographically -- I mean, the 6th District borders on two other districts, I would guess. I mean, three other districts.

I just need to know -- I guess the bottom line is, do you really think it is fair for the rest of the city not to have this -- and I applaud Councilwoman Krajewski's office for having the idea. I applaud other Council Members for trying to get it.

But do you really think Managing Director -- Tom, I am not going to ask you to answer, because you are the operations guy on the ground -- do you really think it is fair that people throughout the city, who have similar problems as in the 6th and 7th and 10th do not get that kind of support and do not get that kind of service for no good reason that I can understand?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think the program was started as a pilot program. And I think pilot programs always -- you always make a decision where you are going to start a pilot program. The decision was made.

I think what we are trying to do, because of the success of the program, is to expand this in a way which we think is affordable, which is in a way that is fair, and can do the work.

But I think it is also a mistake to think because CLIP wasn't in individual areas, that nothing was done in those areas. My office has been, and I am sure my predecessors before we, very responsive to the requests that members of this Council have.

We can show you the number of CVNs written in councilmanic districts for trash and litter, for high weeds, for graffiti, and so forth.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But there are no press conferences for those, there are no stories in the paper for those. There is no, you know, extolling the virtues of this program for those. That's just done on a regular day-to-day basis.

And, again, Councilwoman Tasco raised this, and others have raised it. Can't you understand that the average taxpayer living in the 1st or 2nd or 4th or 9th watches this stuff and says, I have as much a problem with high weeds and dog feces and beat-up properties as anybody, why am I an orphan here?

I just don't think it is fair. And I think that the decisions were made in a political way, which makes it even further unfair, that these neighborhoods -- I mean Council Verna's district I know clearly, because I live across the street from it, has serious problems. There is no reason in the world why that shouldn't be part of the CLIP program.

And why we are delaying the implementation of this, to me, is just unbelievable.

I am sorry. I think my time went up.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Councilman.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Goldsmith, this is not where I was when we left, but you just raised it about the overtime issue.

You mentioned that the Greek Picnic was a million dollars in overtime?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I believe that's what my records reflect.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What was the overtime before the size of the Greek Picnic dramatically reduced over the past couple of years?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't have that information. I could try to get it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But you just happen to know that it was a million dollars last year?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What was the overtime for Welcome America?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will get that for you in a minute.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Madam Chair, I would only ask that I not be charged the time in terms of delay in getting a response.

I think this is -- I think we may be seeing the start of a new tactic, a new stratagem created where you ask a question in 15 seconds and it takes 4 minutes and 45 seconds to get an answer.

I am not paranoid, but it is just -- I am starting to notice a pattern.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will have to get you the answer, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I knew that. Two minutes later I knew I was getting the old, got to get back to you. Okay. All right.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Do you want to know if it was more than a million dollars? Maybe he can answer that question.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Welcome America is about a week. So, I mean, you know, Greek Picnic is a day. It's been decreasing in participants.

I mean, I just thought that it was interesting that that, you know, gets highlighted as one of the major cost factors for an event that has, with a great amount of support certainly from the city, turned itself around from some difficult times some years ago; but in a discussion of overtime, is now highlighted as, you know, one of the great drivers of overtime costs.

I mean, how many events do we have a year, major events? Either on the Parkway or out in the park?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Councilman, what I

was suggesting, I was not trying to put the overtime problem on Greek Picnic. I was citing the Greek Picnic as I would the Mardis Gras, and I would site snow storms and so forth that are events that are somewhat out of our control.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me answer your question.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Welcome America is actually in our control. I think it is our event. So, what's the overtime.

MR. GOLDSMITH: The actual cost for Fiscal Year '03 was $462,904, of which --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: This is for Welcome America?

MR. GOLDSMITH: This is for Welcome America. Which Public Property was $76,000; Streets Department, $17,000; Recreation, $12,000; L & I, $20,000; Police, $250,000; Fairmount Park, $77,000; and Health Department, $601; and Fire, $9,000.

So the total cost that we have is

460 -- approximately $463,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, how many people came to the Greek Picnic last year? You are really eating into my time here, but now we have a situation.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Since the Greek Picnic -- we don't have those numbers, since it is not an official event.

I think, clearly --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I think it is an official event.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Certainly the audience in the park was significantly reduced.

Down on South Street and on North Broad Street and so forth, there were a number of people.

But we have to prepare for the worst on some of these events.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

How is it possible that a one-day event could generate a million dollars in overtime, but a week-long event would only generate 400 -- what was that number, $462,000? How is that possible?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think it is probably the amount of police presence that was assumed that was needed at these different events.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So we have an extraordinary planning for the worst with the Greek Picnic.

How long is the Welcome America celebration?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I'm not sure. I think it is about ten days.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Ten days?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And no particular extraordinary planning goes into that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Oh, extraordinary planning goes into that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's the total cost of the Welcome America event?

MR. GOLDSMITH: According to my numbers that I am showing here, was $463,000 for Welcome America.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I thought you said those were the overtime costs?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I have these as -- I have these as actual costs.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The actual costs?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: For the whole event? You are saying just for the city?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. This is what I am showing, I have to figure out whether it is the entire cost or just the costs we are showing for departmental costs and whether it is overtime.

Is that overtime?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would be hard-pressed to believe that the entire Welcome America celebration costs $400,000.

MR. GOLDSMITH: It is all costs.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: It is what costs?

MR. GOLDSMITH: It is all costs for city departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That wasn't my question. My question was, what is the total cost of putting on the Welcome America celebration?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Since I am just responsible for providing the city services, and not for the entire event, I will have to get you answers to that. I don't have them here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, who would know that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know. I would have to check.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, doesn't your office do the bulk of the coordination of that particular event?

MR. GOLDSMITH: If you are asking total costs --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Excuse me. Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Just a point of information. So the $462,000, whatever number that was, is not a correct number; is that what you are saying, Mr. Managing Director?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Those are city costs. Welcome America has other costs associated with it because it involves other people.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So the costs could have been greater than the 400,000-some dollars; right?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure. Entertainment costs and so forth.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: But you don't have those numbers?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I do not. These are the costs of the city departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So who is in charge of the event?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think Welcome America is -- basically comes out of the City Rep's office, but I'm not totally positive.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I am a little hard-pressed to leave the record the way it is.

Because I think it has a tremendous amount of discrepancy, given this conversation. Because it is not possible that

that event could only cost $462,000 under any set of circumstances.

And, to be honest with you, given the number of events in the various venues, I would actually question how you could have ten days of events all over the city and that cost would be half of a one-day event probably involving much fewer people.

So what I would like to ask, Mr. Managing Director, is if you could have someone -- because you have a fair number of bodies with you here today -- have somebody figure out who is in charge of the event, what the total costs are.

And I would like to know what the answers to those questions are before we close this record on this particular issue.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I think someone just joined the Director at the table.

MR. ROBERT ALLEN: My name is Bob Allen. I am Assistant Managing Director.

I think I can help with some of the issues here because I have worked on some of the numbers and have developed the costs for special events with the various departments.

Welcome America costs far more than $450,000, but a great deal of that is expensed directly to the event sponsors. And, so, what you see here on this page are only the direct city costs.

There are many events involved in that program all week long. And although I don't have the total cost, a lot of it is managed through the City Representative's office, and it is dealt directly with the sponsors.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And do the event sponsors pick up any of the city costs? Are they built into the program.

MR. ALLEN: A portion of what we have here has been reimbursed to the city by event sponsors, but not all.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Then --

MR. ALLEN: In other words, the event costs far more than the sponsors provide.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would like to see a full breakdown of the entire event. I would like to get a better understanding of the overtime costs involved.

And then I would like to see for some of the other events that take place in the city, major events, what those costs are, as well.

MR. ALLEN: We have that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If we are going to have a full overtime discussion, I would like to be able to compare.

MR. ALLEN: We have that detail available.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

And that wasn't even the question that I planned to ask, now my time is up. So I will wait. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Madam Chair, I am looking at Councilman Kelly who wanted to ask a question. He hasn't had an opportunity to go on the first round. I will defer to him.

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PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

I just want to follow up on Councilman Nutter with that Welcome America program.

I noticed you do have corporate sponsors for that event. Are there any other events that have corporate sponsors that contribute greatly to the city's part or share of this, of putting on these events?

MR. GOLDSMITH: For Welcome America or for other --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: For any other event. I know Welcome America, it costs over $462,000, but there are corporate sponsors who contributed greatly to that. And I would like to know how much they do contribute.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get you that breakdown.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Could you give us that breakdown?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Are there any other events, that you know of, that have corporate sponsors that do contribute to the cost of putting on those events?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, there are. I think the bike race, probably the -- well, let me get you -- rather than speculate there are, I would rather be specific with you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information.

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

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Managing Director, I think, in all fairness, when we are getting numbers, that we also ought to get some numbers to show what this brings to the city.

I think that we need to know the activities for that ten days certainly had some positive effects on the city, and some of the other special events have positive impact.

So I don't know, but I would hope so, that there is some way to calculate those positive effects that these special events have in our city.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Kelly, please proceed.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

You mentioned before, and I want to follow up on Councilman Kenney's questioning, about police overtime.

And police overtime, of course, is one of the, I think, major contributors of this deficit that we are facing.

Could you tell me that, one of the major problems that we seem to be having is with police overtime relating to the court system.

Now, I don't know if this is a question I should hold back and ask the Police Commissioner what's being done about that.

I notice in your testimony that you are working with the courts to see what they can do to at least cut back the amount of other time that's necessary.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I think it is -- court overtime, as I have said before, is a perplexing issue because it really involves the Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, the courts, and, frankly, the Defense Bar.

And to get all four of those in the same room and to agree is not always the easiest thing in the world.

But, unfortunately, the court overtime problem shows up on the budget of the Police Department, which does not necessarily control what happens at the court or who the D.A. subpoenas or what type of continuances the Defense Bar asks for.

Having said that, I know the Police Commissioner is working, has been working, on how we can do a better job of making sure only the appropriate policemen are subpoenaed.

And, so, this is an issue that we think has to be worked with the courts, the Police, the District Attorney's Office.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: What kind of cooperation are you receiving from the courts?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think we are getting very good cooperation.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Because this problem goes back not to the last few years. It goes back to 20 years I think.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Exactly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And it has been growing and growing and growing, and nothing ever seems to be working as far as reducing the amount of overtime that's concerned with the Police Department with regard to that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think the courts understand the fiscal situation that we are in. And they reached out to us and had some ideas, and we plan to sit down, and so forth.

But one of the problems, unless people have to pay for something, they may not have as much interest in controlling things.

And one of the problems we have are, the costs come to the Police Department. And the Police Department has some responsibility for managing the costs, but so does the District Attorney's Office and the courts and the Defense Bar.

But there is not as much incentive in there, you know, and everyone has different interests in the criminal justice system. So that's why it has been a perplexing problem for 20 years, and I think it will probably be for another 20 years.

Which is not to say we can't chip away at it and do a better job of it. And I think the courts and the D.A.'s Office understand that

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I would to see at least it diminished a little each year, and then at least we are going in the right direct. But it doesn't seem to be working that way.

One of the other things I would like to get back to is the quality of life issues, and that's the CLIP program, or course.

And I want to commend you and your Deputy Commissioner, Tom Conway. I think you are doing an excellent job in the program, I really do.

And I know that personally because I did make a call about year and a half ago with regard to a problem that some of my neighbors had, and it was taken care of quit effectively.

And I think you really did an outstanding job for the community up there. I want to commend you and your Deputy Managing Director for doing an outstanding job on that.

I do have a question, though. If we did increase the amount of fines from, say, 25 to 75 dollars, would that justify the expansion of the CLIP program to other parts of the city?

In other words, right now I believe there are only three districts that have that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We do plan to expand it to the rest of the city by zip code, working with City Council to identify the appropriate zip codes for the appropriate problem.

I think what happens when you increase the fine and you increase the penalty -- and I think this is what we have seen in CLIP, and why CLIP has been so successful -- people start to take you seriously and they stop doing the types of things that they did before because they know that there is going to be a consequence to it.

So, you know, I think a $25 fine, it probably costs us a lot more to collect the money, and for most people that's a parking ticket.

I think we have got to get people's attention. And I think that's the real message of what the CLIP program is all about, we got people's attention.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: That could be an effective stream to go into the CLIP program itself, the additional revenue?

MR. GOLDSMITH: If the Budget Director would allow us. But we already have a problem that we have to fill with the deficit. But it is certainly something we could do.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: As far as you know, then, that will be expanded, regardless of whether the increased fines?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: But that would expedite it, if you did have the increased revenue from those fines; is that true?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President. Real brief.

I would like to follow up on a couple of the issues that I spoke to you earlier.

One with respect to the staff, can you also give me the length of employment of the Deputy Managing Directors and the Assistant Deputies or Assistant Managing Directors?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Sure.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I just want to clarify what information I will be getting through the Chair on PFM.

You indicated that that consulting contract was in July '03?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's what I am told. I will make sure.

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COUNCILMAN CLARKE: For the Fleet Management issue.

And was that -- I don't know if you know the answer to this. But if you don't, you can get it to us. Was that done through a professional services contract or bid solicitation?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think it was done by a professional services contract, but we will get you all the information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I needed clarity on who in your department was responsible for interacting with PFM. Because I am still not clear as to who was responsible for collecting the information, who was responsible for analyzing the information.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay. I could have Bob Fox come up, if you would like, or we can get it to you in written answer, however you want.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Do you have somebody to respond right now?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

MR. ROBERT FOX: Good morning,

Councilman. My name is Robert Fox. I am Administrative Services Director for Fleet Management.

Councilman, would you want to rephrase your question so I can get started with an answer here for you?

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Earlier there was a question with respect to the reduction in the fleet, and subsequently a question as it relates to the criteria associated with the reduction; who had the ultimate responsibility of determining who would be eligible to take a vehicle home, who would be eligible to drive a vehicle during the course of a work day, who would take priority over whom.

And the Managing Director indicated that you hired a consultant, PFM, to determine some aspects of that operation.

And at the time I wanted to know, you know, who was responsible as it relates to PFM. I had some sense that Fleet Management would, obviously, be in the loop, since they are ultimately responsible for vehicles.

And I am just trying to find out who

did what, what was responsible.

MR. FOX: The Managing Director had asked us about a year ago to take a long hard look at our fleet. Because the number of vehicles that we had in the fleet had risen by over 400 since the Year 2000, and the number that had take-home vehicles had also risen.

So he wanted us to take a long hard look at it, with the intention to reduce.

We did not think it was a good idea to just go across the board and just take off 10 percent from everybody.

We thought it was a more prudent opportunity for us to take a look at how the vehicles were being utilized and try, where we would be forced to take vehicles, take them in a way that would have the least impact, knowing that whatever we did would have some impact.

We had done this in '93 and we had done it in-house. And it was widely considered to be unsuccessful. Because while the departments consider Fleet Management to be an expert in purchasing vehicles and the type of vehicles and maintaining them, they did not consider us to be an expert in how the vehicles were utilized and how many the departments need.

They would say to us, we don't tell you how to fix them, so we really don't understand why you would tell us how many police cars we needed in the district or how many medic units we needed assigned to a firehouse.

So we took that information seriously, and we decided that we would try to find a consultant that had --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Let me understand. You are telling me that you solicited information from departments, and they were nonresponsive?

MR. FOX: No. What I said was, when we did -- we did a fleet reduction in '93. The departments' feedback to us was that, while we had done a professional job in reducing the fleet, they did not think that Fleet Management should be the agent for deciding how many they -- how many vehicles they needed and how those vehicles were utilized.

That we were more equipped to decide the kind of vehicles and how to repair them and when they should be replaced, but we were not equipped to know how many medic units the Fire Department would need, for instance.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Let me understand this. I hate to keep interrupting.

MR. FOX: That's okay.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So the departments decided that Fleet Management couldn't be the responsible entity to determine use.

But are you suggesting that PFM then went to the departments, and the departments were responsive to them?

MR. FOX: No. We decided that we would want to hire a professional consultant that had experience in municipal management and productivity.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So you internally didn't think that Fleet Management had the ability to manage that process?

MR. FOX: Correct.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right. Okay.

MR. FOX: So we hired a consultant that had a lot of experience with municipal government to go out and meet with the departments and collect information that would lead us to making these kinds of hard decisions.

And, for instance, one of the things that they came up with is, that we're very proud of, is Philly Carshare.

It is a contract that we entered into with a local company where they provide vehicles for departments day in and day out on an hourly basis.

So that if you do have your vehicle removed, you are able to go to a parking lot that is in the area and get a vehicle, use it for the time that you need it, and then bring that vehicle back.

We know that fleet reduction is hard on departments, and we know that this is a hardship, and we also know that we had to make a reduction.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right. One actually not related to you, I just wanted to get into. I am going to ask the question, and then I assume that the response will be a little lengthy.

With respect to vacant lots, I wanted to ask the question about the contract for long-term maintenance of the vacant lots that we are now cleaning internally, and understand that we have entered into a contract over the last year with an entity to maintain the lots; i.e., greening, tree planting, maintenance, the whole nine yards.

And I would like to get information on the renewal of that contract versus the city doing that work internally.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay. That's the one with PHS, I think.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: PHS, yes.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay. Madam President, would there be a chance to take a break, please?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Certainly. How

much of a break do you want? 15 minutes, a half hour?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I just -- I think my issues are well advertised in the newspapers. I just want to go down the hall for a minute.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. Supposing we recess for ten minutes.

(Short recess.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Before we broke, I was going to ask for a point of information from Mr. Fox. It was following the question about fleet reduction.

PRESIDENT VERNA: All right. Is Mr. Fox in the room?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I can direct this -- I think my comment is more of an observation than a question, so I think the Managing Director might be able to handle this in Mr. Fox' absence.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Then it is not a

point of information. But, please proceed.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. Mr. Managing Director, in reference to the contract that was entered upon to reduce the fleet, who better knows the needs of the various operating departments than the commissioners?

My question is, why couldn't we rely on the operating department commissioners to come back with appropriate information in the area of fleet reduction?

But as I say that, I have learned that back in 1993 they tried to use that approach, to go to the commissioners. And like in government, and state, local, federal government, people really hesitate to give up anything they have.

Did we ever think of asking the commissioners in this 2004 for a similar information, since who knows best than the Recreation Commissioner, the Streets Commissioner, the Fire Commissioner, Police Commissioner, et cetera?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, we did think of

that, and we have been doing that. And in some cases, particularly when it came to SUVs, we actually had people return their SUVs.

I think, as Mr. Fox sort of reminded me of, is, I asked for a zero-based approach to fleet. Just like we are doing on school safety guards

Rather than say we have X amount, let's work down. Let's make believe we have none, and let's work up.

And I think that we always respect the commissioners' advice and what's needed, and commissioners were given an ample opportunity.

And we haven't actually gone to the operating departments yet to give us their feedback on what we thought from sort of a, you know, numbers point of view, and so forth. And there was give and take, and there will continue to be give and take.

But one of the issues we have with fleet, when it comes to the departments, is, we don't charge back to the departments the costs of their automobiles. So it is just like, you know, when I was a kid, I always wanted my dad to get me a new car. You know, I wasn't paying for it; my father was. Actually, I am exaggerating, he didn't pay for it, either.

But we have to get accountability back to the departments. And then I think you get a better sense of, you know, what they really need and what they really don't need.

So I think it is a collaborative process. This isn't top down. But it is bringing in experts, crunching the numbers, going to the commissioners saying, what can you do without, and so forth.

And, by the way, we are doing it differently than it has ever been done before. We are saying, we are giving you something in return. We are just not leaving you without wheels. We have come up with other alternatives. And I think that's a creative solution.

And, I must say, I was looking at one of the national news programs yesterday, on Sunday, and there was this big feature on the types of hybrid vehicles, where they are the hot thing right now in the country.

And this city should be proud that we are out there reducing our fleet, going at it, and people will be treated fairly.

But I think this is something we have got to do, and I think we are going to do it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

Councilman Clarke, I believe you were in the process of asking a question before we recessed.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Madam President, actually, the question I asked just before we recessed may take some time. If I could just follow up on the Fleet Management issue, while he is here, and I will come back.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That would be fine.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: On the Fleet Management issue, one of the things that I also needed to get a sense of is who made the determination -- while PFM could possibly make the decision on usage, I am assuming that there is a human component to determine what employee will have the vehicle at the particular time.

Or is it just simply down to the numbers, and whatever employee happens to be in that particular position at the time, that's the person that gets the vehicle?

Or is it -- you know, who makes the determination if an employee has community meetings late at night on a particular week?

I am assuming that there is somebody in the department that makes these decisions. Not PFM, because they obviously can't, they are not going to be around on a consistent basis, on a daily basis.

And I want to know who makes those decisions about vehicle usage on a day-to-day basis?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Ultimately PFM, again, was a consultant.

The decision as to what we -- how many vehicles and what types of vehicles we thought were needed in the departments, that we looked at, was a decision that the task force made, which were city people.

And then after gathering the information, coming up with our recommendations, that was sent back to each of the department heads and said, this is what we have come up with. You have an opportunity to come back to us and explain why you think, you know, you need three, as opposed to what we are saying is two, or whatever. And there was a give and take.

They were given a form. And in some cases we agreed and some cases we disagreed and some cases we compromised. And they were given, I forget the date, that they were supposed to come back. Virtually every department came back to us on time.

Now, going forward, once the department has X amount of cars, and who gets to use those cars, which will probably be more on a pool basis, that would be whoever is the head of that department, whoever that person delegates it to.

By the same token, if they are going to use Philly Carshare and go on the internet, or whatever, and reserve a car, that's ultimately what will be decided by the head of that department. It doesn't get decided by me or anyone else; it becomes an operational issue by the department.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So the department head makes the determination of vehicle usage of their particular employees --

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. Once -- given the number of cars they have.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Let me finish the question. Based on a blueprint that was provided by PFM?

MR. GOLDSMITH: The blueprint that PFM helped the city do is to try to determine how many cars we needed in this department.

If someone has -- you know, one of the exceptions, if you are 24/7, if you are 24/7, and you are making -- and I forget, I think it's -- I forget the number. We will get that.

If you can demonstrate that you are

out on emergency calls X amount of time, because you are 24/7, then we are not taking that car.

But if you couldn't demonstrate that, and from mileage and so forth, we are saying, that department does not need that car. We are going to reduce the size of that fleet.

So every department was a little bit different. Those were decisions that the task force made.

And now, once a department has, whether it be three cars or five cars, who gets to use those cars at any given point in time, or use Philly Carshare, is an issue that the commissioner or the department head would make, or delegate to whoever he delegates it to.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So we have a minimum of three levels of entities determining the use of vehicles in a department.

So we had the department head who has the ultimate decision-making power, we have PFM -- no. We have the task force, then we have PFM.

MR. GOLDSMITH: No.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I am saying to get to where we need to get.

It seems like a lot of layers to determine as to how many vehicles a department needs. And I am just trying to understand why.

You have Fleet Management. You said that they do a good job of maintaining the vehicles and providing gas and whatever else it is they do. Why we need to have three additional levels to determine the usage of a vehicle.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't think we have three different levels. I apologize for not explaining it appropriately.

The first step of the process was to say -- let me tell you why I thought that we had to reduce the size of the fleet.

One, we have a budget issue.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I agree with that. I agree with you totally.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Fine. And I also would like to talk about the fact, we don't have mechanics, as many mechanics. They are hard to get in the private sector.

So once we decided, say, we have to reduce the size of the fleet, we needed a process and a methodology to figure out how we go about that decision-making process.

PFM was retained to help us do the process and the methodology. And we appointed a task force, which consisted of Fleet Management, Managing Director's Office, and the Budget Office.

Once they agreed, the task force agreed, on the process and methodology, which I looked at and I agreed with, we then went and looked at every car that the city has.

The decision was then made by the task force, how many cars does this particular department need?

They made a recommendation. That was then sent to the department head to determine whether -- we didn't want to just do it at a numbers point of view. We needed the on-ground assessment of it.

But, by the same token, I will acknowledge we were going to be tough with it. It had to be a good excuse.

Every department had the opportunity to come back and say, you have asked us to give up seven cars, but we really need three, and this is why.

And we looked at those. I think probably more often than not that we agreed.

So the process is determining -- where PFM came in was to help us with the methodology and the process.

The task force, in conjunction with the head of that department, made the decision what we thought the size of that fleet should be in that department.

It is now up to the department on how those cars are utilized. We are out of it now. That's it.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So if there is a vehicle riding around and Joe Q public says, or Jane Q public says, why is that vehicle here or there or whatever, that's the department head's responsibility?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's the department head.

Obviously there are rhymes and regulations and so forth, but that's the department head.

PFM has nothing to do with that. The task force has nothing to do with that. And I would only have something to do with it if I heard it was being used improperly.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You will get me the PFM information?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will come back.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco. I am sorry, Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Mr. Goldsmith, I want to raise the issue of the closing of the satellite service centers, or the mini City Halls.

I had one in my district on 22nd

Street. And it is my understanding that that center has 450 to 550 cashier transactions daily.

Can you please tell me the rationale for closing that center. And I thought I heard that there were plans to provide the service in other city-owned, neighborhood-based offices.

And then someone else said they were not going to provide the service out in the neighborhoods at all, and people would have to take care of their payment of city bills at the Concourse.

Can you please tell me that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: As we went through the budget and looked for ways that we could reduce our expenses and so forth, we looked in every nook and cranny.

The mini City Halls came up. Which, I might add, are not in every councilmanic district. They are, I think, in just two councilmanic districts.

And we determined that given the technology that's in use today, given other ways that we could service the residents in those neighborhoods, that we would be better off closing those mini City Halls.

We believe that -- and I think the one that you are alluding to, I think there is an L & I office not far from there, where people will be able to access services.

The other thing we were told by both, I think, the Revenue Department and I think it was L & I, that having people out in the neighborhoods really does not provide the productivity that's really needed, and we can service those needs elsewhere.

So what we have to do is, we have to show you how your constituents can be serviced without necessarily having to come into MSB.

I believe that we can do that, and we will demonstrate that to you.

This is one of these decisions which, you know, you wish you didn't have to make, but we are looking at every place that we can.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, certainly I was not a Councilperson when they decided to have these satellite offices, but I guess the intent was probably to keep people from having to come into Center City to pay bills.

Do you think that may have been it? I know you were not around then, either.

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; I think that's it. And I think that came during a point in time we were looking at mini City Halls, you know, and how to take City Hall out to the neighborhoods.

I don't know what year that happened. But these are issues that we're looking at. And I think -- I'm not suggesting this as an alternative. But within a month or two months people are going to be able to pay bills on the internet for some of our services.

But there are other ways for people to use our city offices to drop off payments and so forth, and we have to explore those.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So you are saying there is probably going to be away for people to drop off a water bill, et cetera, at some other city office? I'm not clear because I can't hear you that well.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. I think what we are going to be doing is exploring ways that people cannot have to come into the Concourse to do those things.

And I think some of that will take some transition and some training. But I always say we've got -- I forget how many libraries out there. I'm not sure why libraries can't be a drop-off spot, or police districts can't be a, you know, drop-off spot.

So I think there are other ways for us to meet the needs of the people in your district without necessarily having a mini City Hall or necessarily saying you have got to come down to Center City to do it.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Please keep me updated and informed on what's going on.

