COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- - -

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

10:20 a.m.

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Room 400, City Hall

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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FY 2007 OPERATING BUDGET HEARINGS

- - -

PRESENT:

ANNA C. VERNA, President
BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
JACK KELLY
JAMES F. KENNEY
JUAN F. RAMOS
FRANK RIZZO
FRANK DiCICCO
JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
MICHAEL A. NUTTER
DARRELL L. CLARKE
DONNA REED MILLER

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

I would ask Mr. McPherson to please read the first department to testify.

MR. McPHERSON: Department of Records.

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

MS. JOAN T. DECKER: Yes. Joan Decker, Records Commissioner.

Good morning, Council President Verna and members of Council. As I said, my name is Joan Decker, Commissioner of Records.

And with me today with Jeanne Reedy Administrative Services Director; Dave Werbo Budget Officer; Charles James, Labor Crew Chief; and Linda Townsel, Executive Secretary.

Before I review the budget numbers, I just quickly would like to state for the record that every year we like to acknowledge and recognize some of the staff members who have made a significant contribution to our department. And that's why we have asked Charles James and Linda to be here.

Charles recently became supervisor in the records storage center. And I am proud to say that he really manned the operations of the football-sized records storage center by himself, as we had some DROP Program people leave.

He did a tremendous job. We received many compliments for his work. So we just wanted to publicly recognize him for the hard work.

And Linda Townsel, Executive Secretary. Linda actually does a lot of research work. And she is very helpful in researching a lot of the requests for public records that we receive in our department.

And she also works on the Document Notice Program and responds to a lot of telephone calls.

So for all of her efforts in dealing with a lot of the public requests, we want to thank her for that.

For FY '07, the Records Department

is --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, excuse me.

Before you start your testimony, we do have a copy of your written testimony. So if you would abbreviate it, we will make certain that the copy is given to the stenographer and it will be transcribed in full.

MS. DECKER: Okay. I will briefly review the numbers and a couple of highlights, and that's it.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Great.

MS. DECKER: For FY '07, the department is requesting an appropriation of $8,136,215, a net increase of $444,880 from the department's FY '06 estimated obligations.

This level reflects changes in the following areas: Class 100, allocation changes, $3,742,831 for FY '07, a net increase of $207,583, which reflects funding for a wage increase, staffing reductions resulting from DROP, and a one-time increase for lump-sum payments.

The number of staff position changes from 77 to -- from 78, rather, to 77 full time. And through productivity enhancements, this is sufficient to maintain current services. Automation technology will enable the department to enhance its services.

Class 200 increases to $3,680,425, a net decrease of $21,599. And this will support our service delivery to the public.

Class 300 increases by $46,000, while Class 400 equipment remains constant at $259,627.

Class 500 remains unchanged. And Class 800 is budgeted at $212,896, reflecting the pay-back of the department's productivity bank loan.

We continue to search for grant funding to supplement and enable us to do some other initiatives.

We received a productivity bank loan in the sum of $1,300,000 for our digital mapping project, which benefits many other city agencies.

We have continued with a number of

our initiatives in document recording area. We really tried to deploy as many of the operations as we can in an automated fashion online to the public.

This past year we fully deployed E-recording, and we were one of four counties in Pennsylvania that participated in an E-notarization effort, which had a formal launch February 2 of this calendar year.

And all of these initiatives really reflect market improvements and timely responsiveness to the public.

Document recording notice. We have sent to date almost 300,000 notices, and we have had reported to our department little over 100 suspected cases of fraudulent property conveyances.

And, actually, if you would like, I can stop there, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

Commissioner, on Page 15 of your detail, you are requesting $2.1 million for

Eagle Computer for system maintenance, licenses, and enhancement services.

Can you detail what services you receive from Eagle Computer?

MS. DECKER: Sure. Eagle Computing System assists us in document recording area. So that, really, covers many of the initiatives that we have mentioned.

We have mentioned the ongoing support of daily document recording operations. That means recording the various land documents, cashiering the money that we collect through document recording.