My goal is to service the citizens and perhaps not have those to can't come downtown come all the way downtown just to pay a bill.

If we can utilize other city

agencies out in the neighborhoods, then my goal is just to help the citizens be able to do what they can do from their neighborhood, rather than having to come all the way in Center City.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I agree with that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. And I just have a couple more comments.

One is that I would like to get more information on the grants management center, the partnership that you are going to have between William Penn Foundation and University of Pennsylvania.

Because it sounds like you are going to help build capacity of nonprofits, and I want to get more information about that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will do that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And, also, you know, we have several scrap yards. And your scrap yard initiatives, we have several scrap yards in our district that appear to be unregulated and have absentee owners.

We would like to see strong enforcement and, if necessary, shut them down, particularly those who just don't seem to want to comply with any of the environmental issues and the neighborhood issues. And they are just a blighted eyesore out in neighborhoods.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, we are now equipped to do that. And we have had some success.

And I will have John Hadalski from my office contact you so he can get further information. We can zero in on those scrap yards.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. All right. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you very much.

In terms of the quality of life program that you are going to expand, will these new areas have the same level of services that are presently existing in the current Council districts?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will be

attacking -- well, we will be attacking the same issues.

But what we want to do is sit down with you, and for us to work together and you tell us which zip codes -- the reason we chose zip codes is because we had a great deal of debate on whether it should be by councilmanic district, whether it should be by police district whatever.

And we thought zip codes was a better way because everyone knows their zip code, not everyone knows their police district or whatever. It would probably give us a better way to target the areas.

But the same things that are being done in the other CLIP areas will be done in your area.

What's going to have to happen is that we have to be working much better -- and I will use the Ogontz and Olney thing.

When Ogontz and Olney happened, we just got the job done because everybody cooperated. And it is the same approach we are going to take on expanding CLIP, is that there has got to be teamwork among the city departments so they are going in there together, getting the job done, and moving on.

I think the other important component of this is the -- and I always forget the name of it -- but it is the outreach, the telecommunications outreach, that we have.

You have to tell us -- it is called SwitchReach. You have to tell us which zip codes. We can break down by house, by street. And we can call people, and we can say, these are the policies, and we are going to be coming through in a month or two weeks or one week, or whatever it is, and say, this is what we are going to be looking for.

And I have to tell you that, we are going to get a lot more deterrents as a result of those type of initiatives.

So I hope that you will be comfortable with what we are doing. And we will, you know, keep on changing, as necessary. But I think we will have a good plan for you.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Well, you know, a large number of people do not have telephones. How do you communicate with those people without listed telephones?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, we will have to go door by door, or whatever. We are going to use block captains, we are going to use all the resources we have.

Because I think the most important thing here is for people to understand what is expected, and then we have to show people that we are serious.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: We just got a zip code map. And, you know, you probably have looked at this. In whatever way it works, I just want to make sure that it works in the 9th Councilmanic District and the area that I target.

But if you look at the zip codes, there are two or three Council Members in a zip code. So how do we know that you are going to -- will you cover -- say, suppose we take 19141, which is, basically, Logan.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Right.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: She has Logan, he has Logan, and I have Logan. Does that mean all of Logan gets covered, that whole 19141 is going to get covered? I mean, this is for you to think about.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: So you need to look at the zip code map, because it overlaps. I have 19138, Councilwoman Miller has 19138. I have 19126, and she may have 19126. And, I mean, that is that overlap when you start looking at zip codes.

And I want to make sure that if we do it that way, that the areas targeted would be the entire zip code, or then you need to go back to the Council district. Something you might want to look at.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Right. Okay. And hopefully when we sit down in that case, we can sit down with the three of you just to make sure everyone is on the same page, or your aides.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: In your budget message you talked about the overtime. And you said you saved $17 million from 2003 to 2004.

Is that tie-in because of the end of the Safe Streets program?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I can give you -- hopefully we can pick it up.

No; part of it is police. But the Safe Streets program still exists.

I think one of the unfortunate things that's happened with Safe Streets is that people have gotten to identify Safe Streets by the amount of overtime.

And I think the Police Commissioner will speak a lot more eloquently than I can, that Safe Streets means much more than overtime. It is an approach to law enforcement.

In some cases, for example, during the winter months, which was always the case with Safe Streets, you have fewer police officers out on the corners during the wintertime because just the nature of the weather. The weather turns nicer, you deploy differently.

I am not a law enforcement expert, so I don't want to get out of my field. But I do think that we have made a mistake by allowing the debate over Safe Streets to be defined by overtime.

So when you see overtime coming down, it is not because Safe Streets is no longer an active program; it is just that we have gotten better and more strategic in how to deploy people to protect our citizens.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Can I ask one more?

PRESIDENT VERNA: One more?

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Yes.

On Page 43 of the budget, you said that you will spend $1,367,298 with various providers for anti-drug and Town Watch initiatives.

Who are these providers, and when will the contracts be initiated?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Is Frankie Hughes here?

MS. FRANKIE HUGHES: Good afternoon, Councilwoman. My name is Frankie Hughes, Deputy Managing Director.

In terms of the vendors under the anti-crime budget, we have the Philadelphia anti-drug/anti-violence network, also Operation Town Watch, and there are some anti-drug community-based organizations who we fund usually for some of their activities.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Do you have a list of these programs and the areas that they serve?

MS. HUGHES: Yes, I do.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Can we get a copy of that?

MS. HUGHES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Do you fund PAN?

MS. HUGHES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Is their funding be cut?

MS. HUGHES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Are all of the programs being cut, or just certain programs being cut? Is it an across-the-board cut?

MS. HUGHES: No. Actually, we are

going to increase Operation Town Watch's budget. They have not received an increase in over six years, I believe; whereas, we have increased PAN's budget in previous years.

This year we are going to increase Town Watch's budget just due to the nature of the types of things that the approach is for Town Watch members, radios and other equipment.

The cost has increasingly been going up, and we have been trying to find grants and other things to subsidize the costs. But this year there is no way around it, we are going to have to increase the budget.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Can we get a list of the groups you fund and the amount of their funding 2004, as opposed to 2005?

MS. HUGHES: Yes, I will.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Councilwoman, may I just, on the PAN issue, it is my understanding that they have received more money from the School District, which we worked together on that program.

So while they may have less from our budget, I think they have received more from the School District. But I will check that out for you.

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: I would also be interested in the level of service -- I am sure they will probably coming in to testify. If the dollar level has decreased, and what impact it has on their services to the community.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: First, Mr. Managing Director, is there any answer to the last round, or my round before that, questions on the -- have we figured out the vacant lot situation yet?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We said we will get you that information.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I thought for one of the series of questions I asked, you had some information that was at your hand, but you were trying to put your hands on it. Was that the vacant lots or was that the overtime?

MR. GOLDSMITH: It may have been overtime.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Can you tell me -- and I want to get into this and get out of it real quick -- how many officers would it take on a detail to spend a million dollars in overtime?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know. We would have to get you that information.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I said, I do not know that. I would have to get you that information.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. And someone else is finding the person who is in charge of the Welcome America event, and they are prepared --

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will give you a complete answer to that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is someone coming here today to talk about that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I do not know. I

will find out.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have you asked anybody to come here?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I have not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, would you ask someone who is in charge of the event to come over here today, please.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will try to, yes.

One of the problems we have, Councilman is that Gloria Jackson from my office is out on an emergency today, and she handles most of these special events. So she would be much more equipped to answer some of this stuff.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I thought this particular event was mostly handled, in terms of the production of it, either by Commerce or more directly the City Rep's Office or Arts and Culture, something like that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's correct. I was talking in general questions on special events.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I want to be specific about, since we had the earlier discussion, I want to be specific about the Welcome America event. And I asked who was in charge of it in terms of the production, the costs, arranging it.

So if that is either the City Rep's Office or Art and Culture, what I am asking you now is to have the appropriate person come over to answer questions.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will put in a request to the City Rep's Office.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Let's talk about Page 2 of your testimony.

I had asked you earlier about crossing guards. I know you wanted to get information back to me.

But my last question on is that is, who is actually responsible for the crossing guards? What part of the government are they attached to?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Police Department.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So the Police Department is in charge of crossing guards?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In the middle

part of your testimony, on Page 2, you talk about the safety in City Hall, and that some portion of it had been closed off.

How many entrances or points of ingress, egress, are there to City Hall?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Is Commissioner Slauderbach here? I think it is like 20-some, but I would have to get you the precise number.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And since either the tragedy of 9/11 or the tragedy in New York City, have any of those entrances or exits been closed?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Probably three or four. I will have to get you the precise number.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And why is there still such significantly open and unprotected access to City Hall?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We are working on a security system. I think because this is a public building, and it is, you know, unlike --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is One Parkway a public building?

MR. GOLDSMITH: One Parkway is a different building. But it does not have courtrooms, it does not have City Council chambers. One Parkway is much more like an office building.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Managing Director, I asked a very simple question. Is One Parkway a public building? Answer yes or no.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And is the MSB a public building?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do they have security at the entrance?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, they do.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Does City Hall have security at its entrances.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Not at each and every entrance, no.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The federal

building down at 6th and Arch, is that a public building?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So why is this public building so different than any other public building in the city?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I think this building is different because, number one, it was built many, many years ago, unlike One Parkway and MSB and the Federal Courthouse.

It was built with many different entrances. And I think the fact, the nature of the business that's conducted in City Hall, whether it be people coming up here to petition their government, people appearing in courtrooms, the nature is different, the nature of the business being transacted here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Wasn't CJC a public building?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, it is a public building. And that's a good point. That's a building that was built in the '80s, I think, or whenever it was, and there is security there. And it is a one-purpose building; this is a multi-purpose building.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that. No one is talking about restricting or reducing access. The issue is how you access the building and how secure it is.

And I think you would have to agree, at least at this point, that this is possibly the most nonsecure public building in the City of Philadelphia.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I can't speak to that. I think it is clearly --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you know of any other building that has as many entrances and exits to it as City Hall?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will accept your premise that it is the most public and unsecured building.

We also have plans to put security entrances here and card access here. And those will be done, are in the process of being bid out for work. So it is not as if nothing is taking place.

I will also say that --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And I believe

that. When will they be done?

MR. GOLDSMITH: John, can you speak to that.

I might also say, where the incident occurred in New York was a very secure building.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

That was a, obviously, a process and procedure failure, because there is always the human element of people making decisions. But at least they actually had something in place. You can't prevent people from making poor decisions.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The situation here is, there is no decision to be made. You just walk in with whatever you want, wherever you want, and do whatever you want, any time you want, virtually. Except for after 6 o'clock, when you have one entrance to come into the building.

So, again, I don't think there is a person in here who would suggest for a moment that the public shouldn't be allowed in the building. What I'm saying to you is, there are too many entry and exit points. They are not secure in any way, shape, or form.

We have limited upgraded security, which I do appreciate. It comes in the form of the days that there is something going on in this chamber, we have some amount of security on the 4th and 5th floors.

We have Council Members who actually work on the 3rd floor. I guess the message to them is, you know, they don't deserve any amount of protection. And there is the rest of the building and the rest of the people who work here.

And I haven't seen virtually one ounce of change since 9/11, other than the new bollards, the green bollards, around the building that are secured by a chain.

I mean, if you are planning to do something on the building, I don't necessarily know that a chain is going to stop you.

So what is the time line for all of this upgraded security? We appreciate what's happened here in this room and the personnel on the 4th and 5th floors. But for a, you know, a seven-story, four-sided, multi-officed building, it doesn't necessarily provide any security to probably seven-eighths of the rest of the place.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I will ask Rick Tustin, Head of Capital Projects Office, to tell you our timetable. Which, I might say, has been provided to Council before. But we will update you with the timetable.

MR. RICHARD TUSTIN: My name is Rick Tustin, I am the Director of the City's Capital Program Office.

Councilman Nutter, as you know, we have been involved in this project for several years now. We have broken it down into many different tasks to complete.

The simplest ones we have tried to take care of first, whether it is the protection of the apron around City Hall, as you have just mentioned, the bollards.

We have a second phase of that work that will be starting probably --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We have the bollards, we have got some chains, and then the orange cones are a new feature.

MR. TUSTIN: They will be replaced very shortly with a gate system that will be -- we are waiting for the contractor to start, probably, by the end of this month on that work.

We have also done some new fencing in the courtyard around the switch gear and around some of the mechanical and the electrical components that were open to the public before. They are now secured so people cannot get into that area, as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that where the plywood is?

MR. TUSTIN: No, I am not talking about the plywood.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Councilman, we are trying to provide a serious answer to a serious issue. And I think that you are trying to demean our efforts, I really do. And I really -- we are trying to tell you what we are doing.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Managing Director, I think I can ask Mr. Tustin whatever question I want to ask him, whenever I want to ask him. I didn't cut across him.

I asked him about the plywood that I saw in the courtyard the other day. So I am not being demeaning. I am actually very serious. I am going to ask the question the way I want to ask the question.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Right. And we are trying to do our very best to provide security here and do our job.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, Mr. Tustin was doing fine until you jumped in the question. He and I know each other very well. He wasn't upset, I'm not upset. I would appreciate it if I am able to listen to his answer.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will let him continue.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

MR. GOLDSMITH: You are welcome.

MR. TUSTIN: The work we did in the courtyard, Councilman, consisted of wrought iron fencing that protects, I guess it is, the Northeast courtyard of City Hall, where it used to be open before. And if you go down in that area, you can get access to the mechanical and the electrical systems of the building.

A lot of the doors that were before opened have been mechanically locked now in the basement areas.

The doors around the perimeter continue to have the old locking system, which are keys. Unfortunately, with keys, as you know, they can be duplicated, and then the next thing you know you don't have the security you are looking for.

There are probably at least 18 entrances just to the first floor of City Hall. It is a hundred-year-old building. And when they designed the building, they wanted it accessible from all points.

In addition to that, there are entrances through the portals that you can get direct access to the 2nd and 3rd floor, as well.

We have addressed every one of those entrances in the overall security plan, which is out for bid right now. We expect that work to start within the next couple of months.

And, so, you should see a lot of construction going on around this building come this summer and through the fall and next winter, until we are completed.

The work includes card accessing system on all of the doors so that you no longer will be able to duplicate a key and hand it to people. That will secure most of the entrances.

Public entrance will be the northeast corner, which will also have security. You will have an area with turn styles, where you will have to go through similar to MSB, similar to One Parkway.

We will have cameras in most of the hallways throughout the building. We will have security cameras on the exterior of the building. We will have new lighting fixtures around the exterior of the building for better lighting at night.

We will have the grating that now you can get access into the airways from the exterior, will be secured. So you will no longer be able to get access that way.

We have tried to button up the building as best as possible, but we still realize it is a public building and it needs to be somewhat open to the public.

The portal entrances during the normal working hours, I guess 8:00 to 5:00, will be accessible by the general public so that they can come in and do their business and still they will be observable, if that's a word.

So we feel that by this time next year, you will see most of those improvements well under their way, if not fully completed by that point.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you very much. I appreciate the update.

MR. TUSTIN: You are welcome.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Nothing.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Madam President, and good afternoon.

Mr. Goldsmith, I would like to bring your attention to your testimony on Page 5. I apologize if you already answered this question. I was listening to most of this morning's discussion, I may have missed the answer to the question I am about to ask you.

The last paragraph, where it deals with the strategic enforcement and abatement through specific targeted zip codes, the approach would be education, warning, enforcement, and abatement. Enforcement officers and inspectors will respond to quality of life complaints and issue warnings to violators, and it goes on further to talk about the area of abatement.

In what manner will properties be

abated? A property that has no windows, no doors, I generally think is the kind of abatement that we normally speak of when we talk about the issue of abatement.

And what do we plan to do with those properties, where doors, windows are missing?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Let me get Tom Conway up here.

MR. CONWAY: With regards to abatement, the community life improvement program doesn't do many clean and seals, and I think that's what you were getting towards.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Where I am going is, I have been beating my head against this desk for about four years now.

I had introduced a bill back in the Year 2000, which was passed by this City Council and supported by the Administration. I refer to it as the broken window bill.

It was Bill No. 000404, which basically says to a property owner, given a specific amount of time to replace the doors and/or windows that are opened, broken, not existing today, you have a certain amount of time to make replacements to those doors and windows with a door and a window, et cetera, not to seal it up with metal tin, not to be sealing those openings up with wood.

And for every day after the allowed time, the allotted time to make those improvements, the law says that the property owner will be fined $300 per day per opening that is not properly sealed

And "properly sealed," again, means no plywood, no tin, no metal, nothing other than a door or a window to replace that opening.

I have been working with L & I Commissioner Solvibile for a couple of months now. I have just got to use a couple of examples where I think we are really, really missing the boat here.

There is a property at 639 Catherine Street, on the Northeast corner of 7th and Catherine, that has been sealed up for 22 years. And since the year 2000, I have been hounding the Department of L & I and others to do something about enacting this bill.

Recently, in the last few months, action has finally been taken.

As I speak, the fines on that property exceed $1 million. We will be in court next week for the second time.

I believe, I am hopeful, that the judge will see fit to impose a significant portion of that fine to the owner of that property.

The basic reason for that bill was, my opinion, was to get people to do something positive with the property; either sell it, replace the doors and windows so it doesn't look blighted or as blighted, do something about it.

At the same time several months ago I turned in a property at 708 South Warnock that had been vacant, boarded up, tin on the windows, for the better part of a dozen years.

That owner, immediately upon receiving notice that the $300 a day, per day, fine would be implemented, put the building up for sale. He sold it in two weeks, it is now an occupied property.

And I know Mr. Solvibile is at the table now, and he will talk about we are beefing up that enforcement.

But what I was asked to do was give a list. And I don't have a problem, I am always driving around. And maybe I see too damn much, and that's why I can't sleep at night. But I make lists up, and I am going to start sending them into L & I.

Wouldn't it behoove us, while we have the CLIP program in place, during those abatements of properties, cleaning of lots, to create the list on a zip code by zip code, neighborhood by neighborhood basis, and start sending notices out to these delinquent, absentee landlords who really don't care about the property or the neighborhood on which they have created a lot of blight within; most of whom are waiting for that neighborhood to turn around, if you will, and become a viable neighborhood, and then profit on their neglect.

We are losing a lot of money that I think we could recapture, and probably make a lot of money -- although that's not the business we are in -- but I don't have a problem if the city were to make money on the backs of delinquent, uncaring landlords.

So my question is, through the statement that I have made, what are we going to do about enacting once and for all on the citywide basis Bill No. 000404?

This would have probably offset significantly the cost of the NTI program. But what we are doing is, we are taking taxpayers' dollars, people who live in the city, maintain their properties, and pay their taxes, to go out and fix up or close up a property of someone who doesn't give a damn, excuse my French, when they should be the people who the burden should be on.

This is four years in the running. I will have to wait another four years to ask my question, Madam President?

So, I guess, what are we doing? And I know -- I just don't want to deal with, well, when we get a -- you know, and Bob and I work well together, and we have got about a dozen properties, including Center City.

Northeast corner of 11th and Chestnut, an income-producing property on the first floor, has broken windows throughout it, in the core of Center City. And we are not doing anything but maybe send them a $75 fine, which is ridiculous, in my opinion.

MR. ROBERT D. SOLVIBILE: Councilman, since --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Identify yourself for the stenographer.

MR. SOLVIBILE: Robert Solvibile, Licensing & Inspections.

Councilman, since our last conversations about this, we have opened up the violations to be written by all the inspectors in the department.

With the expansion of CLIP is where most of the neighborhoods we are aiming to get this type of enforcement in. The inspectors will be instructed to write this violation for the doors and window violation.

And we believe it will then finally get into the mainstream and become effective at that point in time.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So if I hear you right, Mr. Solvibile, you are saying that your people, L & I's personnel, will be going through those CLIP areas and making that list?

Is that going to be a function of what they do or is it going to be -- and I don't mean this to be disrespectful -- hit and miss, kind of if we see it?

But I think it should be part of the overall program as you are going through those communities.

MR. SOLVIBILE: Councilman, it will be a part of the -- as Mr. Conway, or the Director, has stated, the program will be run by zip codes. And there will be meetings with the Councilpeople to determine their needs.

But as part of the inspector's, L & I inspectors assigned to this going out, they will in fact write that violation citywide, and we will then be able to track it and see how we are doing with enforcement.

Hopefully at this time next year we will have a better report.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Can I finish this statement?

PRESIDENT VERNA: This is very interesting. I am just curious to know, have they been implementing that bill at all?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, the notification has been sent out on at least two buildings, 708 South Warnock, which I explained the owner immediately sold it.

The building at 639 Catherine, we were in Municipal Court. The fines exceeded $10,000. We now have to go into Common Pleas Court next week.

The problem we had -- and, again, we have been talking about this for four years -- is that an inspector went out, looked at the building, and came back, I think, originally, Bob, with several windows. There are about 33 doors and windows in this building.

So, you do the math. If there are 50 doors and windows, at $300 a day -- now the reality is, we may not get all of that money.

But the purpose of the bill was to not just give somebody a little smack on the hand. I mean, the guy who bought that building 22 years ago paid about $35,000. Today, today, as a result of the RDA's appraisal on that building -- because I am going to have to spend NTI monies to take that building through condemnation -- that building is worth $500,000 today.

The owner lives in New Jersey, runs a liquor store in New Jersey. His wife, I don't know where she lives. They are estranged. And they keep using the excuse that they haven't done anything with the building because they can't settle their divorce, 22 years.

I went through two marriages and divorces in 22 years. I am not happy about that. But, I mean, you know, give me a break. I am not boasting about that.

But the reality is, they have been sitting on it. It sits in the heart of Bella Vista. They have been watching the real estate values go up and up and up every year, and they are going to wind up walking away with a profit.

We should have been hammering these people. I mean, now we are doing it, we will see, in that property.

I will give you another example, is the one I always call my signature building, which is in Councilman Clarke's district, the former Daily News building at 23rd and Arch.

There must be 3,000 windows in that building. It is the gateway into the city. People see it on the Expressway, people see it on JFK Boulevard, people see it on the train as they are going of 30th Street Station. It sits there.

Every single window in that building is broken and has been broken for 15 years. I will bet you we have not sent them a notice concerning this legislation.

And I can tell you the owner of that building, when and if he has sold it -- because I keep hearing it is sold, it may be sold -- is going to make a huge profit, because 15 years ago that was not that desirable a neighborhood. Now it is one of the hottest real estate markets in the city.

So the developer who didn't do anything to contribute to enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood, sat back, let the building deteriorate, is going to walk away with a fortune, and we let him do it.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke for a point of order.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

$13 million, by the way, the sales price for the building.

I just wanted to also reiterate, there was a bill that was supported by Council Members, I think, as recent as a year and a half ago that talked about vacant window bill, the boarded-up window bill, that we passed unanimously, that required that the city make sure that property owners put windows inside of vacant buildings, particularly on blocks that are, I think, 80 percent or more occupied, very well supported by the northeast community. It was actually the first piece of press I got in my new district. And today I don't think we are aggressively enforcing that.

I agree with Councilman DiCicco that in some of these communities, where we allow these buildings to just sit and bring down the property values of other individuals, because it is just not right. And we need to address it and go after these people.

We found that, in some instances, when you do go after people, they actually do comply, in a lot of instances. So I think we need to stop playing around with people. We need a get aggressive, as we are getting aggressive on other issues, such as the CLIP.

If we were half as aggressive as these property owners are, as we are on people in the northeast, and making sure they cut their grass or shovel the snow three hours after the snow, we would be a lot better off.

So I agree with the Councilman on this very much.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I would just like to say, as I think Mr. Solvibile will tell you, that we have actually started action against that building. But I don't want to get into that particular thing.

Just to say that I share the frustration. I go around the city all the time. And nothing bothers me more than when I see businesses, you know, sort of trashing the city. And I think we have to get tougher and we will get tougher.

But often, a lot of these times, these people have money, and they are able to tie us up in court and so forth.

But it is a big city, with a lot of problems. And I think it frustrates us all that want to see it better and see people take better care of their properties. And we will do what we can.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I will wait for my next round.

MR. SOLVIBILE: Councilman, at 22nd and Arch, the old Bulletin Building, we did take the owner to court, and we have a court order that he is to put doors and windows.

He asked for a 30 or 40 day -- I'm not quite sure of the time, because there was going to be a permit to rehabilitate it. That did not happen.

I am now asking the Law Department to go back into court, and we will enforce the court order and have him put doors and windows in all the openings where there is broken windows.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. SOLVIBILE: The bill for that would have been over a million dollars, by the way, Councilman, for the doors and windows.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: A million a day. You have to have a few thousand windows in that building. A million? 7th and Catherine is a million dollars, and that's two properties, row-house properties, that are on the corner.

It has got to be over a million dollars. It has to be a million dollars a day.

MR. SOLVIBILE: In talking to the contractor, the person who was going to get the permit to rehabilitate it, told me it was a million dollars.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: To rehab. I am sorry; I thought you meant the fines.

MR. SOLVIBILE: No, sir. To put the doors and windows, he said it would be a million dollars. Now, I didn't check to see if he was accurate on that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I apologize. I misunderstood you. I thought you said a million dollars in fines.

MR. SOLVIBILE: No; no.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to follow up on a question I asked earlier about vacant lots, the vacant lot program. And, actually, the second question, I will get it in now.

The second question is, does the Managing Director have any jurisdiction/responsibility on any of the social services programs? And I will get into the first question in depth.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Approximately two years ago, when we started the NTI process, we talked about entering into an arrangement with P&S, I believe it was, for long-term maintenance of lots, putting grass on, planting trees, and things of that nature.

And one of the questions that came up, that I, frankly speaking, raised was, hiring of local residents. The thought was that this work was not extremely skilled labor; that there could be opportunities in neighborhoods for people to maintain lots in their particular communities. And I was told at the time that there would be some process.

Frankly speaking, I have yet to see a single person from the neighborhood hired to work with P & S. I happen to be the recipient of parts of my district, actually in the neighborhood where I live, of a substantial amount of the work that's taking place.

I must say, I am a little dismayed that that didn't happen, but I must say that I am not surprised.

One of the questions I have is, first of all, I am assuming that we are looking to renew that contract.

Second of all, understanding that we currently have a crew -- and I'm not sure what the size is -- a vacant lot crew that is run out of the Managing Director's Office, were where our work force is probably from a lot of the neighborhoods that the work is currently being done.

But since they are relegated to cleaning the lots, removing the debris, then they go into another location, my question is, does it make more sense to elevate the skill level of the people that we have on the city's payroll to provide the long-term maintenance?

What I have seen, particularly in Strawberry Mansion, when a lot is cleaned and it is greened, and trees are placed, that lot stays clean. You know, something in the psyche of the people in the communities, when they see a nice lot, they don't treat it the way that they do when there is a lot that has a substantial amount of debris on it or untreated lot.

I am going to ask the question, but I believe that the contract with P & S is probably more than a million dollars. And what I want to know, does it make more sense to elevate the level of our employees to not only clean the lots, but also maintain them, since those maintained lots will not require an additional maintenance, an additional cleanup by our lot crews? Is that something that makes sense to you?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, I think what you are saying makes sense.

The P & S contract is not handled out of my office, but I will have to find out what is happening to renewing that.

But I think to the extent that we can either use city workers or people from the neighborhoods to do a lot of this work, and really to increase their skill set, particularly when it comes to horticulture and stuff like that, it really makes sense. We will look into it.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: When you say you

will look into it, with all due respect, what does that mean?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Since that contract does not come out of our office, I will have to speak to NTI folks to find out what's going on with that contract and whether those commitments that were made, where they stand.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Anybody here today?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know. Do we have anyone from NTI?

MR. JAY McCALLA: Jay McCalla, Deputy Managing Director.

That is operated out of NTI by a woman named Cynthia Biette. And we can get you whatever information you want regarding that today. Or certainly we are going to be back to present our budget in the next several weeks. So whatever your pleasure is.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I can't wait. I talked to people in the government about this. I talked to Ms. Biette. I am not going to tell what you her response is, I don't want to get her in trouble.

But to me it makes no sense that we are spending a million dollars, probably more than a million dollars, to maintain lots, green them, put trees up, or whatever it is we do. We already have the work force whose sole responsibility is vacant lots. And you don't get people from that neighborhood hired.

And suffice to say that all the people who work on the vacant lot treatment program, the vacant lot cleaning program, are neighborhood people, probably some of them referred by members in this room, Council Members.

And I asked this question some time ago. And I would really like to get a real answer, a real response, before we renew the contract or continue the discussion on the contract.

Because I think that, you know, elevating the skill sets of our people -- you know, ultimately we no longer need vacant lot cleaning crews, which would be a good thing. At a minimum, these people would have a skill that they can market in another areas, a landscaping skill. So I think that's something we need to seriously look at.

MR. McCALLA: As the Managing Director said, we don't know the term of renewal for this contract. But this is Monday. And there is no reason why you, myself, and Pat Smith and Cynthia can't sit down --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I don't want to do that. I don't want to have a meeting. I want you to do it for me.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will get you the information.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Every time I sit down with people, I don't wind up getting anything out of it. When you get stuff done is in the budget process.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The other question related to social services. In your testimony, I didn't see anywhere where you spoke of any social service program.

But through the course of the last year, when there were programs and contracts to be let as it relates to mental health contracts, there was a contract I recall over near Richard Allen, one of my community people called. And I keep hearing your name surface as it relates to the sign-off on those contracts.

What involvement do you as the Managing Director have in social service program?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, the social service departments report to the Managing Director. So that would be DHS and Health Department and Behavior Health and all of those departments.

There had been a director of social services, Ms. Estelle Richman, served at, when Joe Mertz was Managing Director. And when she became Managing Director, it was then Gary Letterer, he has since left.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So Estelle Richman, she was director of social services reporting to Joe Martz?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, that's correct.

So, those departments do report to

me. And depending on the contracts, some of them I sign off.

If you can get me the name, the specific name, of the contract, or whatever, I will find out

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I want to talk more about process.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So in all the other departments do you get involved with that level of detail, signing off of contracts?

The Fire Department. The Fire Department needs to enter into a contract with whomever, do you have to sign off on that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: It depends on what the contract is, requires whether I have to sign off on it.

Maybe, Tony, you can answer that. But I don't single out social services contracts for special attention.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I don't hear your name coming up in other departments. I always hear your name as it relates to social service contracts.

MR. TORRE: Councilman, usually it is the process whereby the -- whatever the contract comes under, that commissioner's jurisdiction, it is usually that commissioner that would sign off on the contract.

If it was a DHS contract --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: That's always my understanding. But now I am hearing, and the Managing Director has concurred, that he signs off on some social service contracts.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I will sign off on different grants. Things come on my desk all the time. But normally departments do their own thing.

There are some points where I am the signator for the city, and I would sign off on. So there may be social services contracts that, as Managing Director, Chief Operating Officer, I am the signator on them.

Some of them go over to the Mayor's Office. Most of them end up either at the commissioner level or the Managing Director's Office.

So, it would depend.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The Mayor's Office?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Some grants would have to go over to the Mayor's Office for signature.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The Mayor's signature?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

MR. TORRE: Depending.

MR. GOLDSMITH: It depends on what the grant is or what the contract is or what the issue is.

I would say most -- probably the predominant of them get taken care of at either the commissioner level or the Managing Director's Office.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Does that happen in any other departments?

MR. GOLDSMITH: All departments.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You are involved in numerous departments?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. If there is a Police grant -- I think Commissioner Johnson and I just signed off on one. You know, there is multitude of these things that go on.

But if you can get me more specific about any particular one, I can check into it.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Well, that has happened. I mean, there have been a number of contracts that have happened and I have had to get involved with. And that's why I understand now that you are in the middle of it to some degree.

I am just trying to find out from a procedural standpoint, the Managing Director traditionally gets involved in that level, on signing off on contracts, and that's not something that I knew.

Now that you are telling me that, I probably would like to know the types and the categories.

If there is a federal grant that comes down, maybe that will require your signature. But I just need to know what -- does it mandate that you are involved, or do you just arbitrarily get involved?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't arbitrarily

get involved, unless there was -- I don't want to say a dispute. But if there was a difference of opinion or something like that, I might get involved. But I can't, you know, remember any of those.

A lot of these go to the CRC, our Contract Review Committee, which is made up of representatives from the Mayor's Office and Finance Department, Managing Director's Office, MBEC.

Virtually every contract in the city goes through the CRC process. So it may come up there.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The mental health contracts, do they go to you?

MR. GOLDSMITH: They would come up through CRC. If I am misstating myself, I would ask someone. But they would come up to CRC. Laurie Jones is my representative on CRC. But everything goes through a process that we look at.

You know, it is not that I am singling out any particular one. I might be an arbiter if there is a difference or someone says why are we doing this.

On grants, we have formed this grants office. And one of the things, if a grant comes to me, one of the things I ask is for the grants office to sign off on it.

And I particularly want to know whether there are any operating dollars that are going to be attached or are going to be committed as a result of the grant.

If there are, I might look at it a little differently than if it were just federal or state dollars.

But we will get you the process that is used.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I know my time is up. I just want one followup. I want to know are these any Charter-required sign-offs or regulatory requirements or is this the way the government is set up under this Administration?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know the answer to that. I think CRC --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Would you find out for me. I really need to understand why your name keeps coming up on all these different contracts.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Managing Director, earlier this morning I commended you for reducing the city fleet, and that important initiative.

I want to commend you now for your Global Philadelphia initiative. And I want to use part of your testimony to say that this Global Philadelphia initiative is very important because both Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and executive order signed by Mayor Street in the fall of 2001 require the city to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient individuals.

Many, many years ago I came from a limited English proficient family. My colleague, Councilman Kenney, has been a champion in this chamber for a few years on the issue of immigrants, particularly new immigrants, into the Philadelphia area.

And for all the obvious reasons in my name, I have joined him in this area of concern and of righteousness to welcome new immigrants into our city.

And I see Global Philadelphia as coming about at the right time. Maybe well overdue, but, nevertheless, that it is here. And I am encouraged by your involvement and the involvement of this Administration.

In your testimony, you also stated that through Global Philadelphia, in the partnership with community and advocacy groups, the Personnel Department is involved in an effort to enhance recruitment.

I just want to be clear, when you say to enhance recruitment, are you saying to advance hiring?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, to advance hiring.

The whole issue, obviously, is, you can't hire people unless they apply. And part of this, the Personnel Department working with different agencies and different groups throughout the city, is that when we do have positions that we think require some bilingual in nature, that they are -- we are going out to groups and saying help us, you know, find these people.

Obviously once they apply, they have got to go through the same testing and same process. But the outreach -- unless you have an effective outreach process, it is really not going to work.

And we recently had one where we got a lot of applications in as a result of the outreach that we used, so that's something we want to continue to do.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Can you tell us, how far ahead are you with the Global Philadelphia concept?

You mentioned you started to recruit. Because I know my office was of help in the application process. How far ahead are you with this program?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, we just, you know, recently got started. I think we have done a lot of good work so far, but there is a lot of work that's got to be done.

We started out with eight departments which we have identified because we think those were critical departments. We have an RFP that we just received back contracts or proposals from to provide different services to the city. They are going to be document translation, language translation, and telephonic usage.

That review will take place, hopefully, within the next 30 days, we will be able to pick the various vendors to provide that service.

Councilman Kenney and I have talked about this. And I really see our job, in certainly the Managing Director's Office and our initiative here, is to make city government more accessible to people.

Our job is not to go out and try to attract people to Philadelphia, that's other people's jobs. But I think once, you know, people come here, we want them to be able to access our services.

And I think the more accessible the

word gets that we are as a city, the more effective we are going to be in recruiting people and do what we have got to do.

So this is a multi-facetted approach. We got people from the Recreation Department together, all the directors, I think regional directors, from the Latino areas, and we brought in representatives from the Latino area.

And we said, we want to you get to know each other. Because the needs, your needs in the community, you as a Recreation Department employee, have got to understand what the needs are of people in the community. We had a cocktail party for them, and so forth and so on.

I mean, it is a whole bunch of different things that we have got to do. And part of it is legally driven, you know; part of it is the Justice Department, I believe, is sort of revving up on this issue; part of it is basic fairness; and part of it is an economic development issue.

As I said in my testimony, L & I

forecasts about 30 to 50 percent of their license and business permits come from people that do not speak English as their native language. That goes to show people that want to open up businesses and so forth.

That's our outreach, and we have a lot more we can share with you on it.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: It seems as though you are going to contract out some of these services.

Are you looking also to hire people, city employees, to do this type of limited English proficient accessibility?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. In the eight departments that we have started with, we have asked them to identify positions, going by positions that we think it is important to have a bilingual component to. And, so, that's one of the initiatives that we are doing.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I again want to reiterate that I am for this program. It is well overdue. I am glad it is happening now for all the right reasons, for legal reasons, as well.

If we are under all these budget constraints, how are we going to pay for -- we have a hiring freeze, but yet we are saying that we are going to hire to make this program happen. What's your thinking along those lines?

Because I don't want us to give the public a false expectation that we are going -- we are trying to comply with a Civil Rights Act, and we are trying to do the right thing here, and we are telling people to apply for these positions, and then five months go by and they inquire about the position -- I am saying that happens in my office a lot -- and then we turn around and say, yes, this is the right thing to do, but we can't afford to do it?

MR. GOLDSMITH: We are only going out and recruiting for positions that we have vacancies on that we are filling. So we are not going out there and just saying -- trying to go out there and just have people apply, when we don't have positions for them. So we are being very specific.

As positions come up, they are identified by the Personnel Department. And if there are ones in particular that we think are bilingual in nature, that's when we are going out and recruiting.

So, you know, while we have had job freezes on and so forth, the fact of the matter is, there still are positions that we fill every day.

And I want to say the other component here is just not for hiring people, but it is also to make our city services accessible and understandable for people that do not speak English as their native language.

I mean, whether it be the Police or Fire Department or L & I or Health Department, these are major departments, Recreation, that we are working with that we can become, frankly, more customer friendly.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Do you have any idea about how many people you will be hiring directly into the government to comply with this mandate?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No, I don't. That would be -- I would have to get you that. But that's going to depend on how many vacancies we have and what positions.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Are you willing to cut in other areas to make this program work, if you have to?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. I think that -- no. I think what we are doing now is --

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: What happens if the Justice Department comes around and says, you only hired five, and you have ten departments, what are you going to do then?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't think the Justice Department -- I mean, the hiring issue is just one of the issues that the Justice Department is looking at. But we are going to -- you know, we have a financial crisis on our hands.

I was happy that we were able to get state funds to help fund this program. So we will have to go from there and do our very best.

All we are saying is, if we have an

opening, if there is an opening in the Police Department and that's one where we think it would benefit from a bilingual employee, then we are trying to target and trying to be more aggressive to make sure that, from a recruiting point of view, that we get people that are bilingual in nature to apply for that job. Then they have got to qualify like everyone else.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Again, I commend you and the Administration for taking this initiative.

It is very important that we continue to think long range on the future of this city and this ever-increasing immigrant population that is already here within our city limits, and with the potential of bringing more immigrants into this area as a place for them to make a living and fulfill the American dream, as my family and many of you here, have full tilled.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Goldsmith, first of all, I would like to change you for bringing this Police overtime, the one where police officers work on their days off, to bring that program under control.

I know there are still a few loose ends at the revenue end. But, again, thank you for you taking personal charge of that to get that under control.

I wasn't planning to discuss this. But after seeing, I believe it was, Dateline last night, where they reported on the severity of intersection accidents, when vehicles are hit broadside, and that in many cases the injuries are fatal, if not very, very serious, the results of the accident.

And if you could give me an update on where we are with the red light camera program, I would really appreciate it.

Because I understand politics is standing in the way. Because there is an agreement of understanding that's required between the City of Philadelphia and the Parking Authority to manage the red light camera program.

And after seeing Dateline last night, I believe it was Dateline, that every day we allow some of these very dangerous intersections not to be protected by red light cameras and proven technology to reduce fatalities, reduce injuries, I think that that's a very bad situation.

So I would like to know what you can tell me about a program that was supposed to be off the ground December, January, and from what I understand the Parking Authority and the Administration cannot get together on how this program is to run.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Thank you. And I think that the whole issue of traffic safety, whether it be with school children, whether it be with red lights, whether it be whatever the concept is, running the block, or whatever we call it, I think, frankly, we are a little bit out of control in this city. And something I have talked to the Police Department about.

I think we have got to crack down on people that just -- whether they are just going through red lights or whether they are blocking intersections and so forth. We let people get away scot-free here.

And I know New York City, people have told me that have come back from New York City, it is amazing what a little enforcement does and a $300 fine. You don't see that going on right now in New York, and I would like to see us take the same attitude here.

I think it is going to save lives and I think it would make it a much better city to get around, rather than have to get tied up in intersections because someone couldn't wait 2 seconds and went through an intersection and tied up traffic.

Having said that, Joe Egan and I have a very good relationship. We go back many years. And there is nothing that we will allow get in our way from doing what we think has got to be done in the areas of parking or traffic flow in the city.

There was a meeting with the various

representatives April 16, which I think was Thursday, or something like that. We are working on an implementation agreement that all sides can agree with.

I will tell you that this is a complicated issue, and it is complicated because it involves a lot of different entities. It involves the Parking Authority, it involves the Streets Department, it involves the Police Department, it involves PennDOT.

And I know this is long overdue and I know your interest in this program.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It is my legislation, Mr. Managing Director.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I was there when it was signed with you. I know that. And, so, we are anxious to get this thing off the dime and get it rolling.

It has cost issues to it and start-up costs, and we have to figure out who pays for those start-up costs, how we recoup the money, and so forth.

But I think that the meeting that

was held on the 16th was a good meeting, and I think everyone is working to get this done.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You know, I think you pointed out something very important. And I had a conversation with the Police Commissioner, he is going to get back to me.

The culture in this city, people that run red lights, people do not stop at red lights in this city for some reason. And I think that some reason is that our Police don't do all they can do.

I think police officers have gotten to the point where they can be on the corner in a car -- and I think I understand sometimes why they can't go and enforce the red-light-runner, because they may be involved in an assignment or doing something that they can't be distracted.

But I asked the Police Commissioner to get aggressive, come up with a program to start to detail red-light running. Because I don't think there is anyone in this room that hasn't stopped for a red light and the person just goes, blows right on through it.

And I am not talking about one that's questionable; I am talking about dead red.

And I would hope that when the Commissioner gets back to me, that he does announce that there is going to be some stepped-up enforcement.

Because, again, the culture in this city is, as you described, right on the money. Because, apparently, there is just no ramification for running red lights.

And I know we probably have statistics to show how many tickets we do write. But I can tell you that I don't think I am alone in this room with the feeling that it is out of control in this city, the way people disregard at least that one area, red-light running.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Can I ask one more question?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Let it be the last for this go-around, please.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Sure.

The other area that I would appreciate you elaborating on -- and if you would prefer the Police Commissioner to answer this question -- we talked about Police overtime.

I'm concerned about the way we evaluate -- and I understand that the commanders of the traffic division, from the inspector, the captain, the inspector, the chief inspector.

When we provide police for special events, like Eagles games, Phillies games, where does our responsibility end and where do the teams begin to pay for the luxury of having what they believe is an adequate number of officers?

Now, we had the special district where police officers patrolled because of the quality of life issues, the issues of police officers controlling the 700 level at the Vet. I hope that goes away and we don't have that problem at the new facility.

But my question is, how, as a manager, are you satisfied that we are not giving away the store to the Phillies, Eagles, and other special events? How do you balance that?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I think that I am more satisfied than I was. And maybe that's just because I know more than I did.

But we do insist that the -- you know, we are responsible for outside the stadiums. And if the Police Commissioner wants to correct me on any of this, I would appreciate it. But we are responsible for outside the stadiums.

Once you get inside the stadiums, and we are putting on special detail, we get reimbursed by the Phillies or the Eagles or whoever.

I have taken a pretty hard line on this. I know with L & I, for example, when we put people out there for vending issues, I have insisted we get paid up front.

These are vending issues to protect their brand names. This has nothing to do with safety; this has to do with that people don't sell counterfeit shirts or counterfeit hats and so forth. If they are trying to protect their brand name or the NFL is trying, you have to pay us up front.

And Dominic Verdi is instructed, and I have had no problem convincing him, that if they want a detail out there, you pay up front. So we are pretty stringent with it.

And, again, it is a cooperative effort.

When it came to the implosion of Vet's Stadium, the Phillies picked up everything. They pay on time, no problems. Everything was fine.

So we try to work through these issues. And I think with the opening of the new stadiums, you know, it did pose certain challenges, and particularly with the Eagles because of the different parking lot and color or coding and so forth and so on. So we try to work through these things.

But I can be as much of a businessman as they can be. And I don't mind going hammer and nail at them when I don't think the city taxpayers are getting their fair share.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you. Thank you for that.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Managing Director, I will try to move through some of these quickly.

In your testimony on Page 2, you talk about your office implemented a plan to crack down on illegal posting of commercial signs on public property, including utility poles, trees, and other city- and utility-owned structures.

Who specifically is responsible for this program?

MR. GOLDSMITH: It is run out of the Managing Director's Office, but it sort of involves the Streets Department and L & I.

And we have run out -- Frankie Hughes has been responsible working with community groups.

Thanks to Verizon and PECO, they gave us money to give to community groups, 50 cents a sign, that takes down these signs and returns them to us. We plan to, you know, continue this effort.

I think it is blight. But Frankie Hughes in my office is the lynchpin on doing this.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When did the program start?

MR. GOLDSMITH: The program started in August.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Did we receive any information about this?

MR. GOLDSMITH: You should have. There was, actually, a press conference that a number of the Councilpeople came to. But we will get you information.

And I go through Wynnefield a lot and Overbrook a lot. And it just blows my mind that we have allowed those wonderful neighborhoods -- that's where my in-laws grew up, in Wynnefield, and where my wife grew up.

You go down Wynnefield Avenue, sir,

they are just there. And it just boggles my mind.

I actually have a tool in my car that I take signs down. And I have given them to a couple members on my staff. But I would also like to see the Wynnefield Residents Association and others, we will give them 50 cents a sign.

And I go off on this. Because I think what happens is, a lot of these signs, not necessarily Wynnefield, go into our poorer neighborhoods.

And there are businesses, in a couple of cases we found businesses, that were not registered, and we shut them down. But they didn't mind putting up to get telephones or this or that.

So I would like to see us do it as a community, as a community, more on this issue.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes, I would agree with you. And, I mean, certainly Wynnefield Avenue, but many others.

One, I would be glad, if you have any extras, to put whatever the tool is that you have. If you have any, I would certainly like to have one and someone show me how to use it so I don't hurt myself.

But I was not aware that you were offering that kind of bounty. And what do you have, some kind of a contract with a local neighborhood group to work on this?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. Any community, any Town Watch, any community group that's a nonprofit community group, if they return the signs, you know, we give them 50 cents a sign.

I don't have the numbers right off the top of my head. I forgot how much we got, $25,000, or something like that. There is still money left. There is still money left.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Great. And if you could provide us through the Chair any information about, you know, I guess who so far is participating, and where their level of participation is, what the outreach has been, that would be very helpful.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I go through Fairmount Park. I have to say there is a big orange sign right near Belmont Avenue, right on one of those roads there. And they are getting smart now because they are tying them in with nuts. My tool doesn't do any good anymore.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. We will get another device.

On Page 3, you talk about initiatives for '05, you are restructuring your office to deal with the various departments, to help them in the most effective manner possible run their departments, exercise leadership in grappling with our difficult fiscal situations.

To your knowledge, have there been any performance or operational audits for each of the operating departments in the last three, four, five years?

MR. GOLDSMITH: The Budget Office works on service criteria. And when we have the quarterly meetings, those are used as a gauge.

I would say, probably, the closest that I am aware of on a full-scale operational audit is the strategic plan we are doing with

Fairmount Park, which will have some components of an operational audit.

I wouldn't call it, you know, a real operational audit, but it will show us some things that we can do better and so forth.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And not to highlight anything that, you know, could be considered as a negative, but more as a management tool, I mean, do you think something like that would be helpful on not necessarily something you are going to do every year, but over some amount of time, do you think it would be helpful to just have an outside performance and operational audit of every department, find out what you do well, you find out what you don't do that well, the stuff in between, and use that as just a management tool?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Absolutely. And we may actually do that with the Police Department and help on that. I think we have to prioritize which departments and so forth.

But I think it keeps us all on our toes a little bit. And it is always a pain when you are on the receiving end, but they are helpful.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. And, again, I was not necessarily directing it at any particular department. We have a lot of operating departments. All of us, you know, certainly even our place here, can always do better.

On the overtime issue, you make reference to an FY '04, you've reduced overtime by $17 million from FY '03.

Could you provide to us through the Chair a department by department breakdown of this overtime reduction?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, we have that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last year when we were here having the pleasure of each other's company, I asked you about a particular location in my district, the 400 block of North Daggett Street, D-A-G-G-E-T-T.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: At the time you indicated that you were working on a plan to respond to the challenges over on that street, the variety of homes that we have had to ask the citizens to evacuate. It is about 25 percent of the homes on the block. The other 75 percent are still trying to figure out what's going on.

There has been virtually no discussion about that since that time. The problems over there continue. And, so, I need to ask what has happened since I asked you about this about a year ago?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, one of the things that I failed to do, which I wanted to do with you a couple of weeks ago when we were together, was to give you an update on Daggett Street.

We are trying to get a federal grant to help us on that. And if Bob Allen is in the room, he may be able to -- he has been working on this for me. And this is something we may need your help on to get this where it should be.

But time is of the essence.

MR. BOB ALLEN: My name is Bob Allen, I am Assistant Managing Director.

A number of things have occurred on Daggett Street. There is a federal earmark grant that's available to us, it is a quarter of a million dollars, to help us remediate some of the things that are occurring on Daggett Street.

Unfortunately, it is not enough money to help all of the residents on Daggett Street.

And we have a plan, based on an engineering report and some L & I -- several L & I inspections, to remediate some of the damage on the houses that are sinking and to prevent further damage.

Because a big issue for us is that, as they deteriorate, the houses surrounding them are structurally unsupported, as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. ALLEN: So we really need to get in there and make sure the roofs are intact, that the water is draining away properly through the laterals.

And we intend to use the grant money for that purpose. We have estimates for some of that work. And also to make sure that those houses are sealed up in an attractive manner.

Because right now the condition detracts from the overall appearance of the neighborhood, and it is a very nice neighborhood.

MR. GOLDSMITH: What I would suggest, Councilman, if we can get with you today or some time and let you know. We need some congressional help here that you may be able to help us with.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would be glad to do that.

At the same time, there possibly are some things that, with our own resources, that the gentleman -- I'm sorry. I didn't catch your name.

MR. ALLEN: Bob Allen.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Allen, some of the more immediate issues may fall within the course of the normal things that we do as a city government.

Open houses, you have a whole host

of issues with people and their mortgages and debt, public utilities issues, and, I mean, trash, grass, debris, all of that, safety and security of the homes that have been evacuated.

We had a situation, I think, on Friday where someone has apparently bought one of the homes through sheriff's sale, is in the process of cleaning it out, I can only imagine for the purpose of trying to put someone in the property.

I mean, we are in kind of a left hand/right hand situation, to some extent. Bob Solvibile gave me some information about what we can do and what we can't do. But the prospect of anyone thinking that they could put someone in one of the homes that we actually evacuated ourselves does raise a lot of concerns both naturally for the neighbors on the block and for myself.

So somehow we have to make sure that we are clear on what people can do, what they can't do, what we won't allow people to do, and make sure that we are in a constant vigilance situation.

This has been going on, I think, as we all know, for much too long. And, so, I look forward to the meeting.

What would be helpful is to have a real hard timeline in terms of a series of actions to be taken.

But certainly with regard to the federal issue, I would be happy to talk with Congressman Brady about it. It is his Congressional District and also his Ward.

I know my time is up, ma'am.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. Respect also working on the Town Gardens in Southwest Philadelphia?

MR. ALLEN: No, I am not personally.

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. I think where we last left that was, I think, we have had, as you well know, some meetings with --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Congressman.

MR. GOLDSMITH: -- Congressman Brady and Senator Williams to see whether there wasn't some federal money that we could get.

We did have one issue with Town

Gardens on a particular building, house that we have taken care of for them. And I think that we made a commitment to try to do a little greening down there where that house was, and we will do that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information.

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

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Allen, like Councilman Nutter, I have been involved in this Daggett Street issue for a long time, attended community meetings, et cetera.

And the frustrating part of Daggett Street is the fact that the people that are still there, other side of the street, call me -- you can tell that it is very critical there -- 2:00, 3 o'clock in the morning on voice mail, leaving a message that they haven't heard anything, they don't know what's going on. I think the communication needs to get better, also.

How have you communicated with these

people? Because many of them are calling suggesting that they don't really know where they stand. Or maybe they are not listening. I see Bob Solvibile ready to come out of his seat over there.

MR. ALLEN: I would have to ask Bob or others who have been involved directly with the community.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I would like to hear what we are doing to kind of --

MR. ALLEN: My role has really been because of the possible grant activity.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I think when your house is crumbling from under you, it is a very serious concern.

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And not knowing what's going on, not being communicated with, or just getting some form letter just doesn't cut it, in my opinion.

So if Mr. Solvibile would come and answer that question, how exactly are these people being communicated with.

Because I get, without a doubt, a

call a week or two a week from the people that live on Daggett Street.

MR. SOLVIBILE: Good afternoon. I am Robert Solvibile, Licensing & Inspections.

Councilman, when the people were first asked to leave their houses --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you tell us that date for the record, approximately.

MR. SOLVIBILE: Approximately two years ago.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Two years ago. I just want it for the record to understand what I am talking about occurred two years ago.

MR. SOLVIBILE: A little bit more than two years ago.

The properties were declared imminently dangerous. We met individually. Risk Management and Licensing & Inspections hired an engineering firm, Albert Tantella. And he did a study, an in-depth study on the depth of the fill and all of the problems associated with that.

We gave briefing to the Councilman and to the -- several parties. I believe the elected officials, Congressman's Brady's staff attended, and State Senator -- I cannot remember the State Senator that was at the briefing that we gave. Hughes. And we fully informed him.