It also covers credit card. We have deployed an online application. In addition to the in-house daily processing operations, we have deployed an internet application that is now credit-card enabled.

We have implemented electronic recording. That has occurred over three phases. We started about a year and a half ago. And we have continued to increase the number of document types that are incorporated into the E-recording system.

As I mentioned, we have just recently participated in a program, in E-notarization, with the Pennsylvania Secretary of State's office. We are piloting this program.

And that required some additional work, to be able to capture the kind of information and process this information in the way that satisfied the Secretary of State's requirements.

We have implemented in the document recording area optical character recognition software, which is another effort to improve our productivity. So that was another module that was implemented into our work flow to help to make the operations more efficient.

We are continuing to convert the back file of land records. We have an extensive collection of land records which are required to be retained permanently.

Many of the records, even though they date back many years, are used by the business community, land title companies, law firms dealing in real estate, many financial and banking institutions.

When they perform title search or research into the background of a property, these records are very important to them.

Of course we have records being -- in historical city, we have records dating back to the 1600s, deed records.

We also support mapping operations. And, anyway, many of the records are being converted from microfilm, which is deteriorating, into electronic images. And all of that work is -- that's in a nutshell.

But these are many facets of our operations that are related to document recording that we are working on with a vendor.

We are looking for a number of productivity and automation enhancements to make our operations much more efficient and much more responsive and timely to our customers.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

On Page 2, you are requesting $28,768 for Leelee Ann Elkins for funding grants and writing proposals. Is this a performance based on contract?

MS. DECKER: We are basing it on the ability to uncover grants for which we may be available, so it is performance measurement in that respect.

And, as well as helping us to prepare the actual physical document that needs to be submitted. So it is performance based, in the sense that we are looking for a number of grant opportunities.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You currently have a contract for $25,500 to this firm for FY '06.

Can you tell us what grants they have gotten to the Records Department to date?

MS. DECKER: To date, the grant award notices have not been reported out. The awards have not been made, with the exception of two from NEH, National Endowment for the Humanities. And we did receive notice that we did not receive two grant applications.

The other award dates do not occur until later on, actually either at the end of this fiscal year or the beginning of the next.

The grant cycles are very slow. The award dates are sometimes over a year.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So we haven't been very successful.

On Page 2 of your testimony, you state that the department projects that it will record 279,436 documents in FY '06 and 251,492 in FY '07.

Can you tell us why you are predicting a decrease in the number of documents you will record in '07?

MS. DECKER: Sure. We believe, as the interest rate increases, that we will see a slight drop in the volume of documents recorded.

And our staff in document recording has also noticed that, in terms of mortgages, many of the submitters originally had balloon rate mortgages, and it looks like they have refinanced those to fixed-rate mortgages.

So, based on that, we do not think that there will be the volume of continuing refinancing of mortgages that we have seen in the past several years.

That estimate, again, it is a conservative estimate. We would rather not overestimate our anticipated volume.

And it is based on larger macro economic factors, as I mentioned, like the interest rates and what we are able to observe from the types of refinancing of mortgages that are coming into our department.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

Councilman Goode, do you have any questions?

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Just a few. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning, Commissioner.

The question was asked in a previous hearing -- I don't believe you were here -- you explained part of it, related to the Housing Trust Fund. The number for this year decreases next year.

And part of that could be due to

less fees for next year, but the other portion of it could be related to the real estate transfer tax.

You also, within the budget, have the real estate transfer tax budget decreasing. Why is that?

MS. DECKER: Why is the Housing Trust Fund numbers increasing?

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Why is the Housing Trust Fund numbers decreasing?

I understand in part that the numbers are decreasing because of document fees. But the other portion shows it decreasing because of less real estate transfer tax revenue.

MS. DECKER: And because of that. The Housing Trust Fund is collected on deeds and mortgages.

And if the volume, if our expected volume, of documents overall coming in is expected to be a little bit less, and the fees that are collected are based on those documents and that volume, we would also expect that the Housing Trust Fund would decrease, as well.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: I understand that portion of it. You have explained that portion of it.