Then Risk Management and Licensing & Inspections met individually with the homeowners to explain the situation and they assisted in moving the homeowners out.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But, now, how does this scenario play out?

You hear about a house that was one of the affected homes, was sold at sheriff's sale. So obviously that person wasn't dealt with through Risk Management.

MR. SOLVIBILE: We didn't know it was sold at sheriff's sale. And it was the original people that were affected that we moved out, we dealt with.

Subsequent owners who may purchase, they purchase as-is. And if they purchased the property with a cert, state cert, like you would get at a regular sale, they would know that the properties were imminently dangerous and what the problem is.

It is specific in the file as to what they would have to do, what the condition of their property is.

At the sheriff's sale, there is no regular sale; it is just you buy as-is.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, tell me, how could we even sell a house at sheriff's sale that is imminently dangerous? Something doesn't sound like it is connected here.

MR. SOLVIBILE: I believe it was at a private sheriff's sale. Probably the mortgage company sold it. But it was a private sheriff's sale, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: There is no way to block that kind of a transaction on a building that's dangerous?

MR. SOLVIBILE: That's an answer I can't give. That would have to be a legal opinion, and I'm not sure what the opinion is.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We have people that do that.

MR. SOLVIBILE: I am saying, for me to answer you now, I cannot answer that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Doesn't it sound kind of stupid to sell a building that is imminently dangerous?

MR. SOLVIBILE: I would say that anybody that would go to that block and look at that house, and then go to sheriff's sale and bid on it, knows what they are getting. And they are trying to try to fix it up and, to be frank with you, probably put somebody in there for $1,000 a month to get by the system.

But with the Licensing & Inspections and the Councilman's office, we are not going to allow that to happen.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I have talked to some of the people that were, like, the original affected group.

And I made the statement, naive of me, I said, well, you have been made whole on your situation there.

And I was kind of like rebuked and said, we haven't been made whole.

So could you tell me what you know. Has Risk Management taken care of all the settlements? Or, where exactly are we?

MR. SOLVIBILE: Risk Management, the City of Philadelphia, through the Risk Management Office, provided moving expenses for the people who lived in the homes. And the city determined that we were not at fault, and there would be no settlements.

And, as far as I know, that was told to the owners early on in the process.

As soon as the results of the engineering study were made available, were known, we made it known to them that there would be in fact no settlements.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I will wait for my next. I am getting the look.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That was supposed to be a point of information.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Sometimes they are a little longer.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you. I, too, would like to echo Councilman Ramos' comments relative to Global Philadelphia. I am happy to see they are moving in a direction that is positive.

I do disagree slightly with one of your characterizations, that it is not our job to go out and recruit people to come here. I think it is probably what one of our main jobs are.

And in addition to translation services and other types of things that are federally mandated, there are a plethora of things we could be doing.

For example, Community College charges noncitizens a higher rate than a local Philadelphian to attend school, even if the person lives in Philadelphia, pays taxes, works, and, you know, is here legally.

The college does not, for example recognize them as a Philadelphia resident because they are not a citizen. That would encourage people to go to school and do well.

I think one of the things you talked about was that 30 to 40 percent of our business licenses are immigrants, which really is a case in point as to why we need them here.

So I think attracting them from New York, attracting them from other parts of the world, is an extremely part of rebuilding our neighborhoods and growing our population, like Boston, like Chicago, like New York has done.

Another issue, again, is our airport. You can't get to immigrant feeders from around the world, Western Africa, South America, Central America, Eastern Europe, places where people are coming from to the United States, can't get direct to Philadelphia in our airport.

So there are a lot of different things we need to market and change to really make this an immigrant-friendly destination. But I do appreciate the continued movement in that direction.

I want to go for a moment to the issue relative to street-level prostitution and some of the issues that have been affected by many of our neighborhoods in Philadelphia. It is an ongoing chronic problem that pops up and goes away as time goes on, and it seems to move around.

And there has been a number of different opportunities and suggestions for how to kind of combat it.

I know the police regularly do undercover sting operations where, undercover female police officers pose as prostitutes and engage in conversation and make arrests.

One of the things I would like you to look at for me is the impoundment, not the -- I would like to look at the confiscation of the vehicle of the arrested person.

Not the impoundment of a car, like in a narcotics case. I don't want to own the car. But I want to see if we can work out a system with our livestock program where, when an individual is rested for this particular activity, we take his car to the impoundment lot for safe keeping, store it there to make sure it is not vandalized, charge the person the appropriate towing fee, storage fee.

And then make sure, when the person does get out of jail and picks up their car, that they are licensed and insured and they don't have any traffic tickets.

I think the more level of inconvenience that we place on people in these types of petty -- well, sometimes not petty crimes, if it is happening outside your house -- the lower-level crimes.

And when I raised this before, people said, well, we are not empowered by the Commonwealth to take these cars from these people.

And, again, I want to reiterate, I don't want to own the car and sell it at auction. I just want to take it, put it somewhere to make it safe and inconvenient the person, and perhaps they will think about not coming back again.

So could you check and see whether it is feasible within livestock and whether we are legally able to do it?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Another question that I have about towing is relative to our abandoned automobile towing program. And, you know, it has been touted as 30, 40 thousand cars.

I was curious as to whether or not it is ongoing. How many cars we do a year since the initial effort, and what it costs the city to tow, the towing program.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay. I can answer it. It is an ongoing program, and we will get you the specific information as to how many and the cost.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Since we have gotten over the larger hump early on, and this is kind of a maintenance operation, has there been any look at trying to subcontract that out?

Other cities, Chicago, for example, I know makes money from their abandoned car towing program.

I think we have, you know, in an effort to get our arms around a big problem, bought tow trucks, hired a number of people.

And I am wondering whether or not we are at a point now where a legitimate, licensed, bonded towing company or companies could not take that over for us.

MR. GOLDSMITH: We will look into that.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you very much.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Just if I may, on the Global Philadelphia, I was not suggesting that we should not be recruiting.

I was just saying, from the Managing Director's perspective, what we are trying to do is the approach with city services, which I think is indirectly a form of recruitment.

But I couldn't agree more that we have to be more aggressive in recruiting people to Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I think maybe city government and city operations and city information being made available in a more bilingual, trilingual way is a form of recruitment.

But I really do wish that you could encourage the administration. Because I know, having spoken with you, how you are interested, sincerely interested, in doing this. We need to really have a more formal embrace by the government of immigrants and immigration.

Right now some of what we are doing is legally required, some of it is something we are doing as an incentive. But I would really like -- Mayor Menino in Boston has really embraced that program, the Office of New Bostonians, and really sends out a message that we are a desirable place and we want you here. We understand and acknowledge your entrepreneurship, we acknowledge your solid family life, we acknowledge your contribution, and we want to attract you here, not just take care of the people that we got by luck.

And, as you know, we have talked, down in South Philadelphia and West Philadelphia and other places it is just a growing community. Everybody is contributing. No one is taking from the system. They are all giving back to it. And the more, the merrier, if we could get to that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: And I think it adds to the richness of our city.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Madam President. And good afternoon again.

Earlier today in your testimony, when you spoke about the CLIP program -- this is directed to Mr. Goldsmith -- you spoke of the increase in fines from 25 to 75 dollars.

For what violations are we increasing?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, we are not. I mean, that's up to City Council, my understanding. But this would be for quality of life, CVN-type notices.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So it would be for the trash on the sidewalk, could be?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Uh-huh.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: How did we get to the $75 recommendation? You can go as high as 300, I think, under the city statute.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I'm not sure. Maybe it has already been proposed, or something like that, and that's the number that I used.

I think if you go too high, then you sort of slack off on the enforcement a little bit because you think it is too high.

I mean, we have to find the right amount. That's for this body to find out, make the determination. I just think $25 just doesn't do it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I agree.

MR. GOLDSMITH: It is, like, if you go too high, it is sort of like having the death penalty, and you get to where you have jurors that don't want to do it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I think all of us would agree that 25 in today's world is not enough.

Maybe what we need to do, and Council has to look at, are specific fines, increasing some in excess of $75, depending on the violation. And I will work with your office on those issues.

The other issue is, I may or may not have spoken to you about this a month or so ago, when we got into the issue on the fleet.

I asked the question about would we

be looking into the possibility, or look at the numbers, if I will, with the cars for elected officials as an example.

Where the city buys the car, maintains the car, insures the car, et cetera, did anyone ever look at the cost analysis versus a stipend, if you will, similar to what state legislators and Senators get?

You get X amount of dollars a month, you go buy the car amount you want. If it is over that cost, the insurance is up to you.

Because, you know, we get in an accident -- fortunately I have never been in an accident -- but if we get in an accident, the city has to bear the responsibility of the cost of not only the repairs to the car, if there is any litigation in terms of personal injury, which can be pretty expensive, I'm sure.

So I just was curious, has anything been done in that regard?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That is one of the options that we have on the Fleet Management side as an alternative. One is the Carshare, Philly Carshare. The other one is, I think we got 300 employees now that use their personal cars and they get --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Compensation for mileage?

MR. GOLDSMITH: -- compensation.

But the third one is also to do precisely what you are suggesting. We just haven't hung that down yet, but it is something that -- and maybe we start with City Council. And I think that's a good --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It may not make sense. It may cost us more the other way. I just don't know; I am curious.

MR. GOLDSMITH: I would prefer to, as much as possible, to get out of the car business and really allow the limited resources we have -- and I talked about this with mechanics -- to really focus on our police cars and our fire engines and our medic units and the things, our trash compactors, as opposed to having to take care of sedans and so forth. I just think it is a better utilization of our manpower.

So I would totally favor that approach.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Do you have any idea when you may have some final analysis and recommendation in that area?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No; but we will set a date. We will try to do it before the end of the budget process.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That would be very helpful. Thank you.

I have received some phone calls -- and I certainly don't mean to blind-side you -- in the last week concerning fire station closures.

You know, when the Recreation Department list came out, there was not an official list, unofficial list, was not accurate.

Could you shed some light on that today, or is this something more for the Fire Commissioner?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Fire Commissioner Hairston will be talking about that. I think it is fair to say we are not closing firehouses, but he will get into that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

I have no further questions. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: You are welcome.

Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mr. Goldsmith, we have some additional operating departments coming in tomorrow. At the rate we are going, you might be here when they get here tomorrow morning.

But can you give us at this point, is there a definitive list with regard to the rec centers and pools that have been proposed for either closure? Or I have heard about sales or turning over to groups and organizations.

Is there a definitive list at this point as we go into tomorrow's hearings?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I do not believe that there is a definitive list as of yet.

And, as you know, we have looked at

all the rec centers and the pools, come up with our analysis. But we have been going around to the City Council people and sharing ideas with them, and we have been readjusting our views and our ideas based on those conversations.

So I would say there is not a definitive list as of yet.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. All right. I will take that up further with the departments tomorrow.

This is really more an operational issue. But there was a parking issue raised earlier, and I made a note to myself.

In many of the designated areas -- although I noticed a citizen this morning who could not figure out that the sign, apparently, right above his head that said, "No Parking, City Council Only," somehow I guess he didn't think that applied to him. He is probably trying to recover his vehicle from the Parking Authority about now.

But one of the areas for designated parking is adjacent to our beloved Love Park.

Which, as I go by there from time to time, seems to be a bit of a subtly Helter-Skelter situation in terms of where you park.

The other areas, at least, along the Masonic Temple, and I think even MSB -- I think I got the quick bell on that one -- have lines for parking, so it is clear how many spaces there are, people have enough room.

Do you have any idea why you don't have the same situation over at Love?

MR. GOLDSMITH: No. Fran Dougherty handles this.

MR. FRANCIS DOUGHERTY: Good afternoon. Francis Dougherty, Special Assistant to the Managing Director.

Councilman, among my many duties is handling the authorized parking list.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: God bless you.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes. Every day it presents a challenge to us.

We try to work in cooperation with the designated police units, traffic units that have enforcement duties.

But every day we have a different

situation, and we have a shortage of those who are authorized to park there and can't find a spot.

I wish I had more authorized zones around the city, but obviously it is not fair to the public taking many more streets or parking meters away.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No. I understand that. I am not necessarily advocating for that.

What I am saying is, this is kind of more of a space-management issue. Because at least, again, across the street and down the street, you know how many spots there are.

People know where to park, they try to generally stay between the white lines. And, I mean, it is 10, it is 12, it is 13, whatever the number may be.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In the unclear situation over there, you know, citizens, or authorized parkers, are kind of all over the place. And sometimes people don't necessarily utilize the space in the most efficient fashion, because you can park wherever you want.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Basically.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Should we have boxes, or something like that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why don't you lay it out?

MR. DOUGHERTY: We can, actually, look at that as an option. If it is working more efficiently on 15th Street, rather than 16th or on JFK, we can certainly look at it.

We are always looking at all options to improve the situation.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. I think if you talk to the police officers over there, they would probably tell you it is not too efficient.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information.

What's really --

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Point of information, Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What's mind-boggling is the fact that we own a parking lot underneath the MSB. We lease it out to a subcontractor. It was meant to be our parking lot.

We could probably park the city vehicles that we need to, get them off the street, put meters and get revenue around MSB, all these authorized spots.

Why, every year when this parking lot comes up for bid, do we just give it away?

And I have heard, well, it is profitable. But I believe that the garage was designed to be a support for the city vehicles that require parking.

Somebody some day really should look at that and say, the city's garage, maybe we should park city vehicles in it, rather than have it used for the private sector.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Councilman, we actually are looking at that. I have someone from my staff looking at that.

I think I indicated earlier, as I understand the lease on that, the city is entitled to 200 discounted parking spaces. And what we are now doing with the Parking

Authority is trying to define what "discounted" means.

To me it means zero, to them it means a little bit more than that. So we are trying to resolve that.

But under the lease, we are entitled to 200 discounted spots.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I am not sure it is leased to the Parking Authority. Isn't it leased to a private company?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So it is not Parking Authority.

MR. GOLDSMITH: No, it is not the Parking Authority.

But our contract allows for 200 discounted spots, and I don't think we have taken full advantage of that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I think a lot of the heat would go away that we get with all this vehicle talk if we had that parking facility available to park city vehicles and allow the citizens that want to come and do business, the one that parked in the

Councilman's spot, I think that really somebody should focus on it. But, you know, contract after contract it seems that nobody listens.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Point well taken.

As part of the fleet reduction initiative that we are now undergoing, we are also looking at how we get our workers up here because of a lack of parking, the fact that we spend almost $900,000 a year in off-street parking for our employees.

One of the options which we are now exploring is creating a shuttle bus service for employees to park in a designated city-owned lot and bring them up to the triplex area.

This, of course, is being done in conjunction with also exploring getting additional spaces down at Love Park.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You mean our own city garage, we are going to be able to park our own city cars in it some day? It is very creative.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you. You have been tremendously patient. I know my time is up.

But I think it would please Mr. Goldsmith to no end that I probably have three last questions. And, with your permission, if I could ask them, and then I would be done and he could get on with his life.

On Page 6 of the testimony, Mr. Goldsmith, you have the Weed and Seed program. If you could just forward to the Chair the locations where the program is functioning and operating, that would be very helpful.

Do you have any information that you might be able to share on an initiative that we have been working on with regard to Fairmount Park public safety?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes. A number of things going on.

Number one, the Police Commissioner is appointing a police captain to oversee and coordinate park safety.

So we understand from the entire park, which of course is 8900 acres and goes throughout the city, that we are looking at this from a strategic law enforcement perspective. So I think that's one important component.

The second thing that we have done is, we have looked at the availability of cell phone coverage, particularly 911, throughout the park.

I think we did something like 800,000 calls, or some large number. And we had someone come in and study that.

And what we found out is, where we don't have adequate coverage is in Wissahickon and there is a small band up at Pennypack Park where I think, actually, the band shell was at. So we have engaged someone to come up with other technology that we can use.

We are looking for, probably, three or four towers that we can place. Obviously it is going to be sensitive because of the nature of the park and so forth. But I think we should have that within a month.

We are also talking to Verizon on their pay phones, to put street names on their pay phones around the park.

One of the problems that we have with 911 calls is that it does not track, there is not street information in the park. And this is a first step of what we are trying to do.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So if you were at a pay phone, basically, somewhere on the phone it would tell you where you are?

MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes, so you could identify yourself to 911.

We are also looking at emergency call boxes to put at the beginning of some of the trails.

We have had conversations with Temple and Penn to see what their satisfaction and results have been with those.

I was, actually, supposed to get a demonstration last week, but that was cancelled. And that's coming up.

I think that there are issues with

it, but we want to look at that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You are talking about the kind of call boxes that we see on college campuses?

MR. GOLDSMITH: That's correct, that have the blue lights.

We are also looking at some increased lighting, particularly on West River Drive, where I think that there are some dark areas which we have discussed; and also that one bridge, putting a mirror there. We have got the mirror in place. That will be done.

We are also -- Karen Borski will probably have a better update than I do -- on getting informational, some plastic cards, made up with some of the rules.

We want to have a big campaign handing those out. I think we have been shooting for May 1. Hopefully that will be available.

Also looking at some pruning of trees and some other type of maintenance with shrubs to create more of an openness there, and better deployment of our park rangers and also some volunteer park patrols. So there are a number of initiatives.

I hasten to add that last summer was not a good summer, and we had some terrible tragedies. But I think we always walk a fine line by trying to be responsive to those issues; but also saying that, I think, we have, when you consider that we have an urban park, one of the largest urban parks, that goes around this entire city, that it is basically a safe park, but we are always looking to do better.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you for that update.

And I have enjoyed working with you on these issues. And I think we have further conversation coming up shortly.

A couple last questions. You mentioned tree pruning specific to the safety issues. But overall in your Appendix A, you make reference to the street tree removal program.

One of the things that at times has been a little perplexing is actually getting a schedule related to both tree pruning by area, and then -- and certainly I can talk with Fairmount Park -- the at times mystery around when a request goes in for removal and when it actually happens, and then, naturally, the followup on the planting.

We can never really seem to, even by season, tell citizens with any certainty when the tree is coming out; and, even after that, when the new one is coming in.

So I would like to get some additional information about that.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Lastly, what is the transportation policy for the City of Philadelphia?

I ask that in the context of, when I look at your testimony, you lay out Emergency Management, Municipal Energy Office, a number of different entities.

And it's both a recent assignment, general interest that I have always had, but what is the actual transportation policy, or who is driving -- no pun intended -- the transportation policy for the city?

MR. GOLDSMITH: I don't know. It is not part of the Managing Director's Office.

I think Planning Commission has a role in there. I think at one point Planning Commission, I would say, is a major driver there.

And it is a conversation Maxine Griffith and I have from time to time because it involves so many different components of city government.

But I would think, from a planning perspective, it would be Planning Commission. From an operational, it depends on what the department is, and so forth.

I think at one time that, I know when I was in city government 20 years ago, that came out of the Mayor's Office. I think at one point it was moved to the Managing Director's Office. And right now I think it is in the Planning Commission.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. It keeps kind of moving around. But, okay. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you

very much.

Are there further questions? Further questions or comments?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The only thing I would like, before the Managing Director leaves, is this policy, whether the Law Department has to be drug in, where a dangerous home, we could move people out, and then there needs to be some process developed where that property then can't go to sheriff, can't go to foreclosure. That it just, it is ludicrous to think that what we heard today could happen.

But I would hope that somebody would pick up the ball and prevent that situation from continuing.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much.

Well, it looks like we can move forward. The Police Department is next.

OPERATING BUDGET - BILL NO. 020455 - 4/19/04

PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon, Commissioner. Thank you for your patience. We do have a copy of your testimony. A copy will be given to the stenographer.

Does the stenographer have a copy?

So may I suggest that you abbreviate your testimony.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. Please proceed. Identify yourself and proceed with your testimony.

COMMISSIONER SYLVESTER M. JOHNSON: Sylvester M. Johnson, Police Commissioner, City of Philadelphia.

Good afternoon, Council President and members of City Council. It is an honor to appear before you today for the third time as Police Commissioner to present the Police Department's General Fund budget request.

With me at the table are Deputy Commissioner Thomas Nestel, Fiscal Officer Thomas DeWaele, my Senior Legal Adviser Karen Simmons. Also accompanying me are Deputy Commissioner Patricia Giorgio-Fox, Deputy

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Commissioner Charlotte Council, Deputy Commissioner Charles Brennan, Executive Officer Marvin Burton.

I am presenting to you a budget request that is $14 million less than last year's. This does not mean that we expect the department who have less work to do next year. In fact, we will provide the same level of service or better.

We will increase our efforts directed at eliminating open-air drug markets, while continuing to serve search warrants on drug houses.

We will devote more effort to reducing the numbers of young people who use drugs, because this is the only effective long-term way of tackling the drug problem in our city.

We will be strengthening our program aimed at reducing gun violence and getting guns off the street. The number of homicides in this city still is far too high. Reducing the number of guns on the streets is one of the most serious ways of getting the homicide numbers down.

We will do even more to make our schools safer for those who learn and work in them. We owe this to our children and our teachers.

We will be initiating our new program; namely, reducing noise level in our city, an important quality of life issue.

We will do all this without compromising the level of service that we provide in response to the emergency calls for assistance and without reducing our efforts at preventing terrorism or our preparations for responding to major incidents, whether caused by terrorism, accidents, or natural disaster.

We will do all this by working more efficiently and effectively. We will reduce our budget, while continuing the high level of police service to the public, because we will be reducing our lump-sum payment to retirees, as fewer employees are expected to retire in FY '05; decreasing personnel costs through the reduction of ranking officers and supervisors; reducing court overtime; eliminating the

Police Mounted Unit; utilizing grants.

We will make better use of technology and generate more revenue from those services which we are able to charge fees.

I am confident that the men and women of the Philadelphia Police Department, both uniformed and civilian, will rise to these challenges

The Police Department General Fund Budget request for Fiscal Year 2005 is $481,172,558. This figure is $14,683,545 less than our estimated obligation of $495,856,103 in Fiscal Year 2004.

It will provide for 6,910 sworn personnel, 1,037 school crossing guards and, 911 civilians.

In order to sustain the sworn personnel level, the requested budget will apply for four police classes, totaling 354 recruits. Including the 159 sworn officers assigned to the airport unit that is funded through the city's Aviation Fund, out total sworn strength is Fiscal Year 2005 will be

7,069. This is the highest level in more than 15 years.

The Police Department will be able to sustain personnel level and workload by implementing a number of cost-saving measures, including overtime reduction, revenue generators, without affecting the level of quality of service provided to the citizens of Philadelphia.

My written testimony that you all have fully addresses a list of our major accomplishments and initiatives; such as, Operation Safe Streets, Operation GRRIP, anti-terrorist response preparation initiatives, school safety, overtime control program, police reimbursement overtime program, use of technology to enhance our policing.

The list also includes our efforts and initiatives to improve the quality of life in Philadelphia.

The programs that I have mentioned only represent a small part of what we do every day and every night of every week of the year.

In addition to the efforts that are listed and highlighted in my written testimony, we answered 1,810,315 calls for service, made 66,000 arrests last year, and served those who work, live and visit our city in countless other ways.

As Mayor Street said in his budget address a few weeks ago, "Philadelphia is city of proud neighborhoods and we will never default on our commitment to regular people who live in them."

Thank you for this opportunity, and we are prepared to respond to any questions you may have.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Commissioner.

You mention in your testimony that your Class 100 budget is being reduced by $14 million in FY '05. How much of that amount is due to the DROP and also the transfer to grants accounts?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I understand

$10 million.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I think we calculated it to be 14.

What, if any, of the $14 million in your reductions have been an operational impact upon your department?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Can you repeat that question again, please?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Sure. I would like to know how much of the $14 million in Class 100 that's being reduced is due to DROP and also the transfer to grant accounts?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, it is 10 million due to DROP, my understanding.

PRESIDENT VERNA: 10 million?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

I'm not sure how many is going to -- it is about 3 million to grants.

PRESIDENT VERNA: What, if any, of the monies in reductions will have an operational impact on your department?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I don't believe any of the money that's being reduced.

I think what we are trying to do is

change a lot of different initiatives that we have.

I think the effect on our department by analyzing, by making a lot of different changes that we have done so far in the last year, will enhance the services of our department, even though we are reducing our operational budget.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You mention Operation Safe Streets in your testimony and you also mention its accomplishments for FY '04.

Can you tell us what the program will encompass in FY '05 and what will be the projected cost?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, I think, really, what Operation Safe Streets did, it was mentioned earlier today, it changed the quality of life here in the City of Philadelphia. It wasn't about statistics; it is about quality of life.

And I also think that, in the very near future, some of the statistics we have here, at least some of the things that we are doing, by changing statistics -- not so much changing the statistics, but changing our initiatives -- will put more police officers on the street, but at the same time will enhance the quality of life here in the City of Philadelphia.

I'm not sure the exact amount of Safe Streets we would anticipate next year. I have to ask.

I am going to ask Deputy Commissioner Patricia Giorgio-Fax to testify, at least to answer that question.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Very well.

Good afternoon. Please identify yourself for the record.

MS. PATRICIA GIORGIO-FOX: Yes. I am Patricia Giorgio-Fox, Philadelphia Police Department.

The Operation Safe Streets program has continued in a fairly successful way. What we are doing in the last two months or so is, we are starting to analyze in a more efficient way the hours when the officers are needed so that we can pinpoint when the officers need to be there, rather than totally blanket a corner 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This will, hopefully, be fiscally responsible, but will also get the same effectiveness that we have had in the past.

We are doing that through mapping, through crime analysis, in a much more targeted way than we were in the past.

As the program progresses, what we have realized is that we need to focus this program. And what we have decided to focus it on, at least for right now, is wanton gun violence.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Is what, dear?

MS. GIORGIO-FOX: Wanton gun violence.

And, so, actually we have a plan right now in conjunction with the Safe Streets program. And we call this a priority safe streets corner.

Whenever we have an outdoor shooting for which there is no immediate motive known, and the corner gives us a history of violence, or the individuals involved have a history of either narcotics activity or violence, we then set up what we call priority safe streets corner, where we will have an officer on that corner 24 hours, 7 days a week.

So we believe that while we target those corners, the other corners in our program over the last two years have improved to the point where we can randomly cover them during periods of time when that's necessary.

And as far as a projection of cost, I know that in the last two months we spent somewhere in the area of 600,000 in overtime. I cannot tell you what the future will hold. We have not been in this mode.

This was, April was, the first month that we started this random variable interval coverage.

PRESIDENT VERNA: All right. Thank you.

Commissioner, you mention the elimination of the mounted unit in your testimony.

Can you tell us what this unit costs

and what are the savings to the department by its elimination?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We will save approximately $700,000 a year.

And let me say this: I think that the mounted unit is a very effective unit that does a very effective job. But, at the same time, being fiscally responsible, I also realize that by not reducing the mounted unit, that I would probably have to reduce personnel.

And when it comes between reducing the mounted and reducing personnel, we made the choice to reduce the mounted unit.

Our bike unit has been very effective, and they showed that during the RNC, that they can handle a lot of things the mounted unit used to be able to do.

It is not so much that we wouldn't want to reduce just Police Department, but I wouldn't want to see any city employee, no matter what department they worked in, be eliminated because we kept the horses.

Approximately ten years ago we had

175 horses here in the City of Philadelphia. Today we have 17. We had approximately 335 people in the mounted, today we have 26.

So although I think the mounted does an outstanding job, I feel as though, being fiscally responsible, that we have to do that to save money.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Are there civilians in that unit?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am, there are.

PRESIDENT VERNA: How many civilians, and what will happen to them?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, the uniformed police officer will be assigned to other areas.

But understand that the civilians, there is approximately -- I'm not sure of the exact numbers, but those other than supervisors have the same classification as, I think, a fingerprint technician.

What we would like to do is train them to be our fingerprint technicians.

As far as the supervision is

concerned, I think that's still being discussed.

PRESIDENT VERNA: What will happen to the horses? Are we selling them?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No, ma'am, we are not selling any horses at all.

PRESIDENT VERNA: What will we do with the horses? They would still have to be cared for, if we keep them.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We are not going to keep them.

What's going to happen is that all the horses -- most of the horses that we have were donated. We are asking the people who donated them to have the first choice of giving them back. And I think there are a number of people who have decided to take them back.

In addition to that, I think the New Jersey State Police will take any horses that we have leftover. There are other township police officers that want to take our horses that we have leftover.

So we will not sell any horse. And

any horse that even, that we volunteer to give back to, we will investigate. We don't want the horses just to be given to anybody to be misused.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And you say in eliminating the mounted unit, we will be saving what 700,000?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: $700,000 a year.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Commissioner, I would like to have or hear your position on PICA's report in the areas of poor management and lack of oversight and unnecessary personnel rules in the Police Department.

Can you comment on that, if you will?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

First thing, what we would like to do is meet with the PICA to come up with just how they came up with these determinations.

The percentage of uniformed officers in the field is misleading because it does not consider the number of civilian employees who are available to perform administrative duties.

For example, Los Angeles has 3,080 civilian employees, that's 25 percent. Philadelphia has 933 civilian employees.

The other question we would like to ask them, are all police departments surveyed comparable in their consideration of the definition of officers in the field. Can the term "field" be defined in some other regard in these cities. These cities differ.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, you mean PICA never sat with you and discussed what their report was going to be indicating?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No, ma'am, they did not.

As far as I know, I don't think they discussed it with anybody from the department.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Strange.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information, Madam President.

When Joe Vignola sat in that chair a few days just before, never once said that he even had a report on the Police Department.

He sat there, and I asked him question after question about different things about the Police Department.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I think that report -- wasn't that delivered to all of us?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Madam President, I asked --

PRESIDENT VERNA: And I think it is on the internet.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But I asked Joe Vignola why he didn't tell Council, when we were talking about the Police Department, talking about the reimbursable program, the Expressway issues, never mentioned once that there was a report, and two days later it gets dropped.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And, as I said, it is on the internet.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But that was after the fact.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Your point is well taken. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner,

would you elaborate on the overtime controls that you have now put into place.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, a lot of our overtime is court overtime.

And I think also, going back to the PICA report, you know, overtime expenditures do not reflect or compare work rules that maybe other cities may have, where here in the City of Philadelphia we just can't change our work rules because of union concerns.

What we, basically, have done is that, as far as people working overtime, if you work two hours, you have to have the approval of a supervisor.

If you are going to work over the two hours, you have to have the approval or permission of the commanding officer.

There are a whole lot of other things that we are actually putting in place to try to control overtime.

One of the things that we do now, Deputy Commissioner Nestel constantly asks each commander to justify their overtime expenditures, what did he do to try to reduce it. I think in the last month or so, it has been coming down.

We have been meeting with the city government -- not so much with the city government, but with the court administration, with the District Attorney's Office, to try to eliminate unnecessary people going to court.

Say, for example, there was one court case in one day where they subpoenaed something like 85 police officers to come to court.

We have asked them to monitor that and have their supervisors approve those types of things.

Right now I think what we have in place, whenever there are over ten officers that are going to court, that the supervisor has to look at it.

In addition to that, I don't see the necessity of an officer going to court for almost a month at a time. Those are our concerns.

The other thing, too, when these arrests are made and officers are needed for court, we want the supervisors to look over and make sure that the officers on those pieces of papers, on our investigative reports, are actually officers who are actually needed for court.

So there are a whole lot of things we are trying to put in place to try to control overtime, to control our overtime.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You know, I think for as long as I have been here, this issue comes up every year. I am delighted to hear that, hopefully, something will be done about it.

And I know in past years if there were ten police officers that were at the scene of a crime, ten of them didn't have to appear in the courtroom. Now the laws have changed.

But I think if you can continue to work on that, it would really, really make a difference.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, one of the other things we did in the last four or five months, and by meeting with the District

Attorney's Office and the court administrators, they requested that I send them more court liaison people, to look over the reports. I transferred ten people over to court liaison.

So that everything that the Philadelphia Police Department can do, we will do. But it has to be a cooperative effort between the District Attorney's Office, the Police Department, and the court administration. But we will do our part.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Are police officers on call?

I know years ago they used to be on call. Say there was an involuntary manslaughter case going on, and maybe there were 12 other cases listed. The officers involved in these 12 other cases would be on call, if in the event that the involuntary manslaughter case did not proceed.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We got away from, really, the on call. Because it appears that what was happening is that certain police officers would go in front of the judges, the officer wasn't there right at that moment, they would dismiss the cases. Other times we had police officers that they couldn't get ahold of, even though they were in other courtrooms.

So we changed the rules where we didn't want anyone to have a reason to dismiss any criminal in the City of Philadelphia because the officer wasn't physically there at that point.

So when the officers are subpoenaed to court, we want them in the courtrooms.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. You mentioned school safety in your testimony. Can you tell us what you will be doing in FY '05 in this area.

Well, we are communicating quite often with the school police and the school administrators.

In addition to that, each captain has to have a report with the principals of the certain areas that they work in.

At our CompStat, again, Deputy Commissioner Fox specifically asked the commanders what are they doing about certain schools, are there any problems with these particular schools.

There are certain areas that we have schools -- not necessarily school police, but we have the Philadelphia police officers go over on a daily basis, say for Lincoln, Frankford, and a lot of other schools, South Philadelphia High School, that, at dismissal time, we take a lot of our administrative people who work inside, who actually go out on the street during dismissal time or the time that they report to court

The communication, the network that we have with the school police officers has to become a little better. Anything they ask the Philadelphia Police Department for, we give.

Whether it is a form mapping or information or statistics, we try to give it to them on a daily basis.

So, we work with them every day, we communicate with them, and we make sure that we patrol troubled schools.

And I think I have already mentioned

that at CompStat, those questions are brought up to every commander that comes up in front of us.

PRESIDENT VERNA: In fact, I think we made 60 Minutes last night starting problems with school safety, as many other cities are facing.

At this time the Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Commissioner, let me just start with a couple of preliminary questions.

With regard to Operation Safe Streets, at this point what is the estimate of the number of open-air drug markets in the City of Philadelphia?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We have approximately 154 Safe Street corners, and it fluctuates. It fluctuates based on what's going on each week.

In addition to that, Deputy Commissioner Giorgio-Fox put something in place that's a little different, she has priority corners.

And priority corners are corners where there has actually been a shooting or an incident that has happened out there outside.

That priority corner, police officers not only stand there for a period of time, but they are there for approximately between 21 hours and 23 hours or 24 hours a day.

Also with the priority corners we bring in the state patrol, parole officers, other warrant officers to send a message that if these things happen in a particular area, that we will not tolerate it.

And it also sends a message to the citizens that we are concerned about what is happening in that particular community.

So right now we have, again, about 154 Safe Street corners -- but, again, it fluctuates -- and approximately 24, 25 priority corners whose designations are by the commanding officer of that particular district.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And if a corner is designated as a Safe Streets corner, does that mean that it is what we have referred to in the past as an open-air drug market corner?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, when we came up with Safe Streets, Safe Streets corners that we originally went to were corners that had open-air drug markets and also had violence on those particular corners; it wasn't just a corner that sold drugs.

And those corners, they were like car washes, where people actually line up to buy their drugs.

So, I mean, there are still some corners probably that are out there selling drugs. But the open-air drug market, the way that it used to exist three or four years ago, we find doesn't exist anymore. But, drugs are moving indoors now.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When Deputy Commissioner Fox talked about redeployment strategies, and not just having the officers out at, what I recall the start was, 300 locations.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But now we are looking at a more strategic use of the officers.

What does that mean in the context of either the number of officers out or any reductions in the cost of the overall program?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, what it does, at least in my opinion, it reduces overtime. But, again, Safe Streets wasn't an overtime-type thing.

When we first started Safe Streets, what we were doing -- and we learned by some of our mistakes -- was putting officers on the corner for eight hours, the entire day. And they stood on those corners for eight hours a day.

What Deputy Commissioner Fox has put in place, where it is not necessary for officers to be out there for eight hours. They might be out there for an hour, they might be out there for two hours.

And there are a series of corners that they will patrol, that they will handle. No one knows what time they are going to be out there, no one knows exactly what day they are going to be out there. So it is hard to set up a drug corner

Because normally what happens, at least it has happened in the past, the buyers would come to certain corners because they knew those corners were selling drugs.

But not knowing what corners to go to, it eliminates a lot of the buyers going to these corners and a lot of the people standing out, even the sellers. So I think that strategy has become very, very effective.

The other thing which she has initiated with the priority corners, by having officers out there 23 hours a day, I think, is really, really effective.

But, again, by putting those police officers on certain corners, at certain times of the day -- most of our crime that we understand happens between 7:00 at night to

3:00 in the morning. Before we would put an officer out there from, say, 8:00 to 4:00 and 4:00 to 12:00.

Now we put them out there based on our intelligence, based on surveillances, based on information from the community. We put them out there when we feel as though the officers are actually needed, during those periods of time.

And we survey that. And I want the commanders to go out and monitor these types of things, where corners are needed and where corners are not needed.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You made the statement that the program was not originally designed for overtime. That's not an exact replay of your statement, but I think I got pretty close.

My recollection, though, is, when the program was announced, it was anticipated that over a five-year period, there was, actually, I thought, a schedule of additional overtime costs associated with the Safe Streets program. I think it was 35 million in the first year, 25 in the second, possibly 25 in the third, 12 and a half and 12 and a half in Years four and five.

Do you recall that?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir, I do.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Weren't those costs additional costs attributed to overtime?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, they were, but that was the cost of budgeting given to us by city government.

And at the time that we first started Safe Streets, I think it was something new not only to the city, but new to the Police Department.

And we anticipated that during the period of time that we started Safe Streets, that drugs were going to change. As we changed, they changed. And what we found, and predicted, that drugs will start going indoors.

At the same time we also realized that drugs are being sold at certain times, in certain areas. And because of that, we changed some of the schedules for some of our units.

Say, for example, the highway patrol unit changed their hours of operation. Our narcotics strike force changed their hours of operation.

We are still attacking the same areas that we did before, but we are doing it on regular time instead of overtime.

But when we started this program, it is like having an invasion force going in there. We didn't really want the citizens to be too much involved in this because we knew the drugs were not going to just stop. Drug dealers are just not going to turn over and say, well, you all are out here.

And by strategizing, we have more community groups that are involved in it right now. We have Mothers in Charge, Men United for a Better Philadelphia, other people are in charge out there right now.

A lot of our enforcement is still out there, but is out there on straight time, instead of doing it during overtime.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I know the buzzer sounded. I have some other questions, but I will come back.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I am sorry. I didn't hear you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I said, I think I heard the --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes, it did go off some time ago. We will come back to you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, I have a few questions. I don't know if I will get to all of them in this round.

I would like you to describe to me the rationale, the recent move, where the money came from, why we moved to the Navy Yard a police operation.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, if you are talking about the traffic unit, I think there was an agreement between the city government and the people from the stadium and the community that when these two stadiums were built, that we would have more enforcement down there.

Also, in addition to that, we changed the operation of highway patrol. It was two-fold that they had, crime beat and they had the Expressway.

Now those who work the Expressway are now, again, working within the traffic unit.

But I think that arrangement was made by the city government and the community and the people who are involved in the stadium. The Police Department wasn't really involved in that decision.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Are we paying rent for this facility at the Navy Yard?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Public Property is paying rent there. The city is paying rent there.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: How much?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I have no

idea. I will find out for you.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you, please.

The next issue, as you heard my conversation with the Managing Director, and you heard the Managing Director's observation, that the culture in this city of running red lights is out of control.

And I know you promised to get back to me on possibly some stepped-up enforcement to red-light running by the uniformed police in the City of Philadelphia.

What can you do to help with this issue of red-light running in the city, since cameras aren't here yet?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I think I am among the opinions that when it is observed by uniformed police officers, it should be enforced at all times.

We are going to come up with a strategy to make sure that those things are enforced.

A person running a red light is a danger to everyone. So, again, we are going to sit down and we are going to discuss it.

But the rules have always been, if you observe a person violate the law, whether it is traffic law or laws of the penal code, you should enforce it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I understand that.

But I think that it has gotten so out of control. Again, the culture that, if you run a light in Philadelphia, the chance of getting a ticket is remote.

I really think you need to do something quickly to remind the officers or have some type of a specific program, one of these things that you do occasionally to make something a point to the officers to enforce, that red-light running is something that really needs to get under control.

And in that same breadth, it has been reported to me that the VASCAR officers that had in the past been assigned to deal with speeding, that many of those units are inoperable, the officers aren't trained any longer, and we have very little, very little speed enforcement with VASCAR throughout the Police Department. Since we are not allowed to use radar, the VASCAR is the only alternative.

Could you report to me what we are doing presently with VASCAR in the city; how many units, what districts are they?

92nd District used to have VASCAR on the Drives, and I don't think that that presence is there the way it once was.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. I will get that information.

But one of the conversations that you and I had about the red lights, and what we did, we discussed it at every roll call in the City of Philadelphia. It was already discussed, or supposed to be discussed.

And we will send out a teletyped message that says I will discuss it with my deputy commissioners and come up with some plan how we can enforce that.

Again, as I said, I think it should always have been enforced. If a police officer observes a person violating traffic laws, he should enforce those things.

We will make sure that supervisors and other people involved in our command structure make sure these things are done.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, again, I am not the only one seeing this. You heard the Managing Director talk about his personal observations.

Were you here today, when he brought this up?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir, I was.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And VASCAR?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I will get more information about the VASCAR.

I am not sure how many we have at this point. I am not sure if any of my deputies know at this point.

MR. THOMAS NESTEL: Tom Nestel, Deputy Police Commissioner.

Councilman, the VASCAR is predominantly used on the Expressways. We also have districts. The 5th District has one, the 39th has one, I believe the 7th has one.

I'm not aware of the one in the park not working now, but we will check on that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: 14th had one, and I was told that there is no one there that knows even how to operate it.

MR. NESTEL: Well, if the commanding officer doesn't have someone who can operate it, it is his responsibility to let us know, and we will see that they are trained.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I am not sure if VASCAR is on the Expressway, Commissioner. I don't know about that.

MR. NESTEL: Well, I am, sir.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: There is?

MR. NESTEL: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The last issue, Commissioner. Our strategy to go after the 6 million bucks.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Go ahead. Finish.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The strategy to go after the close to $6 million from the state doesn't seem to be a very good one, when we hear today a statement that we are going to continue to do this work, even if we don't get the money.

Your chance of getting that money is limited to none, I would think, based on that type of a strategy.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, the strategy the Police Department has, at least the strategy that I have, public safety is number one.

And, you know, to patrol I-95 and the 76, I think that's a little above me. This has been going on for, probably, 40 years, when I used to patrol the Expressway.

But, at the same time, we cannot eliminate having officers on I-76, 95, or Broad Street.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But it is not your responsibility.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It is not your responsibility.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: It is my responsibility to make sure the citizens of Philadelphia are safe.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But it is a state -- again, I am not going to argue the point with you.

My point is that, it is not a very good strategy, to let the people know you are going to continue to do it.

Do you think you are going to get money out of Harrisburg with that kind of strategy? I don't.

Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: First, Commissioner, I want to thank you for providing expert testimony on our gun legislation and assisting us in getting those bills out of committee.

All of the bills are out of

committee. We have forwarded all that information to Harrisburg. We will cross our fingers and await a response from the legislature in the Governor's office.

And if we enter into some substantive discussion, I would ask you that you support us again and participate in that discussion.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I appreciate you even putting that legislation up. I think anything that's going to benefit helping us control guns will help the citizens of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Right.

Safe Streets was obviously an initiative that I was very happy to see. Some of the law enforcement -- and I won't call out any names -- I can recall sitting in this particular chambers early on in my career as a Councilperson asking questions about people standing on corners, selling drugs openly, knowingly, and we basically did nothing about it.

And I was told by prior law

enforcement officers that there was nothing we can do.

And I got so upset that one of the local newspapers drew a little funny picture of me. I think it was the City Paper, and said, "The last angry Councilman." I was frustrated. And it was a pretty funny picture, too. It looked nothing like me.

But I want to say that I am happy that, in fact, you have done something about that. You have gone out on the corners aggressively and stemmed the tide of open-air, arrogant drug dealing.

But, saying all that, I want to say that I personally believe that it is time to go another level. And I know that you understand that the level of drug trade has changed, people have gone inside. People do things in a different way, people have gotten mobile.

And I want to ask you about a couple of things that I have heard over the years as it related to sustaining the level of enforcement on these designated corners.

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One was a Chicago initiative that was actually more targeted towards gangs, because they had a serious gang problem in Chicago.

And I don't know the technical term that was used for the legislation, but the word on the street was called the Gang Bang Law, that was passed by the Chicago legislature; that, essentially, the city, along with law enforcement, was able to designate certain corners.

And those corners, by law, authorized the police to allow people to move off the corner, although they weren't noticeably doing anything.

But because of that certain designation of that corner, it authorized the police where they would, essentially, come in, I want the corner. And during a certain time period, I think it was like 15 minutes, if they came back, if those people did not leave, they were authorized to arrest them.

And I believe that this was challenged, and I believe ultimately they won the challenge.

Additionally in some areas, actually in Chicago and in a couple of other municipalities, they have gone the surveillance route.

Where there are known drug corners and crime corners, where they have decided to do surveillance with pole cameras and other types of surveillance that enhance their ability to enforce certain known crime areas and also diminishing the need to have manpower.

Understanding our budget constraints, and even if we didn't have them, I am assuming that you would agree that at some point we can no longer have the physical presence of police officers out on corners.

And I want to know, do you think that either of these initiatives is feasible in the City of Philadelphia, or if you have any other initiatives that can allow us to monitor activity on corners or in designated drug areas without having a physical presence of an actual police officer?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We already, you know, have cameras up at certain times.

And I think this was mentioned last year about Chicago, and we did talk to Chicago.

And one of the differences in Chicago and Philadelphia, Chicago had a lot of gangs that were easily identified, the Bloods, the Crips, that we don't have the same problem here.

As a matter of fact, I talked to Chicago's chief not too long ago, and he was trying to find out what we were doing here about Safe Streets. Because some of the initiatives they have up there they didn't feel as though they were working.

I think the main thing, at least in my opinion, by being involved in this for a period of time, traditional policing is not working, and just traditional policing by itself will never change the quality of life.

I think we need the community, the clergy, the elected officials, the businesspeople to get involved in this.

We can constantly go out there and make all of the arrests that we want to make. But, at the same time, the drugs go where is the least enforcement.

There are certain times with Safe Streets that we pulled away of certain corners, and the drug dealers came back.

Some corners where they came back, the community came out to say, we are not going to tolerate it, and they left.

Other corners who were out there, that felt as though they can go out there and nobody says anything, they stayed.

There is a reason why they sell drugs on certain corners and drugs not on other corners.

I think both of the initiatives that you mentioned would be a benefit to us, if legally we could do it.

My problem originally, before, is that we are not going to break the law to enforce the law. And I know it is nothing that you have asked us to do.

But to take the kids from one

corner, who are not doing anything, and put them on another corner, there has to be jobs and training, there has to be other things that are going to have to get involved in this to be able to change their culture.

What we are finding with Safe Streets, drugs are going indoors. And by going indoors, the community has been very supportive of us, giving us information about where the drugs are going.

Unfortunately, as long as you have a buyer, you are going to have a seller. And, you know, we let this go too long. It took us 25, 30 years to get into the condition we are in today. It is going to be hard to get out in one or two years.

But any initiative that I think will benefit the quality of life is a good initiative. And I will again talk to Chicago.

We do surveillance, we do have pole cameras up there. A lot of things that we have to do have to be legally responsible. When we go to court right now, we have to make sure that we do everything by the book.

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Because if we don't, they are going to throw those particular cases out.

We have had cameras up there at polls where they have actually shot them down. But, at the same time, there are things we are doing differently because the drugs dealers are now doing things differently here in the City of Philadelphia.

But I will communicate with Chicago and find out where the law stands. But, from my information, it was easier for them to do it because of the gangs that they had there.

We really don't have the types of gangs they have in Chicago. We have some drug gangs, but they are not as identifiable as the Crips or the Bloods or some of the other disciples as they are in Chicago.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I agree with you, Commissioner, to the degree that we don't have gangs as notorious as the Bloods and Crips.

But I do know, and I am sure you know, that there is a resurgence of gang activities that is centered around drugs. And people are starting to identify themselves by name in some of these neighborhoods.

So while we are not where they are at this point, I think that we need to get ahead of the curve on this one and be as aggressive as possible.

I personally am a person representing a district that has a lot of the social problems that subsequently create the law enforcement issues.

As I talked about earlier in the hearing last week, about spending more money on the front side, as opposed to on the back side with the prison system and the law enforcement and the judicial system.

But the reality is that I am to the point where I am as frustrated as I was when the prior Commissioner said he couldn't do anything about people standing on the corners.

I am getting to the level where I am extremely frustrated at the level of homicides and the continued crime. And I think it may be now to talk about another strategy as it relates to going the next level.

Recently we have this phenomena, and I am calling it that now, of putting individuals who solicit prostitutes in the newspaper.

And maybe we need to start putting the pictures of people who are purchasing drugs, be it a nickel bag or a dime bag or crack, or whatever, you know, in the newspapers, since the solicitation issue has gotten such notoriety. And maybe we need to go that level with the other types of illegal activities.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: That was recommended by the Daily News a couple of weeks ago.

What we do do -- at one time 30 percent of the people that bought our drugs came from outside the City of Philadelphia.

And what we were doing was letting the township know who these people were, who was arrested, what did they buy, and then they were putting their names into the news media.

If there is anything that I think will benefit the citizens of Philadelphia, I am very open-minded and I am willing to do.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Would you support an initiative to have individuals' pictures and names placed in the local media?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I have no problem with that.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Wouldn't they have to be convicted?

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I asked that question about the individuals who were arrested for solicitation.

And those individuals were not convicted, they were arrested, and their pictures are in the paper.

So if you can do it for the Johns, I think we can do it for the drug purchasers.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I think we ought to get a legal opinion on that, I really do.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That would have to be a large newspaper.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Very large newspaper.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Are you finished, Councilman?

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yes. Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: First of all, I want to thank you very much for the assistance and the help that you have been giving me to make Roosevelt Boulevard a much safer road. I know that's going to take place.

Specifically two areas, and two intersections, were actually probably unsafest roads in the country, and that's at Roosevelt Boulevard and Grant and Roosevelt Boulevard and Red Lion Roads.

I want to thank you for your assistance in that. I know it is going to be much safer, probably, within the next few months.

With that, I just would like to ask you a question. And probably it has been asked many times. And that is, do you currently have police officers assigned to do clerical duties in your districts?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir, we do.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And, if so, do you have any plans on removing those police officers and putting them on the streets and replacing them with civilians who could probably do just as an effective job for probably less cost?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I know it's been something that's been talked -- well, been asked from you probably for many years, I know.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: There are a lot of things that probably have been discussed for a number of years here in City Council, that being one.

I think for the last 25, 30 times we went to the contract, we have went to arbitration, that's one of the things that we have asked for at arbitration, that we have civilians replace some of the police officers that we have. We have not been successful with that.

A lot of these are controlled by the unions, of which we really have no control.

And that's one of the things with the PICA report. It says LA has 25 percent civilians. We have less than 9 percent.

We would like to do that. But, as I said, we are under a mandate by our labor unions that we just can't do certain things.

So that's one of the things we will probably bring up again at arbitration, and see if we can bring in more civilians, put more police officers on the street.

But what we are doing right now, because of the school situation, at night or during dismissal time, we are putting them out on the streets, and in the mornings we are putting them out on the streets.

I have asked every commander to look into eliminating as many administrative jobs as we possibly can to put people on the street.

In my own staff, I went from seven down to four. I know some of the other deputies have lost their staff and put more people out on the street.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Compared to other cities, how does Philadelphia compare to other cities like Boston or New York?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'm not sure.

Compared to the PICA report and the ones we did look at, we probably have the least civilians than anyone else. Ours is 11 percent, LA's is 25 percent.

I am not sure whether Deputy Commissioner Nestel has any more information.

MR. NESTEL: Councilman, we did look at six cities. Of the six, we had the lowest percentage of civilians.

In the report it talked about the percentage of officers in Los Angeles who were on the street. But, as the Commissioner stated, they have 25 percent. They have over 3,000 civilians; 25 percent of their department is civilians. So, therefore, they are able to put those additional people on the street. Unfortunately, only 11 percent of ours is.

We have tried on numerous occasions in the Act 111 arbitration. In 1992 we were successful in getting 179 positions. However, since then, we have not achieved one single position to turn over.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. In the last few years.

I would like to ask you another question concerning police facilities.

During the Capital Budget testimony, I asked why there was no money for the upgrading of district police facilities, and I was told that there was none requested.

Is that true?

MR. NESTEL: It is true to a degree.

We had to prioritize our needs. And when we prioritized those needs, we did it with the real emergency things that had to be done; such as, the roof in the Police Administration Building. It is leaking all over and it is causing damage. So that was our first priority.

We had listed about 20 priorities, or 20 items in priority listing. Because of knowing that there is just so many dollars available, we had to select which ones --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Do you have anything held in escrow, if you might say that, just for emergency use?

Because you have probably numerous police districts that are over close to 50 years old. And I know of one of them up in the 2nd and 15th Districts, which I visited on occasion.

And I found out that many times during a rain storm, there would be 5 or 6 inches of rain. And, in fact, the officers there couldn't even use -- they would have to use only the top shelves of their storage cabinets because any time it rained, the water would just get through each one of their lockers.

And I am sure there are other police districts the same way. I have got a listing of them here. And a lot of them, they were built back in 1950, 1955, '54, going on. So it is close to 50 years old.

And I could imagine that there is going to be some request made even on an emergency basis.

MR. NESTEL: Councilman, for several years there was a lot of money put into those districts to bring them up to where they should be.

What has happened, if some emergency occurs, either heating or roofing, we get together with the Capital Programs Office, we get together with the Managing Director's Office, and we work out some way to come up with that money to make those repairs.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. Is my time up, Madam Chair?

PRESIDENT VERNA: It is.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam President.

Commissioner, is there a safety

plan, if you will, for lack of a more formal term, for each of the police districts in the city?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: You say a safety plan?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: A safety plan, a safety strategy.

Is there a plan developed by anyone or the respective captain in the district as to, you know, what their game plan is to improve the safety in that particular district?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: There is. I mean, there is a plan. I mean, that's the whole purpose of the CompStat. The whole purpose of CompStat, it is a management tool. And when the captains come in front of us every 28 days, they have to give their plan.

But as far as Safe Streets is concerned, as far as a lot of the other plans is concerned, tactical plans, they meet with Deputy Commissioner Patricia Giorgio-Fox every Tuesday to come up with a strategy and a the plan.

But at CompStat, with the mapping and the things we have had, everything that's happened in those particular districts and those particular places they have to explain.

The main thing we want to do is let them know they have to let us know what is their problem and what are they doing about their problem.

When they come back the second time, we want to know what plan did they put in place to resolve that problem and what did they do to, you know, eliminate those types of problems.

We have the mapping, we have daily reports go out every single day. But each captain is like a little commissioner himself. He can put in place things that he feels are going to benefit his particular community.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't know if you want to put that on the record.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No, I don't. Once I used that, I changed my mind.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We will ask if the record can be stricken with regard to that remark. That will cause you more problems than you know.

Let me ask this question: Can you provide to the Chair an analysis of Part 1 and Part 2 crimes over the last two fiscal years, complete years, and the first half of this fiscal year, by police district so we would be able to see by district, by crime, what the trend has been over the last two and a half years?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, I can.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And is there a criminologist on the police staff?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: There is not?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: There is not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Do you think that would be a good position to have in the Police Department?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, the problem is, one of the things that we have been doing, because of working with the federal government, and, you know, this whole cooperation we have with law enforcement, we have asked for analysts, and we use some of their analysts. I think we put X amount of money into a place.

But I think that certain people in our department have a rapport with people from Temple who are criminologists, University of Pennsylvania who are criminologists.

So we have people that we can communicate and do talk to and have meetings with that give us information, but we don't have any person on board ourselves. But we have contacts that we talk to.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. And then, I mean, obviously it is good that you are reaching out to try to get that kind of resource on -- I don't know how often you are in touch with those people. And, obviously, we have our budgetary problems.

But, I mean, it would seem to me that having a person on staff, who is there all the time, I mean, the same amount of hours that you and the command are there, to assist with that, just might be something that we would want to look at somewhere in the course of the next budget cycle or two.

I know there has been a lot of discussion over the past couple of years, your testimony lays out many of the successes, of our anti-crime program.

From your perspective -- and you started your testimony saying that it was not necessarily statistically driven -- but, how do we know that the program is working? How do we determine that?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, what I try to do is go out the streets myself, and I go to most of the community meetings that I am invited to, and I do look at our statistics. And there are crimes that we can control and there are crimes that we can't control.

So, I guess, I try to judge it by based on the sentiment of the community and the calls I get from the City Council people and from other people whether these things are working or not working.

When we came up with Operation Sunrise, our statistics were outstanding. The amount of money that we got, our arrests were up.

And when I rode around for a period of time, I realized with all the statistics being up, we had not changed the quality of life at all. People couldn't come out, kids couldn't come out and play.

And when you asked the average citizens about the crime statistics, they don't know. But they do know that I can come out, they do know my kids can come out and play. So I try to judge it based on the sentiments of the community.

Last year by itself we confiscated approximately $120 million in drugs. So far this year, we have more guns, we have more drugs, we have served more search warrants than we have ever served.

And, in addition to that, we get more calls from the community with information than we ever did in previous years.

So I think the effort that we are doing and the effort that the community sees that we are doing has joined a strong partnership.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Madam Chair, if I could just finish the last part of this in this area.

Commissioner, given what you have laid out and given many other discussions and concerns -- and you are certainly right that when there are problems, I know many of us in this chamber give you a call -- but in an effort to get a better sense of what's going on, would you see any value and would you participate in any opportunity for a third-party independent analysis of the program, how it is working, what has been accomplished over the last few years; away from what any of us within the government might think about it or what our own experience has been, but actually put it to the kind of peer-review evaluation that often takes place with relatively new programs?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I would have no problem with that at all.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Commissioner, just refresh my memory, if you will, with the forfeiture funds.

Does the Police Department, I guess, get a portion of it, does the District Attorney's Office? How does that work? Is that up to the courts? And how is that money used?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: With the District Attorney's Office, if we do a forfeiture with them, we get 60 percent, they get 40. But this is after their costs are involved. And I think that's close to something like $750,000, or somewhere in that area. So once they get the $750,000, then we start taking the different percentage.

If it is a federal-type thing, we get sometimes 80 percent and they get 20 percent.

It normally goes into the operational fund. I'm not sure exactly where it goes, most of the time.

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PRESIDENT VERNA: General Fund?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No; it goes into the Police Department's fund, I believe.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And how can that money be used?

MR. NESTEL: Council President, the state forfeiture money, which is the money that is funneled through the District Attorney's Office, must be used for narcotics enforcement. We utilize that money. A lot of equipment has been purchased for our narcotics people.

We also utilize that money to help defray some of the overtime costs for our chemical laboratory personnel and our firearms identification unit personnel. A portion of their overtime is definitely related to narcotics, so that we can use that.

The federal forfeiture law must be used as a supplement to, and not a substitute for. So if it is something that would not normally be utilized, would not normally be within an Operating Budget, then we can utilize that money for that.

If it is something that is or has been in the Operating Budget, we cannot utilize that money.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I know that you have worked very hard since you have been our Commissioner to close down open-air drug corners, and I commend you for that. I don't envy you.

I remember in the mid '80s I heard former Mayor Wilson Goode say something that I always remember, especially when I go through drive-through open-air drug markets. And he said, "As long as there is an appetite for drugs, we will always have a drug problem. And as long as there are people that are willing to sell it, this problem is going to be around." And it seems like it has been around, my whole life.

As a young activist at the age of

19, I started a campaign against heroin trafficking in my neighborhood. It caused my little activist office to be fire-bombed.

And one night someone, we never found out who it was, put a dynamite stick inside of a pipe, and put a clock on it, and we were lucky to get out of it alive. So I have my own scars from the war against drugs.

But I drove through an area, East Detectives, as you have stated over the years, this has been an area that has been very hard to eradicate the drug trafficking.

I drove by there on Saturday, around 2 o'clock. And between 2nd, all the way up to Front Street, where we have the Sheppard school, there were a lot of write-ups about this elementary school being in the middle of this drug-trafficking area. And it was as bad as I have ever seen it.

It was just new, younger faces, new kids out there, but they were doing their thing, opening all the way down that strip.

And I know at some point on Saturday the police was out there trying to get them off the streets and trying to make arrests. But it seems as though that this scourge on our cities seems to be getting worse again.

In your five-year plan, you explained that the department plans to shift people and funds from off-street to on-street activities.

And, as a result, in your Fiscal Year '05, you will improve from your 87 percent of your uniformed police in on-street activities to 90 percent. This is an improvement, but still less than the national average reported by PICA to be at about 92 percent.

Having given that, can you please describe your plan for implementing this shift, please?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Again, I'm not sure where PICA got their statistics at and what they consider to be on-street police officers. It is kind of making an evaluation and a comparison between city to city.

What I have been trying to do is eliminate in some of our top command to put more people at the bottom. In the last year, we have eliminated close to 60 positions from corporal above.

We have no intention at this point right now to make any major promotions as far as top-level command is concerned.

We have eliminated deputy commissioner spots, we have eliminated chief inspector spots, we have eliminated captain spots. We have eliminated a lot of the different places.

We have eliminated administrative overtime. There was two captains, in most of the districts we are down to one. There was three, four lieutenants to every district, we are down to three. We will eliminate a lot of the supervision.

And I think, by doing that, we haven't eliminated the efficiency of going out there and enforcing the law, but at the same time we put more officers on the street.

They are our first-responders, and we really have to support them. And we really have to put more people out there for their support.

So I have asked every deputy commissioner in the department to come up with a strategy and to evaluate each of their different views as to how we can take more people and put them on the street and do certain things.

But, at the same time, I know what we have done by putting more people in each division.

Say, for example, in narcotics strike force, we now have a lot of bike officers out there. Highway patrol we boosted up by 60 people in the last year or so. They are like the top of the unit, they can go any place at any time. We put more detectives out there to go out and investigate the crimes.

As far as on-street workers, there are more people out there right now. And, as I said, it is just hard for me to compare what the other cities were doing based on the PICA report than what we are doing.

They might talk about the different 911 responders. We have people out there who are 911 responders, in the strike force or the highway patrol. For priority calls, they will respond. Detectives are out there, they will respond. We have warrant units out there who will respond to these different things. So we have a lot of officers out there.

I try to ride each division quite often, and I will ride out there tonight, to see the things that you are seeing. And I will make sure -- not so much to make sure, because I am sure that Deputy Commissioner Fox heard what you said today, and we will address that problem.

When we first came up with Safe Streets, we had 300 corners, 100 of them was in each division. But no matter how many police we put out there, unless the community and everyone else get involved in this, the churches, the politicians -- not so much the politicians, the elected officials and the businesspeople, they have to get involved in this.

So, again, everything that we can do to make a good quality of life out there we will do by being more proactive than we have ever been.

For a long period of time I think that the Police Department has been, basically, reactive to crime. I think we have to become a lot more proactive and educate the children.

No matter how many drugs come into the City of Philadelphia, we can educate them not to sell it or not use it.

But the one thing that we did find out, most of those who sell drugs live in those neighborhoods. They don't come from outside the neighborhoods to set up drug corners; they live in those neighborhoods and live on those streets and sell those drugs on those streets.

So the community really has to get involved in this.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I agree wholeheartedly with you.

I have seen this fine Police Department barricade that neighborhood, and I have seen it keep police officers on those corners. But it sure looked the same as it did just a couple of years ago this past Saturday.

Yes, there has to be more community involvement and more -- you know, I am not questioning what you do with intelligence gathering and undercover agents.

But that, you know, I think that maybe we should take a look and see are we doing enough in our intelligence gathering and those areas that have big drug problems.

How many police officers, Commissioner, in your -- you have 23 police districts; is that correct?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: And you have a couple of outposts or details, right, the Convention Center and South Street and some other places.

How many police officers do you calculate are doing clerical, administrative, computer-intake type of work in your police districts?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, we

never give out numbers.

I am not sure of the percentage, but I don't think it is that high of a percentage. We have police officers who, you know, they are up at the academy, they are all over. So it is hard for me to predict.

But what I will do is go back and make a report and personally give them to you or City Council.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Please provide it to the Chair.

Because if you have 3 per police district, you are talking about 69 officers doing clerical-type or clerical-related type of work.

Anyway, you will provide it to us, and we will see what that number is.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I will provide it to you.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke. This is the second go-around, I think.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

Commissioner, I am going to ask you a quick question. And I hate to reference other municipalities because I believe we have the best city in the country, the best police force in the country, the best municipal work force in the country, the best Council.

But every now and then there are some things that you see in other municipalities that you may want to investigate. And a couple in particular.

From time to time I tend to travel to New York and I travel to Baltimore, and I have always noticed that they have this category of employee called "public safety officers."

I know in Baltimore they utilize them substantially when they have games near Camden Yards. And they, basically, direct traffic, providing law enforcement in that aspect but they don't carry guns.

In New York they also use them in public safety as it relates to traffic monitoring and corners and things of that nature.

And I have always wondered why we, in the City of Philadelphia, use police officers to do that? And I understand it may be certain issues related to the Charter.

Earlier you responded to Councilman Kelly's issues about utilizing police power in certain portions of your department, you know, clerical and on-street.

And I understand that, as a result of the arbitration awards and the union issues, it is sometimes difficult to get around deployment.

But I am talking about another category of employee that will be a public safety officer that would do traffic safety, that would do things as police sanitation, that would do things that you probably, frankly speaking, the police officer is overtrained for, to help reduce the number of police officers doing this that are needed, but work that obviously could be done by some other officer.

If somehow -- and this may actually require a Charter change -- a level of employee could be created to provide those services, is that something that you think could be helpful as you try and free up officers to do other types of much-needed enforcement?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I think it would be very helpful. And legally if we could do it by contract and by labor agreements, we would have no objection to it. I think that's something that we have been trying to do for a period of time. They would become civilian employees of the Police Department.

But it has been pretty difficult at our arbitrations for those things to come in place. But, as I said, I don't think anybody, at least in my executive staff, would have any problems with that.

There are times that we have made certain changes just to one or two people and have been taken to court or been challenged. And I can give you some examples about that.

But, as I said, no, I think it would be very -- the more uniformed police officers that we can put on the street to enforce the law would be beneficial to us and to the citizens of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So let me understand.

With respect to the union issue, that jurisdiction and involvement of the unions pertain solely to the Police Department and the police officers per se; am I correct?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So anything outside of the Police Department, in an actual police officer, the police union really has no jurisdiction over those individuals?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'm not sure.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I am saying, if you created another category of individual -- because I know the Charter mandates certain departments, mandates certain Civil Service requirements.

If there somehow was another category of employee who was not a police officer, but to some degree dealt with public safety issues, would they fall under the jurisdiction of --

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I will let the expert answer that question.

MR. NESTEL: Councilman, the bargaining unit positions are identified by what officers do now.

So if we are presently directing traffic, that has been identified as a bargaining unit position. And any attempt to replace a police officer with a civilian in that position must be either negotiated or come out as a ruling in the Act 111 arbitration acts.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. So -- that did answer my question.

So would the collective bargaining process supersede the Charter? If the Charter said one thing, then the collective bargaining position says another thing, who would have --

MR. NESTEL: My guess is the Act 111 arbitration would supersede, but we would have to check that with the law department.

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COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The law department.

Can you do that, please?

MR. NESTEL: Sure.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: All right.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, tell me about the Police Department's long-term planning.

Today we heard that most of our police stations are 50-plus, most of them. There are a few new ones in the mix.

My observation is that we are going to see some downsizing in the city, going to see some possible city facilities close and maybe even become available for sale.

Have you thought about, has the Fire Department thought about, has the Recreation Department thought about, has the Administration thought about, possibly, when some of the city land becomes available, if it does, that we create an environment where we have a police station, a firehouse, a mini City Hall, small rec facility, all on one parcel of land?

I think that would be a very efficient reuse of land that would be become potentially available going forward, long term. So is there any long-term plan?

I know the police district that I live in has been there for maybe 45, 50, 60 years, and I talked to some of the officers.

And I think the reason we get a pass on the condition of some of these police stations, that not a lot of the average citizens visit a police station in their lifetime. It is not a place where -- hopefully. That's a good thing.

And I talked to some of the police officers that tell me about the conditions of some of the police facilities, that they are absolutely disgraceful.

And I know that when I stop at a police station, even if I don't go in, parking lots are dirty, trash strewn all over the place. Even a new building wouldn't necessarily correct that.

But my point, I think we need a long-term plan in replacing some of these dilapidated, antiquated, dirty facilities. Because inside, they are beyond able to clean some of them, tiles broken and floors are bad.

What about long term, for your successor, to some day have a plan to build some new police stations and maybe use the concept that I described?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, you know, that's really above me.

And, you know, if I had the ability, I would build all new police stations, start with police headquarters, I mean, if I had to have a building to do that. And if we had the money and the fiscal things to do that, that would be workable.

But I don't even think that even when they come to the Planning Commission, that they ever involve the Police Commissioner of the Fire Department to make these particular plans.

But, as I said, I would like to see

the conditions of Police and Fire to be the very best.

I mean, they are the only occupation that there is really no guarantee, once they leave their homes, there is no guarantee they will be coming home. So I think if we can make the working conditions as best we possibly can, I am totally in agreement with that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Firehouses are different, I think, entirely different. People live there, pretty much they are there. Firehouses are relatively in good shape.

For some reason the police stations, a totally different environment, in my opinion.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Like you said, we have different visitors that come there, also.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I am getting some heckling from the audience about the conditions of the firehouses.

At least I believe the firehouses, I am going to have to double-check that fact.

But after you just fixed the roof of the Police Administration Building, I wouldn't sell it or move.

But, really, I think it is your, or any Commissioner's, responsibility, if you have facilities that need to be replaced or upgraded, to speak up.

Isn't that part of the process, to suggest new facilities?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I believe our Administration has spoke up.

And I have been on the department now going on 40 years. And if I can recall, every Police Commissioner prior to me has also spoke up and spoke out against that.

But we just don't have total control of when we can build and not build a building. So when I say it is beyond me, there are so many other people that are involved in that.

But I agree with you completely. I am not going against you. I agree with you totally that we should have the best working conditions possible.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The concept of

possibly putting some of this stuff together?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, I would really have to evaluate that and look into that. At least at this point I don't want to make any real judgments.

I am note sure whether the Fire Department, Police Department, and any others -- with all this terrorism right now, I think you have to be very, very careful of what we do and how we do things.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Right. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want to follow up with what Councilman Clarke was referring to, about the police duties and whatnot for this new unit of his.

It wasn't too long ago, I believe it was maybe over ten years now, but the enforcement of traffic tickets, or parking tickets, was transferred to the Parking

Authority. And that had to do with state legislation, I believe. It was approved.

And that was, I mean, a police officer at that time had the duty to write parking tickets. Now, of course, that was taken from him and given to the Parking Authority.

And I just wanted to know, did that have union approval, was that negotiated, or was that just the state legislature approving that?

And, if so, I would like to know why a unit for traffic control or something like that would be taken away, again, from the Police Department, why that would need a Charter change, or whatever?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'm not sure. I mean, I'm not familiar with it. And I don't think anybody else here is familiar with it.

I mean, we still have the ability to write parking tickets, if we want to write them. It doesn't say we can't write them.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Well, you also have the ability, of course, to control traffic at any time, too.

Just because this new unit that Councilman Clarke was referring to, that duty would be, of course, just -- that's all they do, would be controlling traffic in certain intersections at certain times.

What I am saying is that, this could be something we could look at. Because in certain events -- I am talking about special events, which Councilman Nutter was referring to earlier today -- that maybe this could bring down the cost of running those events, the city's costs.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: The Police Department is not against that.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I just wanted to know what had to be done to do something like that.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'm not sure. But what I will do is, we will investigate it and find out.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Because I know I am going back a few years. I know the Parking Authority received that permission, you might say, or whatever, from the state.

And, again, I don't know if this is something that would have to be arbitrated through the state or through the union. I don't know.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I will look into that.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: It is something to look into.

Because I think that there is a considerable cost savings involved here, there really is, with having something with controlling traffic and only that, and giving your police officers more time to do really the tough jobs, you might say, in fighting crime.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: So I would look into that, if you could.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We will.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And you mentioned something else, and you just referred to it, the terrorism.

Of course this is the day and age of

terrorism. I just wanted to know if you have a counter-terrorism unit and if it is headquartered here or where?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We have, as far as my opinion is concerned, and some of other people's opinions -- I just came from Florida last week, two- or three-day terrorist conference.

I think Philadelphia has probably, second to New York, one of the best terrorist units in the entire country, by the fact we had a deputy commissioner up until last week in charge of terrorism.

We formed a whole terrorist unit. And I am not going to give you the number of people, but it is a considerable amount of people.

In addition to that, we used to have one person with the task force, the FBI, the terrorist thing, we now have over six. We are in constant communications with them on -- not so much on a daily basis, but on a regional basis.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: How does that

interact with the police aviation unit?

Because I am going back. And a few months ago, I think it was recently, that we had an inebriated pilot running around our city in an airplane. And, thank God, nothing seriously happened.

But I think there was some criticism over the Police response. That airplane could have done considerable damage to any facility, whether it be a cultural facility that we have in this city or it could have been a utility or anything.

And I just wanted to know how you are responding to that in the future, because that's something we would have to look at in the future.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I didn't hear the criticism about our department. I know we forced him to land.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I think the criticism was in the response; in other words, it took them so long to get the Police helicopters up there, or whatever.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I have to

look into that. I haven't heard any of the criticism that it took us too long to get up there.

I think there is --

COMMISSIONER KELLY: Well, I don't know. It may not be the Police Department's fault, I am not saying that. It could be the control tower didn't relay that information to the Police Department.

But what I want to know is, if there is an active liaison between the aviation people and the Police Department now to prevent such instances from occurring again, at least have a better response time?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: There is a liaison, and I will look into that particular incident. Some of the things you are saying today, I haven't heard before.

But we have two helicopters here. I know they are in constant communications. We talk to other people in law enforcement. So, I mean, we have to work together, and I think we have been. But we can always enhance that.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yes. Because we

have to really consider our historical sites that we have in this city, and we have to do everything to protect them.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam President. I am going to be uncharacteristically quick.

Commissioner, there was a discussion earlier about traffic safety, red-light running. And I know you put out there generally or specifically that officers, if they observed that kind of activity, should write the appropriate violation.

At the same time, could you state, at least for the record, to the best of your knowledge, in the crosswalk between a pedestrian and a motor vehicle, who has the right-of-way?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, I believe the pedestrian has the right-of-way.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you know whether the Police Department on any kind of regular basis writes tickets for motorists who do not give the pedestrian the right-of-way when they are supposed to have it, either in a signalized intersection or a designated crosswalk area?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I don't have any specific information whether they do or they don't. I am sure some do and some don't.

But what I will -- obviously, that is a concern of yours -- do is make sure that we look into that, and that's one of the things that we really have to enforce.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would greatly appreciate it.

You were here, I think, earlier for the discussion about the Greek Picnic. Would you have any estimations on what size of force it would take to spend a million dollars in overtime for that event?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I think what happened -- and I heard the discussion -- that the Greek Picnic is not just a one-day event.

The Greek Picnic is something that starts off on a Friday night, and goes, basically, all night Friday night, and then they are out in the park on Saturday, and then that night they are back on South Street, or they are on South Street and then around 2:00 or 3 o'clock in the morning, after they clear South Street, they are on Broad Street, and then back again on Sunday.

And I think, based on prior history, what happens to some of the citizens of Philadelphia, with some of the things that were happening to our women and some of the problems we had on South Street, that we prepared for that to make sure that there is nothing happening to anybody.

So it is not just -- we don't consider it to be an event. It is something that -- the park has been going down in the last two or three years.

And very seldom -- and I have been involved in it in the last four or five years. All my involvement normally would have been starting on South Street. I very seldom went out to the park.

I don't see the amount of people on South Street or on Broad Street diminishing. The park is diminishing, but the amount of people that are coming to South Street or Broad Street and staying on South Street, the numbers are, basically, the same. And some of the same problems we had down there are, basically, the same.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But would you agree, Commissioner, that at that point, once you enter the South Street, Broad Street portion, isn't the Greek Picnic over at that point?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We don't consider the Greek Picnic to be just an event. The Greek Picnic was something just in the park. The Greek Picnic brings other people into the city.

The amount of people that's on South Street those nights and the amount of people on Broad Street, and I am talking about from maybe Washington Avenue, all the way up to Hunting Park, I have never seen those amount of crowds.

And there are certain incidents that happen during that period of time that we have to have that amount of police officers out there to defend anything from going over.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

I would be interested in the department's information with regard to major events that take place in the city, and what the respective overtime costs are associated with those events.

Let me move on. Commissioner, would you say that there is the same, more, or less drug sales or drug use in Philadelphia over the past few years?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'm not sure.

I know last year we confiscated close to $120 million worth of drugs. And so far this year, in the first three months, we have confiscated $6 million in drugs.

What I am finding is that there is more people, the drugs are going indoors, and they are selling the largest amount of drugs indoors, along with the weapons.

It is hard for me to make that -- I know as of last week we still have the purest heroin in the nation still in Philadelphia.

I believe, based on our arrest record, also, we are locking up more sellers and buyers than we did in previous years.

And we are locking up less people who is coming from outside the city buying our drugs. At one time it was close to 30 percent. I think we are down to about 2 or 3 percent of the people coming from outside the city.

But it is really hard to make that evaluation, whether, you know, there are less drugs or more drugs.

There are too many drugs that are coming into the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I have two last questions, and I will be done.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Might as well get them over, because we do have groups that have been waiting.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

Commissioner what's your opinion as

a law enforcement tool with regard to targeted video surveillance outdoors?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I think it plays a very important part in law enforcement.

I'm not sure -- I mean, it normally sometimes will help us in apprehension. I am not sure how much it is going to be in prevention.

If people know that the cameras are out there -- I mean, they know there are cameras in banks, but they still rob them.

It is hard to see whether it helps or not helps. Because, again, it helps in the apprehension, but I am not sure how much it is going to do for prevention.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I mean, are bank robberies up or down or about the same?

If you know that there is active surveillance going on, I mean, you don't think that might discourage some people from --

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I am sorry. What I was trying to say is, if they know that the surveillance are out there, then it probably would have to be a help, it should be a help.

But in certain people's minds, especially certain criminals, is appears as though they don't feel that they are going to be caught anyhow. Our bank robberies are up.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I mean, the greatest law enforcement tools cannot account for stupidity, Commissioner. And, I mean, some of the criminals are just stupid, they do dumb things.

Of course the banks have video surveillance. And, you know, most of them think that they are so smart they are not going to get caught, and you probably catch a significant portion of them. But, you know, some people actually do try to avoid observation.

So, I mean, I just wondered what your perspective was on its usefulness as a tool. And have we ever looked at that in any serious way of adding to the tools or weapons that we have to fight crime in the streets?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I know Wilmington did it. Originally when they did it, the crime went down. I think they still have it.

And I talked to the people down there. Once they became familiar with what was out there, the crime just went right back up.

My opinion, you have to look into it a little more. Anything that's going to help the citizens of Philadelphia, it has to be positive. But I'm not sure whether that would deter certain people from committing certain crimes. But, again, it could help.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last question. By the information that you shared with us on the performance reports, and certainly from newspaper accounts, the indications seem to be that homicides are up or will be up this year versus last year. And I think they were up last year versus the previous year.

There is a note attached to the -- what do you call this -- Table of Service Measures down the bottom. It says, "Number of homicides. National trends for FY '04 illustrate homicides are rising in the nation's larger cities."

I guess a two-part question. One, do we know why? And, second, even if homicides happen to be going up in some other cities, why would there be an automatic corollary that they would be going up here?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, when I meet with the Mayor and the city chiefs, no one really knows the reason.

Our homicides, we go by a ten-year average. And we are below the ten-year average.

Say, for example, in 1990 we had 500 homicides. One homicide is too many. As of today, we are seven homicides over than we were this time last year.

But if they make these comparisons to 2002, we had 288 homicides, which is the lowest that we had been in 18 years. We led the entire nature on reduction of homicides.

But if you compare that to 2002, 2001, and 2000 --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, Commissioner. What did you say that number was?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: In 2002, we had 288, I believe. 2003, we had 348.

But if you go with the ten-year average, we were still below our ten-year average. Because it says up until 1998 we averaged over 400 homicides a year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I know that. They have clearly been going down.

Just, again for the record, your information indicates for FY '01, the actual was 299; FY '02, the actual was 318; FY '03, the actual was 308; and you are projecting for FY '04 316.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I am going to have to look at these numbers. I don't think these numbers are exactly -- they are going by fiscal years, instead of calendar year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. I mean, I just have what I have here. But generally I thought you guys counted by the calendar year.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: We do, that's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So they are going to be off. Okay.

Anything else you want to tell us about homicides?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: No.

The only thing I noticed, that probably over the top 12 cities in the entire nation, homicides are up.

Last year, out of the 348 homicides we had, almost 140 were indoors. I don't know the reason. And I don't think anybody else knows the reason why the shootings are happening.

If I did know the reason, we had five law enforcement officers ourselves that have been shot this year. It is a difficult type thing.

But I think it has more that just to do with law enforcement. It might have something to do with the economy. I don't know what the reason is or what the answer is.

But we are trying to do is put

everything in place that we can possibly do to prevent the violence here in the City of Philadelphia, whether it is a child or an adult.

But, again, as of this morning we are seven above we were at this time last year. But that's making a comparison where we were at 2002, where we were at the lowest.

Hopefully by some of the initiatives that we put in place, that we will reduce that during this calendar year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And the staff of the Philadelphia Police Department.

I too want to thank you. I think that your department and yourself in particular have been very supportive of all the efforts that the community groups are making as it relates to dealing with the violence here in this city.

And I have seen you out a lot with Men United, and you have been there for Mothers in Charge and some of the other groups that's been around.

I just have a quick question. Have you noticed an increase in calls from people complaining about juveniles during the daylight that are not truants?

I know in certain parts of my district, some of the people, some of the young people that have been reassigned from day school to twilight school seem to be causing problems out in neighborhoods; such as, gambling and just loitering and all those kind of things. And I was just wondering if this was a citywide problem.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: My information from our deputy commissioner of technology, that that is not the case, that we haven't seen that surge in calls because of that reason.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. All right. Well, maybe they are not calling the police, because they are sure calling me.

And I was just wondering if it was a citywide problem. Certainly this is an issue that we will discuss with the School District.

Because I stopped a group of boys last week, too, that I saw. And they are all in twilight, and they have nothing to do during the day. And people are a little bit afraid and frightened of them.

That's really the only question I have. You know, my district loves Safe Streets, people are glad that it is there. It has had a positive impact in neighborhoods.

And one person called me today and said, has the Police been on yet? And I said, they just came on, and Deputy Commissioner Fox just talked about Safe Streets. I was watching it down in my office.

And they said, they are not going to

cut Safe Streets, are they? No, they are still going to have Safe Streets.

And I said, they sure are.

They said, well, that's all I wanted to know.

And I do know that that has made a real good impact in the streets in our district.

One other thing I would just like to bring up. When Councilman Nutter, I think it was, or Councilman Rizzo, actually, I believe, was talking about the need of police districts, certainly you know and everybody knows that Council Members go to the police stations to get gas.

And the trash that's actually in the parking lots, you know and I know, are made by police personnel.

And when I go to one particular gas station in my district, you can just see how people get out of their cars, they just throw their Dunkin Donuts cups or bags or McDonald's bags, or whatever trash that they have in the patrol car right, right where the cars are parked.

So it would be nice if a directive came out that said, we have to be role models, and we have to use trash cans rather than just disposing of the trash on the ground in the parking lots. That would make it look much better.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am. I agree with you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

I don't know if Councilman Clarke is in the room. Is Councilman Clarke in the room? I don't see him.

Are there any other questions from members of the committee?

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Comment, Madam President.

I would like to simply underscore the suggestion raised by Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller.

I know a number of us have a concern

about the environment in the city. And if we want our young people and children to do the right thing, we really do have to lead by example.

So typically the condition around police stations in terms of the trash and environment is less than acceptable.

So to hear the Commissioner agree, I would add to that, whatever you do internally to inform your lieutenants that this is a concern -- minor though it may be, but larger scope if we are just talking about quality of environment -- that would be appreciated

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, Madam President.

We just wanted to say that, in spite of all of the tough times we are having in schools and in our neighborhoods, we appreciate the excellence, the commitment, and the excellent job of our Commissioner and the entire force in our city.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you very much, Councilwoman.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from members of the committee?

Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I thought for the record it might be nice to see the quick response that the Police Department gave on the speeding enforcement throughout the city.

The report on the VASCAR assignments. I am glad to find out they are on the Expressway, there are nine of them. And patrol cars, one in the 92nd District, one in the 15th, one in the 8th, and one in truck enforcement.

That doesn't mean you can go speeding in the other districts that don't have them, but I appreciate knowing that, Commissioner, because it is very helpful.

Thank you for that quick response.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you.

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PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much, Commissioner, and thanks to all of your staff. We appreciate your patience and your information. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Fire Department is next. The stenographer will be given a copy of your testimony. It will be transcribed in full.

We would really appreciate it if you could abbreviate your testimony, please

COMMISSIONER HAROLD B. HAIRSTON: Okay. Good afternoon, Madam Chairwoman.

I am Harold Hairston, Fire Commissioner for the City of Philadelphia. And to my right I have William McNulty, who is a Deputy; and to my left I have David Beatrice, who is our Fiscal Officer.

The Fire Department's Operating Budget proposes $162,602,811 for the General Fund; $4,882,250 for the aviation fund; and $831,834 for Grants Fund.

This represents a decrease of

$13,827,031 over our estimated FY '04 budget, and a decrease will be absorbed by a reduction of Fire Department resources.

It represents a protracted trend which shows, since 1990, a 46.8 decrease in structure fires and, since that same period of time, an 80.5 percent increase in EMS responses.

In service enhancements, we see that over the last five years, we see fire deaths have decreased by 35.8 percent. Fire prevention programs continue to be on the rise. 6,627 fire prevention programs over the last year by our fire prevention division, 152 families availed themselves of our program that deals with juvenile fire setters, and we see a general trend downward of fire deaths.

26,800 homes were visited over the last year. 2,800 smoke alarms were distributed.

The decrease in structure fires is evident from 2002 to 2003. The overall reduction of fires in structures since 1990 is 46.8 percent. And we see a general decline in the number of paid days lost since 1993; the fact is, a 77 percent reduction.

Injuries are down from 1993 to 2002 to about minus 24 percent. The revenues have increased dramatically during that same period of time.

And the campaign to reduce the unnecessary calls for EMS is something that we have worked on rather vigorously. The fact, is we had about 199,000 calls for EMS. Roughly 50,000 of those did not require medic unit. So we have had a lot of help with trying to get the reduction in place.

We had Clear Channel step forward and put up 80 billboards. We had Comcast that did some public service announcements for us. All the TV stations have agreed to play those.

We are doing a number of other things, in terms of radio programs and television programs, to try to get people to call us only for emergencies.

And it still tends to spiral out of control. And at any given time we could actually run out of medic units.

So it has been very clear over the last several years, has been that the number of structure fires continues to decline, the number of EMS calls continues to escalate, and the people continue to call us for unnecessary calls.

So what we are trying to do is to make an adjustment in terms of where our resources are so that we will be able to have enough medic units, so that we don't run out, and so that we have a sufficient number at any given time so we can respond to anybody's medical emergency.

The other enhancements in the Fire Department deal with technology, most of which deal with what we are doing for EMS.

And we had managed to get our contractor that does the collections for us to step up to the plate and put some enhancements in place so that we can tell where all the medic units are at any given time; and that we will, in cases where somebody is lost, we will be able to anticipate that; also be able to anticipate and send the closest medic unit to a particular incident.

And the latest thing is this thing we call Safety Pad, which allows the medics to fill out their incident reports and then get that to the hospital, which is kind of the end user in that, to be able to complete whatever is necessary regarding the medical information.

So that that helps when they get into the emergency room, and then it also allows a contractor to bill more efficiently and quicker.

That pretty much ends my testimony. I am ready for any questions that you might have.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Commissioner.

I notice that in the budget detail, there are 216 less firefighters than were budgeted for in FY '04. Were most of them on the DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We had a number that were on DROP, and that's about the DROP number that we had.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So would you say 216 were DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I am sorry?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Would you say that 216 were under DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: When is it anticipated that they will be replaced?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We don't anticipate that they will be replaced.

As you see from the very first paragraph, we anticipate that we are going to end up with somewhere around $13.8 million less than we would otherwise have had.

We are already short about 173 people, and we anticipate that we will be going down below that number because of the lack of funding that is being proposed.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, you state in your testimony that your decrease will be absorbed by a redirection of department resources.

Would you please explain what that means.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, there were three things that actually were proposed in the five-year plan.

Two of them I don't believe will be considered at all, but they were up for consideration.

The first one was to reduce the staffing on the ladder companies. That would require, because it was won in arbitration, that would require, going to court in order to get that. So I don't think that that's a practical thing to happen.

The other was to have as many as 15 quints. Quint is a piece of equipment that has five different functions.

We have one quint in the city. It was not accepted very well. They do use quints in other cities, but that would take a long time before you were ever able to put anything like that in place.

That would require that you establish what you want in terms of that piece of equipment, and then go out for bid. And then, or are able to, put that much money forward in order to do it.

Our quint that we have in place right now cost us about $450,000. The price of a quint today is probably closer to $600,000. And it would take a long time, probably well over a year, before you could do anything like that.

So the likelihood that you are going to see that is somewhere between slim and none, in my opinion.

I think what will happen is that you will see a reduction in the number of engine companies and the number of ladder companies.

The general proposal that is on the table is to reduce the number of engines and reduce the number of ladders, and then add back some medic units because we run out of squads every day. Well, not every day, but a lot of days.

So, that's the general transformation plan.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Will you be removing any firefighting vehicles or apparatus from any fire stations?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes. The general plan is --

PRESIDENT VERNA: What is the equipment that you will be taking out of service, and from what locations, and can you tell us what will happen to the fire personnel?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: First of all, I can't tell you the locations because I haven't even submitted this to my boss.

And there are three different plans that I have worked on: One that takes as much as 13.8 out of the budget; one that takes the amount that was put into the five-year plan, which was for four engines and seven ladders; and the other is for a lesser amount of engines and ladders.

PRESIDENT VERNA: We are being asked to consider a budget, and we don't know exactly what's being proposed or accepted?

We know what you are proposing, but we don't know what the Administration is accepting.

And we are going to be asked to vote

on a budget that we don't have as much information as we should have?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I would say the answer to that is generally true. The fact is --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you think that's fair?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, let me be real clear here.

You know, I don't think there is a fire chief in the country that would come before a body such as this and say that they were in agreement with cuts.

The fact is, the way it is put to me, is that we have a budget deficit right now of $217.7 million, that we will be part of that.

How much of it we will have to absorb will probably be decided in large part by this body and others that I have to report to.

Generally speaking, it is this: That the only reasonable way you can do this, as far as I am concerned, is that you don't close any firehouses, that you reduce the amount of equipment that's out there, and you add back some medic units so that you can at least take care of what the workload appears to be.

The workload is increasing in the EMS, the fires are down as far as structure fires are concerned, and you have to have something that responds to the needs of the public.

Most people generally seem to believe that they are more subject to needing a medic unit than they are a fire engine, whether that's an engine or a ladder.

It is not something that I am happy about, but it is something that is being given to me to say that we will have to be a part of that reduction in terms of dealing with this deficit, which is $227.7 million.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You indicate that there will be eight new medical units.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Can you tell me where they will be located?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I didn't bring that kind of detail with me, and it is really up for grabs at this point.

Generally speaking, we can show you, or anybody else, for that matter, you know, where we have all of our medic units now, which we have 40. We have 60 firehouses, generally.

And, so, you would add eight back in the areas where you have the greatest response every day. So I would have to see a map in order to show you what the proposal generally would be.

And we are checking that against what fire personnel think, compared to what EMS personnel think.

In other words, I could show you on any given day where our responses have a tendency to come from. We do this by census track.

There are 368 census tracks. And at least one of those census tracks, as many as 1600 responses come from that one particular census track.

That happens to be surrounded already by a number of medical units; however, it doesn't stop people from calling you out of that particular area.

Our biggest problem is, we just can't be two places at once. And since you can't be two places at once, you have to at least put medic units not necessarily where the responses are coming from, but to at least put them in the areas where you have firehouses available so that you will be able to at least keep those medic units from having to continue to respond to those other areas.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, does this redirection of resources impact your current labor agreement with the firefighters union?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: No, it doesn't.

PRESIDENT VERNA: It does not.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: It does not.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And, again, I would like to make it eminently clear, there is no intention of closing any fire stations in the city?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That is absolutely correct.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information, Madam President. I don't think that's a clear answer.

What I heard was that, in place of a ladder or an engine, it will be replaced by a medic unit.

Now, I don't know anybody that schedules a fire. I want to know what the response time will be.

If we pull an engine or a ladder and replace it with a medic unit, what is the impact -- and, again, not knowing where these ladders and engines will be pulled to replace with eight medic units -- I really need to know, before I can be part of supporting any budget for the Fire Department, what it means to my constituents' response time.

In other words, if there is a fire, I don't know what a medic unit is going to do to put it out.

Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: There is a piece of fire equipment in every firehouse.

Since there is a piece of fire equipment in every firehouse, there will be somebody with fire equipment that would respond immediately to any incident in any geographic area.

The notice that will come in is that, when you respond to a fire, a particular piece of equipment may be missing. And if it is missing, that means that somebody has to respond from a different location.

On every fire a reasonable amount of equipment will respond with the ability to fight a fire.

Now, the only definitive kind of standard that I am aware of is 17-10, which deals with deployment. Under that standard, you are to have as many as 16 firefighters on location within 8 minutes.

With this plan, right now, on average, it takes us about five minutes to get a piece of equipment on location. It is whatever the amount of people are on that particular vehicle that actually gets there, but the response times would not change.

It simply means that some pieces of equipment will come from further away, but not for somebody that is first in.

You would have some firehouses that would have engines, some that will have engines and ladders, some that will have engines only, some that will have ladders only in terms of actual firefighting equipment. But there would be firefighting equipment in every firehouse.

And, in addition to that -- and it is probably not a good way of putting it -- in addition to that, we would be adding more medic units.

So we have 40 medic units now, 28 of which are full-time, 12 of which are what we call part time, and then you would have other part-time units that would be added.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Just briefly to follow up.

Are you telling me that there will be no location in this new plan that will only house a medic unit?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, I know how professional you have been throughout the years and how you truly love the department and the city.

I am assuming that you were told by the Administration you have to cut by X amount of dollars, as probably all of us were.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's correct.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And you are now in a position to have to make some very tough decisions.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: They are the toughest.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are requesting the same level of funding in FY '05 as you did in FY '04 for your payment to the water fund.

Shouldn't you be seeking a 9 percent increase to cover the proposed water rate increase?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: You know, that's an excellent question. And I wish I had a better answer for you.

But the fact is, these are numbers that are given to us by the Budget Bureau, and they are the ones that really make that decision.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, Commissioner, we are going to have to make some decisions, too. It is difficult for you, and it is equally as difficult for us.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I know it is. You have been extremely supportive all the time for every time I have been up here.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And we certainly want to be and hope to continue to be.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: However, sitting here we don't know what is literally being proposed or in front of us.

What fire stations will have the engine and the ladder, which ones will just have an engine? How many more -- and, as I said, you did explain about the eight new medical units. We don't know where they are going to be located. What happens to the personnel?

There are more unanswered questions than we have answers. So I find this somewhat upsetting, frustrating.

And I think we may have to have a call-back, because I just don't feel comfortable with the testimony that I hear today.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, I want to pick up on your last statement. You said that the Fire Department or yourself or the management staff is given the numbers that you have by the Budget Bureau.

Was that your statement?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes. That was specifically about the water fund; but the other numbers are given to me, as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I thought your answer overall was about the budget.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, we all know the Budget Director to be an extremely bright and informed and tremendously competent person with the numbers of the budget.

I do not know the Budget Director to have any particular experience or expertise with regard to fighting fires or responding to a medical run.

So, I mean, I think you identified at least in your testimony -- I don't recall the people that you introduced up there -- but, I mean, certainly yourself in your many distinguished years of service, you have a fiscal officer, you have administrative services people.

It would seem to me that there would be some amount of aggressive push-back or just possibly an out-and-out fight about how to run the Fire Department, and how much money you need to do what you need to do, as opposed to at least as you described it, you get the numbers from the Budget Office, it is what it is, and then you are now in a position to have to try to explain it or defend it or come up with ideas that conform to a budget that's handed to you.

I mean, I don't understand how this works.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I am not sure how to approach this question.

The fact is, I feel pretty battle-scarred. It may not be showing, but it seems like to me I am pretty battle-scarred over this whole thing. Certainly not a budget I would have asked for.

I certainly wouldn't walk before here and then tell you that I want to see a cut in the Fire Department by $13 million.

The fact is, I think we have already gone through all that in terms of fights and so forth.

And we were given the number. And the fact is, these are the numbers we were given. And since I am given those numbers, I see my task as one where I do it with the least amount of scarring to continue.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. I respect that. We may have a difference of opinion about it, but you have been honest about it.

Let me try to understand one of your other responses, I think, to the Chair. I think you were asked whether or not any of the fire stations would be closing. I thought your answer was no.

I am trying to understand that in the context of Page 109 in the five-year plan. And maybe this is semantics or my lack of understanding.

The sentence says, "The city is assessing the impact of closing 7 of its 29 ladder companies and 4 of its 60 engine companies."

When the sentence says that you may close these places, how does that match up with your response that we're not closing any fire stations?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I think it matches it rather clearly. Perhaps I can elucidate.

The fact is, we have engines in our fire stations, we have ladders in about half of our fire stations. It means that we would remove a certain amount of ladders. That would still leave an engine in those stations.

We would remove a certain amount of engines, which would leave ladders in those stations.

So the general thing is that you have either an engine or a ladder in every station. So, therefore, you don't have to close a station; you are simply removing a piece of equipment from those stations.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So on the one hand we are able to represent to the citizens that we're not technically closing a station, but maybe we are not exactly explaining that the station will not be the same station that they have come to know it to be.

Now, I mean, you know, not being an expert in fire service, and certainly nowhere near the time in government that you have, I think most citizens don't necessarily make a distinction between an engine and a ladder.

You've got a big red truck, with personnel on it, makes a lot of noise when it comes roaring out of the station. And when your house is on fire, to some extent I don't know whether you really care or make a particular distinction between an engine and a ladder.

What you really want to see is the truck coming up the street, a bunch of people jump off, hook it up to a fire hydrant, and put the fire out.

I guess the second part of this is, with a significant reduction in both equipment, I am assuming the seven ladders and the four engines, we would put that equipment either out of service or sell it to someone?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, generally speaking, those pieces of equipment would probably become our second line of defense in terms of reserve equipment. And we would take equipment that is now in reserve and then get rid of it. Because the presumption is that all front-line equipment is better than what you have in reserves.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: So you step it down.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So we are getting rid of some equipment somewhere that we are presently using?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And the total number of firefighters that you expect to have, the decrease -- I thought I read in the detail 231, but I thought I heard in Q and A a number of 216. Which is it?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I think you are right on every count.

The 216 number was from DROP, that was the question that dealt with that. The 231 number is a number that we are likely to hit in terms of closures.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Closures. Closures that are technically not closures.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: If we close those particular companies, the four and the seven, we are likely to be down 231, compared to what we otherwise would have been authorized to have.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Of which you expect 216 to be the attrition, essentially, out of DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We already have that attrition. We already hit that number in terms of our reduction.

We anticipate we will have a similar number in the next round.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. I was with you there for a second.

So is the 231 just a pure reduction in the number of firefighters, having nothing to do with the DROP program?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That has to do with DROP, as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me ask it this way: In the course of the next fiscal year, you expect to have 231 fewer firefighters, in FY '05?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's correct.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And of that number, are 216 of them leaving the Fire Department because of the DROP program?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We are at a loss of 216 due to DROP.

We anticipate that in the next round of DROP, over the next year, we are going to lose, probably, another 150. Right now we have --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When you say you have lost the 216 already, that would be in the present fiscal year; correct?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. Now we are getting somewhere.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: The thing that may be confusing about it is that we have been on a hiring spree up until now.

So if I look at my total number -- well, we have been hiring classes, 80 at a time, as people go out the door.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: So if you

look at where we are in terms of the number of people in the Fire Department, and you look at what our overall authorization was -- which, for uniformed employees it was 2,461, I think -- we have 173 less right now. So we are not doing any hiring.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I am showing you in the book, for FY '04 budgeted positions, uniformed, is showing 1,996. That's what the budget book says.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That sounds right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I thought you mentioned the 2,000-plus figure. But we don't have to quibble about that.

So in the next fiscal year, you expect 231 fewer firefighters, of which you think 100-plus are from DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And how do the other hundred or so firefighters leave city employment?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: You still have some attrition.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Aside from DROP. Although it is slow, it is becoming more normal now than it had in the past, since a lot of people have waited to get the benefit of the DROP.

And we also have, right now on our rolls, about 173 people less than we otherwise would have been authorized to have.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Got you.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: So the general thing is that you will see a reduction in the number of people in the Fire Department that should not require any kind of layoffs or anything like that in order to make this transition.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

Let me ask this question: 231 less officers, 11 pieces of equipment, whether it is the backup that you have now, you move these first-line pieces to the backup and the stuff that's now backup goes out the door, what's the impact on the ability of the Fire Department to fight a major fire or respond to, you know, the unanticipated either terrorism or bioterrorism action?

And how do we say to the citizens that we can do as much with fewer equipment and fewer people than we have today?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If this proposal were to go forward.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's a complicated question, but let me try to segment it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: These are often complicated situations.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, I am going to try to segment it to some degree.

Last year we had 13 fires that we considered multiple-alarm fires, more than one alarm.

A one-alarm fire, generally speaking, is four engines, two ladders, two battalion chiefs.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We had a total of 13 fires that went beyond that, to the point where we would consider it another alarm. So two alarm, three alarms, et cetera.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All separate?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: All separate.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 13 separate incidents?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: 13 separate incidents.

Right now, at this date, we have had 13 similar incidents based on the fiscal year. So we have seen a general decline, which is kind of outlined in my testimony, if you look at the chart.

On a normal situation, up to six alarms, we seem to be able to handle that without bringing any additional people in.

Some consideration will have to be given if we get fires that probably go beyond, say, four alarms, as to whether or not we will have to institute our call-back system.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many alarms was the most recent fire up in Councilwoman Miller's district, the gas?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That was four alarms.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That was four alarms.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

Now, four alarms we can do very easily the way we are constructed right now. You don't have to call anybody extra in, or anything like that. There is plenty of equipment and plenty of people in order to do that.

Now --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What would have happened if there was another four-alarm fire in West Philadelphia that same night?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We would start to get shorter and shorter, and then we would have to resort to other resources.

That's why you have, as one of the reasons, at least, why you have reserve equipment, and one of the reasons --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do you mean by "resort to other resources"? What other resources?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: It means we have to go to our call-back system.

We have a call-back system that allows us to call in people that are off duty, and we tell them where to report to. And it has been very successful over quite a number of years.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Point of information.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Madam President.

And good afternoon, Commissioner. On that same line of questioning, you referenced certain incidents where there are four engines, three ladders, or whatever, depending on the size of the fire, I assume.

Where do we wind up at the end of the day if these cuts of engines you are talking about, reducing engines and ladders and various firehouse facilities, would we be able to respond and provide the necessary backup if all of these reductions that are being proposed were in place today?

Does that make sense? I am trying to figure out -- I am not familiar with firefighting, there is no question about that.

But you mentioned, based on Councilman Nutter's question about these larger fires, I assume you were speaking to, where you have a certain amount of equipment.

There was 13 incidences this year where we had four engines, three ladders, et cetera. I don't remember exactly what those numbers were you were mentioning.

What happens if we reduce the number of engines and ladders that is being proposed? How do we get there? How do we respond?

Is there adequate equipment, will there be adequate equipment, to provide for the response to the people who live in that community in a safe -- and for our fire personnel?

I mean, it sounds like you are going to try to do as much with less in terms of responding and fighting fires because your equipment inventory is going to be shrinking.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: You and I both know you can't do more with less. You have to do less with less or you have to do different.

And, so, what we are saying is that we will have to do different. Not because we want to do different; because our budget is being cut.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I understand that. And I understand that --

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Allow me to finish to try to get to the point.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I am sorry.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: What we have to do is, we have to go by history.

History indicates that the number of structure fires are going down. History also indicates that we get on location within five minutes. That means that somebody gets on location within five minutes.

Now, I believe that history will continue to show that we have fewer and fewer structure fires based on what the history has indicated; that over the last 13 years, since

1990, we have seen a reduction of 46 percent in terms of the number of structure fires.

A more careful analysis of that will show that, on average, it takes about 18 minutes before a fire is placed under control.

Now, if that continues to be the case, where we continue to see fewer and fewer structure fires, a system where you have less engines and less ladders overall should still be adequate to get on location within the five minutes and to have at least 16 firefighters on location anyplace within the city in eight minutes. Now, that's really what the standard is.

It is not something that I would be happy about. Look, you will have less people, and, so, we have to do this differently. And the fact is, what we see is a reduction in the number of structure fires.

And since we have a reduction in the number of structure fires, and since we have the obvious thing, which is that we continue to go up -- and since 1990 and 80 percent increase in the number of hospital cases -- we

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have to be able to respond to that in some way.

If I had my druthers, I would come before you and you wouldn't be talking about a reduction of $13 million; you would be talking about an increase so that we would be able to respond to the other half of Councilman Nutter's question, which dealt with what happens as far as terrorism is concerned

We don't know what will happen as far as terrorism is concerned. I can tell you this, though, in every case that I am aware of, you need a degree of redundancy in order to be prepared for those things. This takes away any redundancy that we have.

But if you have to have the cuts, if you have to have the cuts, I'm saying that, don't cut the number of fire stations. I'm saying put some firefighting equipment in those stations, and then add back where our obvious problem is, and that's dealing with EMS.

Now, look, this is the way it is. I mean, if somebody wants to give me more money, I will thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We are going to try to do that.

(Applause.)

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Okay. Thanks.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I do appreciate your candor. In the best-case scenario, best-case situation, you would not be asking for a cut, you would be asking for an increase.

And I understand you have a job, you get a budget, you have to try to figure out what to do with that budget.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Thank you for that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: My only concern is, no disrespect to you, because you are dealing with a lot of if's.

And, you know, when it comes to the lives of people, and especially our fire personnel, you being a fire person yourself, I have a problem with dealing with that.

And that's the message we are going

to be bringing to the Administration, not to you on a personal level, the big if and the should. The word "should" and "if" were being used quite often in your comments and remarks to me.

So, I do appreciate your candor and understanding that we really should not be -- and I will use the word "should" -- looking to cut here.

I mean, we are talking about reducing equipment. We had a conversation with the Managing Director this morning, which is probably my second time I have talked to him about the fleet, the overall fleet.

I have a car. It is one of the perks of my job. I appreciate it. I would like to keep it. But there are a lot of other people who have cars. And maybe I shouldn't have it. People will debate whether Councilpeople should have cars or not.

But there are a lot of other cars out there that I see people taking home at night, doing lots of things with it they are not supposed to be doing.

There is where the cuts should be made, there is where the rollbacks should be made.

And we should be looking to figure out a way in giving the equipment, personnel, whatever it is, to Police and Fire. That should not even be a topic of discussion.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman DiCicco, I think Councilman Nutter was --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That was my point of information.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: It was a good point.

Madam Chair, unfortunately, I am going to ask two things. One, to be excused.

Second, you laid out earlier that you expected that there would be a call-back. There are many, many questions that need to be more fully examined.

I would also say, though, to the Commissioner, that, under the circumstances, as Councilman DiCicco laid out, I respect your attempt to be a team player with the

Administration under the circumstances.

But, at the same time, I think it is clearly incumbent upon us to get from you a more detailed plan about proposed, quote, unquote, closures, reorganization, what the actual plan is, number of people who would actually be on the scene.

I would like if you would forward to the Chair more detailed information. You have mentioned on half a dozen occasions this afternoon that structural fires -- and you have emphasized on the structural fire side -- are down, although they seem to have leveled off to a certain point over the last four years, and then they were much higher in the previous years.

But I would also say that it almost appears -- I am not attributing this to you -- that because of the increase in fire-prevention services that are performed by the firefighters, that it is at least an unusual situation where increased activity out in the community to try to better educate people about fire issues, smoke detectors, a whole host of things, which help, I think, to drive down the structural fires, now somehow is used as a negative against the firefighters.

That, because, in essence, because you have done such a great job at helping to drive down the number of structural fires, we now need to get rid of you.

And I am not, again, attributing that to your judgment, but it does appear to be the case. And that certainly is a rather unusual, if not bizarre, result.

I would, Madam Chair, like to reserve the opportunity, when it presents itself, to have much more detailed discussion.

This is clearly one of those 100-question situations. And if that opportunity does come about, I would like to have a chance to ask many more detailed questions with regard to this proposal.

It is quite discomforting, and I think that we have much more work to do in this regard.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, so I understand, I want to go back over. And I am pleased to hear that you are being a team player, at least that's how I am understanding it, that you are not happy about having to --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Rizzo, excuse me just a moment.

Would you yield to Councilwoman Blackwell for a moment, please.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, Councilman.

Madam President, unfortunately I have to be excused, I would like to ask permission to be excused.

And I would also like to certainly thank the Commissioner for the work that they do, and also say I was prepared to even ask if some of the firefighters could come forward.

We were concerned about issues like, instead of 5-minute arrival at a fire, 11 minutes, and some of those other issues, issues you raised about over 200 people not working, and how that really affects the quality of life in our city.

We are all worried about cuts. But we are also worried about the quality of life for the people in our city. Albeit we know, Commissioner, all of you are kind of pressured about these cuts.

We really, really are worried. Because every time a fireman goes out, his life is on the line, and so is the life of everybody in our city.

So I am looking forward to additional discussion, as well. We thank him and thank the firefighters who are here, who are really fighting for their existence, as well.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, again, trying to work within the parameters that you have been handed, I understand your mission here, but I have got some specific questions in reference to response time.

And I wasn't trying to be funny when I said that you don't plan a fire when it happens.

Because the number of dwelling fires have been reduced, I really need to understand what effect will occur to response time when -- and I will use this scenario, I think I know enough.

An engine is a piece of equipment that responds that has 500 gallons of water on it that, in most cases, is successful in extinguishing a fire almost immediately, they don't have to hook up to a hydrant. Am I right?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Let me give you a scenario now.

What happens to a particular

location that becomes a ladder and a medic? What happens to response time? I am talking about a firefighter through the door with water.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Ladders carry a certain amount, although minimal, in terms of hose lines. It is possible for them to hook up to a hydrant and start -- you want the answer or not?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Yes, I want the answer.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Okay. If you want the answer, you are throwing me off based on your body language. And I recognize I shouldn't worry about your body language.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's part of being a Councilman. I will stand in the corner.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: All right.

So it is possible for you to go into service and do that. It is certainly less than ideal.

Look, it is as simple as A, B, C. You can't do more with less. Now, we are talking about doing the same thing we are doing, which is responding to automobile fires, we are talking about structure fires, we are talking about all the other things where danger can be present for either a person or a firefighter, a person that is, you know, in peril or something.

You will be delayed in terms of getting the water on the fire.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I can't be supportive of a budget that delays the response.

And, I will be real honest, I am going to fight this until you retire.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I didn't mean that with any disrespect.

What I am I meant, Commissioner, just for the record, is, you are out of here in a few months. And I will fight that with you until you do leave, or whoever comes to take your place.

Because the bottom line here is that my constituents will be affected by this plan.

And you are on the record saying it is going to take more time.

It is going to take more time to extinguish a fire that requires water at locations where there are only ladders and medic units, because it is going to take more time to hook up to a hydrant than it would if an engine company showed up that had water. Am I right or wrong?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I would say generally you are right.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So let's talk about response in general.

If you are waiting for an engine company that's now deployed 25 blocks further away and has to respond, that's going to be a longer response, also, than it would if there were an engine ladder in each of these firehouses along with a medic unit; am I right?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, you threw a hypothetical in there, and it dealt with 25 blocks away.

And I don't know in any of the data

that I have looked in that it would create such a scenario as that.

I will say that you have about half as many ladder companies as you have engine companies. That's what you have right now.

Over the last several years, we have seen a reduction in the number of people in this city. You have seen a reduction in the number of firefighting equipment at the same time. I mean, we had closures before that I have been around for. I haven't seen a firehouse open up again.

That's why in any plan that I have anything to do with, I am convinced that the way to deal with it is to not cut any fire stations.

However -- you are aware of it, I am aware of it -- I am given a budget, I am given less resources.

Now, the only reasonable response to deal with that is to try to convert the department or transition the department in a different way than we are right now.

You know, the fact is, if you have a

budget that does not support enough to put all of your engines and all of your ladders in place, and at the same time respond to the changing needs of the citizens which deal with the EMS, then you have some choices to make, all of which may be bad choices.

But it is the most reasonable way of dealing with these, I believe, if you have to have a less amount in your budget.

So that's really what we are talking about. We are talking about fewer dollars. And since we have fewer dollars, in order for us to respond to the needs of dealing with the present budget, which, as I understand it, is $227.7 million less, so we have a deficit that we are dealing with.

At the same time, the Fire Department is given numbers that say we have to be part of that correction, as well as everybody else does. And, so, therefore, that's really what this plan deals with.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner, how much money do you need put back in the budget to restore it to full service?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: 13.8 million.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The whole 13.8.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: The whole 13.8 million.

The fact is, if you really wanted to do that and restore that, and you really have to still consider that the fact is --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, isn't most of that payment to the DROP?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, you have about a 9 million that we would anticipate would be payment for the DROP.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: About 9 million of that would be payment for the DROP.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's not 13. That's not the real number, then.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, it depends on how you want to count the real number.

I think that's an expense we have to pay. If we have to pay it, we have to get it from someplace. So, therefore, you have to the 9 million in there in order for you to pay it out.

PRESIDENT VERNA: But isn't that a one-time payment?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's a one-time payment. But, you know, other people following you are going to deal with the DROP, as well.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We will have to talk more.

I am going to start looking under some rocks to get you your 13 million, because it is out there.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Madam President, can I finish one more question?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes. Quickly, please.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I am always brief, Madam President.

A scenario. You respond to a vehicle accident at an intersection. Two insured vehicles are involved in a collision, medic response, fire company response.

Have you implemented a program where we recover those expenses from those two insured vehicles that were involved in the accident for that response?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We don't get anything from an accident other than when we take somebody to the hospital.

If we take someone to the hospital, they get a bill.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But why, if two insured vehicles, you go to do a wash-down, gasoline tank breaks, two fire engines respond to that location -- we are looking for revenue here.

Two insured vehicles now. I am not asking anybody to write a check to you. Two insured vehicles, Adams and the Boulevard, a piece of your equipment shows, you do a wash-down, you cut the battery terminals, you do whatever.

Why shouldn't we go after the insurance?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Probably the same reason we don't go after the insurance for a house fire. Two insured houses, one insured house, whatever it is, we don't go after that, either.

What we do is, if somebody in an accident goes to the hospital or we treat them in some way, we send a bill for that.

We don't send it for the response to cutting the battery cables or wash-downs or any of those kinds of things; no different than we do if we respond to a house fire and the person is insured or not.

You know, I mean, the fact is, what we do is, we go and we do whatever we have to do to render the situation safe, but we only bill for medical emergencies.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you look into what other cities may do in this scenario? Now, I am talk not talking about the house fire.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Your question was clear, and I hope my response was just as clear.

If you are asking me to look into it to see if there is a way to do that, I will be happy to do that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I would like to see that.

Because we are talking about cutting services in this city. And if there are insured vehicles, I will bet you the tow truck that toes it away gets paid.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I bet you you are right. I bet that's why they are in the that business, and so forth.

But the fact is, no, I haven't looked at that before. You asked me to look at it, I will be happy to look at it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Ramos.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Back in late February members of the City Council were briefed on the budget status of the city.

Back then we were told that we were facing a deficit of around $150 million or so.

Then we had another briefing in early March, and it went up to $227.7 million.

And when we were briefed then, it was estimated that you were going to be asked, meaning the Fire Department, to cut back between 7 and 10 million dollars.

On April the 19th, today, you are cutting back 13, almost close to 14, million dollars.

And as has been stated here this afternoon, there is a chance that you might be asked to cut back some more. Because now we are not going to pay the 18 million, we are not going to ask PGW to pay us back the $18 million that they owe us; and there is going to be a surcharge for water, you know, in our water bills, and you are going to have to pick up part of that cost. So, at least that's my understanding of it; I could be wrong.

So I think that the statement that you made in your opening statement, that no department personnel will be laid off, is probably not going to be so, and that is a concern of mine.

And it seems as though we are replacing firefighters with EMS personnel. And all due respect to EMS personnel for the good work that they do in the profession, I believe a firefighter is not replaceable and should not be replaced by EMS personnel.

And I know that if an EMS personnel is in, you know, another part of the city, which I know in fact it does happen, that by the time they get to their call, that person that needed to get out of that house or needed to be moved out of a house, whether it was in a fire or not, might not survive. And simply because our firefighters are trained to do so many life-saving things, besides put out fires.

So I am concerned that this budget says we are going to replace our firefighters, which I believe they are not replaceable, with EMS personnel, and that I have a concern now that this cutback that you have been asked, Mr. Commissioner, is probably going to get bigger. And I think that then you are going to have to take a look at layoffs.

Having said that, I also may have concern with the talks that your department is having with the union, with the firefighters union, how those talks are coming along.

The union is owed the respect to be talked to. Because they represent members, they are the front line of concerns that members have.

So those are my concerns, Mr. Commissioner, about this budget that you are presenting today.

One, that I think you are probably going to be asked to cut back some more. Two, that you are probably going to be put in a position to have to lay off, and I have a very serious concern about that.

And, thirdly -- and I pose this as a question -- what's going on with your talks or the department's talks with the union?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I have never been approached in any way by anybody in terms of seeing a number higher than this 13.8.

I did see the budget grow, the budget deficit grow, in terms of its explanation to us, from 150.2 million to the 227.7 million.

We right now have about 173 people less than we otherwise would have had before we got into this whole thing about whether or not we were going to be seeing cuts or not.

So I think that the highest number we will have to reach is that 13.8 million, is what I think.

I hope that we see a number that is far less than that. In fact, I hope we don't see any cuts at all. But if we have to take the cuts, I hope it goes back somewhere near the original proposals, which was somewhere around 7 million or so.

So, and if that happens, then we certainly won't see any kind of layoffs.

I believe that since we will not do any hiring during any of these talks or anything like that, that we will be able to do this without anybody being laid off. And it is certainly something that I don't want to see, any layoffs in the Fire Department. And I don't want to see any cuts at all.

But if we have to cut, I hope it is closer to the original number, which was somewhere between that 7 and 10. And I certainly hope it is closer to the 7, if we have to take any cuts at all.

These have not been discussed with the union. We have had no discussion with the union. I haven't even so much as put this plan in front of the Managing Director, so he doesn't even know what firehouses would be affected.

That's something that I will have to present to him. And then he, in turn, will either agree or disagree or tell me to go back to the drawing board before those things are presented to the Mayor.

So when that happens, I suppose that we will end up coming back before you. And then we will make some indications as to which firehouses, which neighborhoods, which districts are going to be changed in some way.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Why haven't you talked or -- I don't mean you directly, if it is in any other ways, through our attorneys or our labor relations people -- why haven't you talked to the union representing your firefighters?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Mainly because that the plan has not been approved by the Managing Director or the Mayor.

And I think that before we do any of those discussions, we will get that approved through them.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Is that an Administration policy or is that your way of working?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I don't know that the Administration has a policy when it comes down to that.

This is a new territory that we are talking about here. We haven't been talking about doing these kind of cuts in the past, and so forth.

So this is all new for everybody.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.

I just wanted to go on the record, as well. I have been a union representative and a construction worker until I came to City Council, so I cannot let my firefighters union stand alone in this issue.

And the firefighters of this city have done a tremendous service to our city, including yourself, Mr. Commissioner. And, at least from my position, is that I will not, you know, let the firefighters stand alone in this battle.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I am sure that is greatly appreciated by everybody here.

And I don't want you to misunderstand anything that I am saying, but at least you gave the impression that perhaps that firefighters were in some way more needed than EMS personnel.

And I will tell you that I think they both have their place, and I would find it hard-pressed for me to say one was greater than the other.

What I can tell you is that, in all

of my dealings with wrestling with a plan -- because it is no fun in this -- that what we see is a reduction in the number of fires and we see an increased number in the calls for emergency medical services.

And what we find is that more and more people are getting sick, more and more people are needing our service, and we have to respond to that in some way.

And as onerous as this is -- and it is certainly not something I would have asked for -- the fact is, if we have to do cuts, we still are going to be plagued with the problem of more and more people calling for emergency medical services; and, therefore, we need to be able to respond to that.

And I would find that those people that work for us, who are paramedics, are of really great value to the citizens of this city, and I just want to make sure that's clear.

COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, you were incorrect in one statement, and that is that every department in the city had to take a hit.

Well, in fact, the Mayor's Office budget has gone up 11 pe4rcent and its payroll has gone up 15 percent.

And I am wondering, you know, what value this Administration places on fire service, when they can increase their own budget and payroll, while reducing the support and resources that go to, I think, probably the most important department in the city. And that's the one that has --

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So not everybody is feeling the pain.

Council is feeling the pain. You are feeling the pain. Second Floor is not feeling too much pain.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, I am

sure feeling pain.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, I know.

I wish you were a little more angry, though, at the Administration for doing it.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, wait a minute. How angry do you want me to be?

The fact of the matter is, I work for the Mayor, I work for the Managing Director, and --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You work for us.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's right.

And I am given a budget, and I do the best I can with that particular budget.

I don't know what somebody expects here in terms of scars. I have got enough scars.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, I expect a little fight with them about some of what they are doing to this department.

And I am curious as to what was happening --

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: How much money

does this department turn over to the city General Fund as a result of its collections on medical services and transportation and service to the citizens? How much money?

I understand we turn money back to the city.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Over what period of time? I think if you go --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Year, two years.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We started collecting for EMS in 1989.

And we differ on this amount. He says it is 160 million. I think it is more like 175 million. But somewhere about that.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Last two years?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: No, not in the last two years.

We are right around that $20 million mark in terms of our collections.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we turn back $20 million or so to the city every year to the General Fund.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, not quite that.

There is a chart that's in here. I can go by the chart.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Just a round figure.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Round figures, over the last couple of years you are talking about that $20 million range.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Speaking for myself, I think it is extremely unfair that a department that turns $20 million back to the city needs to eat a $13 million cut, especially when it affects the public safety of the citizens.

And I think that that is really unconscionable, considering we are allowing PGW, that mess, not to give us our 18, but we are forcing 20 million still out of this department in order to pay for the stuff that is just some of it is unreasonable.

I mean, you know, 11 percent increase in the Mayor's Office does not make any sense to me, when the Fire Department of the City of Philadelphia is making $20 million a year for this city, and PGW is throwing money down the toilet, they get absolved for their 18 million, but we are still stuck with giving the 20 million back.

I mean, I know you don't have an answer to that. But I think you can understand how that really just kind of grates on people, and grates on me and other members of this Council.

It is a disgrace what's happening, considering how efficiently you run this department. I mean, you wouldn't be turning that $20 million back unless you were doing your job and doing it well.

But that does not mean that now, on top of that, we need to take a 25 percent hit in ladder companies and a 7 percent hit in the engine companies. It is just not fair to the citizens.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It is not fair to the citizens, but I also don't think it is fair to the firefighters.

My question is, with a 25 percent cult in ladder companies -- ladder companies primarily are responsible, as I understand it, for aerating the building, opening up the roofs, getting the smoke out, kind getting up out on top of the building to help with the engine companies, who bring the water in and then extinguish the fire, get the smoke out of the building. Is that my understanding?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: The first duty, though, is rescue.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So they are going to get into the building, open up the building, aerate the building, and so forth.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Look for the bodies.

Rescue is the first thing that they do. They do all those thing you say, the most important of which is to go in for rescue.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Is there a possibility that on a hypothetical dwelling fire, for example, that we would have less people on that fire ground in that dwelling as a result of the closing or ending of certain ladder companies and having less people on the fire scene initially?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: No.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we are going to have the same number of people.

These people, when ladder companies are being closed or terminated, are those people being assigned to other ladder companies? Are they going to be additional people on apparatus going to the fire?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I am trying to figure out the easiest way to explain this to you.

The first part of your question deals with whether or not you are going to have fewer people on a particular fire. The answer to that is, no.

And this simply means that they will be coming, some of them will be coming, from further away.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But I guess the initial response, the initial response will be the same number of people?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Will be the same number of people, except some in some sections of the city that would be affected by this would have to come from further away.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: How much further away on average?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Probably less than a mile, in most cases.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: See, my concern is -- and I know it is your concern, too, because I know you are a firefighter, you are a life-long firefighter, and I am not trying in any way to denigrate what you have done. I think you have gone a pretty good job.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I just get concerned when our people are in those buildings, and we lose one, and we can't find somebody, and somebody is hanging from a joist somewhere or somebody is laying in a pool of water because they had a backdraft that knocked them into it, do we have enough people on the ground in that building to pull our people out and to look for that kid who is hidden in the closet because the smoke is too much?

I mean, aren't we going to have less

people to do what needs to be done, and we are running the chance of losing our own people and losing a citizen?

And I know that's something that it is important to you. But I also know that it seems to me that we are going to have less people, we are going to have less people in this department.

Do we have a class planned for next year, any classes?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We graduated a class.

I think it would be foolish, under the present circumstances, for me to add anybody that may end up being laid off.

I am trying, as one of the things in this, is to make sure that I don't lay anybody off. So, to me, it makes no sense in hiring a class, and then getting them in and then having to lay them right off.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: We are going to lose 200 or so people as a result of attrition, aren't we?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's

right.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we are going to have 200 people less, potentially, next year?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's right.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we will have less firefighters?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's right.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So how are we going to staff at the same level, when we have 200 less people?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, it depends on what you call staffing at the same level.

The fact is, if you have 200 people less, you are affected in some way by it. It simply means we wouldn't have as many engines and as many ladders as we presently have.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And as many people.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: That's right.

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You have 200 less people. And, just rounding it off for this conversation, you have less engines and less ladders.

But the companies that respond to the fire, you would get the same number of people that we do presently at that particular fire ground.

But in some cases where you have closed an engine or closed a ladder, you have to bring people, in order to get the same amount of engines, the same amount of ladders on location as you have now, from further away.

And there are some cases where they would have to come from further away. Not in all cases, because we still have a number of engines and a number of ladders throughout this city.

But some people would come from further away; therefore, you have to do things differently.

This is a very aggressive department. We do interior firefighting. We try to make sure that we exercise every safety precaution that we can so that we don't get anybody hurt.

Look, if you have less people, and if they have to come from further away, you have to do things much differently. You can't be as aggressive going in there.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, that's not good news.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: No. No, it isn't.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: If my house is on fire, and you are less aggressive coming to get me, I have some real concerns about that.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Councilman, I am as concerned as you are, and I know you recognize that.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I know you are.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: And I know you recognize this is not a good news day. This is not a good news day.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: No.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: But the fact is, if I am given a budget, and I am expected to reduce the budget, the only realistic way of me doing it, that I am aware of, is to reduce the number of engines, reduce the number of ladders, add back some medic units so that we can take care of what the obvious needs are in this, which is to respond to the medical emergencies, along with fires.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Do we have statistics on what the average row house fire, how long it lasts? I know it is not an exact science, but we must have some experience in numbers.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We do. And it is hard to answer that in its totality, so I am going to answer it in part this way.

From the time that we receive an alarm to the time we get on location is roughly five minutes.

Now, some people calculate that in a different way, but I am calculating that from the receipt of the call to time on location.

The average time total for a fire to be placed under control, average time -- because some may go on for hours, some way even go on for days -- but the fact is, average is about 18 minutes, from the time that you make the phone call until the time it is placed under control.

Now, "under control" generally means that it is not going to, you know, spread past that, and so forth.

But that's generally what you are talking, about 18 minutes before we are sure we completely got it, we don't need anymore equipment.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And the concern that I have -- and I know you share it -- is that I understand that the initial moments of the fire, the initial time that you get there, is the most critical time in saving lives and in keeping our people safe.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So the distance issue will extend that time of response, to a point where statistically, or percentagewise, the increase in possibility of lost life or injuries both on the part of citizens and firefighters has to be increased.

(Applause.)

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, that's absolutely generally true.

However, if you have a piece of equipment in the station, somebody will be on location.

Now, look, I'm not going to tell you that it is ideal. I mean, if you were to ask me what was ideal, I probably would add back some more equipment and I probably would still expand EMS, and that kind of thing. But that's not what we have here.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I know I have gone over my time, but I just want to say one thing. And this is not your fault.

What do you -- and you can give me an honest answer, you can give me an answer; or if you choose not to, that's fine -- what do you view, as the Commissioner of this department, our role of City Council is in this process?

I mean, I know the Mayor may think differently, the Managing Director may think differently. But what do you think our role is in this process?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I think your role is to respond to your constituency primarily. And I think part of that constituency is right behind me here, which are firefighters.

And so what I hope you do is to recognize the record that you are aware of in the Fire Department, I hope you recognize what the needs are that you are currently aware of and have been aware of for some time, and that you make a conscious decision to support the Fire Department and support the constituents of this city. That's what I see your role as being.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: That's pretty well stated.

And the problem that we have, which is not your making, is that we are probably not going to know what the locations of these closures are until after we are expected to pass this budget.

And don't comment, because you don't have to. That is ridiculous.

This Board of Directors of this 3.4 or 3.3 billion dollar company doesn't get told about major decisions until after we are supposed to vote on a budget. And then we will tell you, then we will tell you which ladder companies, which engine companies, what neighborhoods. It is absolutely insane.

I can't respond to our constituents, we can't respond to our constituents, we can't respond to the people who work for us, because we don't even know what's closing until well after the budget has already been passed.

And that will not go over well, I hope, with the majority of the members of this Council. Because I think when it comes to issues like firefighting, like police services, and things like that, public safety, we should know what's going on before John Street, Phil Goldsmith, and Harold Hairston decide what's going going to happen.

I mean no disrespect. I know you are working within the parameters you are required to work within. But that is just not fair to this body, it is not fair to the citizens.

And I can tell you, if we knew what was closing now, this room would be a lot more crowded than it is today, and there would be a lot more people upset.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Commissioner, I do appreciate your career, I do appreciate your contributions. I meant no disrespect to you.

When I get emotional about this issue, I am sure you can understand why. And I appreciate your patience in answering the questions.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Thank you. And none taken.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman Rizzo. I really wish you would be a little brief.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Real short.

Commissioner, I think this member of Council was misled by the Administration.

Because many times I heard the Administration saying that there would be no cuts in Fire, no cuts in Police. No cuts in Police, now we are hearing cuts in Fire.

I had personal conversations -- and I am not going to name names -- where I was assured there would be no cuts in Fire, no cuts in Police.

I believe that they snuck this one in on us here at the eleventh hour. Again, I will not be supportive of this budget until I know exactly how my constituents will be served by the Fire Department.

I have a question about the way we do business in the Fire Department. Tell me about cross-training. Why can't paramedics -- is there such a thing as a firefighter that's a paramedic, a paramedic that can fight a fire?

Why do we have to have this line in the sand?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: I have never looked at it as though it was a line in the sand. Two different jobs altogether, as far as I am concerned.

One deals with the medical aspects

of a constituent's problems, and the other deals with the extinguishment of fire.

I personally like the idea of keeping them separate. There may be some people around the country who disagree with that, and they are certainly free to do that.

But the way I see it, the best paramedics are ones that are paramedics, that deal with the medical aspect of it. And the best firefighters are the ones that are strictly firefighters.

I think that's the best way to keep it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Fine. I just wanted to know.

For the record, are there any, could you elaborate, are there any major fire companies that do cross-training?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Sure.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Who?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Phoenix, for one. You know, they use a different system and so forth.

But the system that we have, if you

check it against other systems, I think you will find that we have got one of the finest systems anyplace in the country.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: If you had cross-trained paramedics and firefighters, would your decision be less complicated today?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: First of all, I don't want that. So, I mean, I don't like those systems that have the cross-training. I like what we have.

So if I were forced to do something like that, obviously I would have a different set of facts. But, I don't like it.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I hope they don't force you to do that, like they forced you to accept this budget. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco for some very brief questions.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Just one final brief question.

And, again, thank you, Commissioner, for your comments and the manner in which you have responded to our questions.

On the issue of EMS again, the $21.2 million expected to -- that EMS will generate, which we now know goes to the General Fund, is the projection of 21.2 or three million dollars, is that based on the current fleet of medic units?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Well, yes.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So, as you testified, you would like to see the number of units increased by eight, which is approximately 20 percent.

Would that equate into a higher -- I see he is shaking his head no. Does that mean we would be getting more revenues?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: It shouldn't mean, that for this reason: The number of incidents are the number of incidents.

The number of incidents won't increase because we have more medic units; our ability to respond to them will be better.

If that somehow corresponds into more dollars, it will be strictly accidental.

The likelihood is that the number of

incidents, though, will increase to some degree, as it has over the last the several years.

In other words, if you look at the chart in the back, which starts at, I think, 108,000, and it goes to roughly 199,000, you can see that the number of calls has gone up every year.

We anticipate that the number of calls will continue to go up. And, therefore, whatever that amount is, which is roughly around 4 to 5 percent a year, that, if anything, you will see an increase based on that, which is just a product of --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The demographics, aging population, things of that nature?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: And that's exactly it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The 200 or so personnel that will be leaving this year, they are at the top of the ranking, I assume, rated as far as the years of service. They are sort of getting the maximum pay, for the most part.

When you replace those, when and if you replace those, with 200 new firefighters, which will be coming in at the lesser rate, is that being calculated anywhere in this discussion?

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We have calculated it about every way we can calculate it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I just needed to know for the record. I'm sure you did.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: We have calculated everything we can calculate.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So it is in there.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: It is in there.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, again.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, as I indicated earlier, I think this is a very, very serious issue.

We will be asking you to come back at a later date because I don't think any of us feel very comfortable with what has been presented to us today. And, hopefully, by that time you will be able to provide us with more information.

COMMISSIONER HAIRSTON: Yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Thank you all very much for your patience. This committee will stand in recess until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 20, at 9:30. Thank you all very much.

(Hearing adjourned at 5:45 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing proceedings of the Council of the City of Philadelphia of Monday, April 19, 2004, were reported fully and accurately by me, and that this is a correct transcript of same.

RE: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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DEBRA A. WHITEHEAD