But where are the estimates on the real estate tax revenue coming from, and why are they decreasing?

MS. DECKER: On the number of deeds. One of the types of documents that we record are deeds. And we expect that the number of deeds will begin to fall slightly.

We have seen this year a slight decrease from last year. And we expect --

COUNCILMAN GOODE: So you based your real estate transfer tax --

MS. DECKER: Is based on deeds.

Yes, the transfer tax is assessed only on deed documents, only when there is a transfer of property; not on a mortgage document or a satisfaction document or any of the other land records.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Related to the Housing Trust Fund, if those estimates are wrong, Housing Trust Fund gets a set percentage regardless; is that correct?

MS. DECKER: The Housing Trust Fund receives -- the recording fees for the documents that were covered were doubled. And that half of that recording fee automatically goes into the Housing Trust Fund, always.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: And how often does the Housing Trust Fund receive that money, and when does it receive that money?

MS. DECKER: It is, from the Record Department's perspective, it is deposited into a special account as we collect it daily.

COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you. Thank you Commissioner.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome. Thank you very much. We appreciate your coming in.

Good morning. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

Mr. McPherson.

MR. McPHERSON: The next department if the Fairmount Park Commission.

FY '07 OPERATING BUDGET HEARINGS - 3/14/06

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

MR. MARK A. FOCHT: Good morning. I am Mark Focht, Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission. Good morning, President Verna and members of Council and the public.

With me at the table today to my immediate left is Stephanie Craighead, Deputy Director for Planning, Preservation, and Development for Fairmount Park. And on my right is Christopher Palmer, Director of Operations for Fairmount Park.

With us also today is other senior members of Fairmount Park, and the Park and Recreation Cluster, and also Commissioner Phil Price.

I am pleased to appear before you today to present, on behalf of the Fairmount Park Commission, our proposed $12,952,858 Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2007.

This includes a General Fund obligation level of $12,882,232 and Grants

Revenue Funding of $70,626.

The Class 100 request of $8,671,102 is $194,275 above the Fiscal Year 2006 estimated obligations due to salary increases which will be enacted during Fiscal Year 2007. This increase will allow our number of employees to remain at 170.

Our Class 200 and 300, 400 requests are $2,692,509 and $668,621 respectively, and represent proposed increases from Fiscal Year 2006 estimated obligations of nearly 3 percent in Class 200 and just under 10 percent in Class 300 and 400.

The mission of the Fairmount Park Commission is to preserve, protect, and maintain the open space, street trees, natural and cultural resources of Philadelphia's parks for the recreation and enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Further, the mission is to educate the public on the environment, history, and use of the Fairmount Park system and promote, celebrate, and enhance the uniqueness in value of Fairmount Park and its economic impact to the city, region, and state.

Within its responsibilities are the woodlands, watersheds, landscapes, and physical infrastructure of 469 buildings and almost 200 sculptures throughout our 9,200 acres.

The Fairmount Park system provides Philadelphia citizens and visitors with opportunities for passive and active recreation.

With more than 60 parks managed by the Commission, it comprises one of the largest municipally operated landscape park systems in the United States.

Each of these parks is an important piece of open space in the urban landscape, regardless of its size or features; from the smallest neighborhood mini-parks, to downtown plazas, to regional parks, and our large watershed areas.

I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the accomplishments in Fiscal Year '06, including enhanced citizen services.

Two significant initiatives greatly enhance the Commission's ability to provide citizen services. The first being park information.

In 2005, in partnership with the Fairmount Park Conservancy, a new map and visitor's guide was published and the new park website, www.FairmountPark.org was launched.

While the guide is a tremendous resource in print, the website has become the primary portal for interactive information about the park system.

Also under street tree management, after years of using a decentralized geographic-based system to handle street tree issues, the Commission created a new division of tree contract management to handle all matters of street trees and park trees.

This unit provides information, guidelines, and services to citizens citywide who are interested in getting trees planted, removed, or pruned.

In fulfilling our mission to manage Philadelphia's parks, we are proud to have received an overall 82 percent satisfaction rating in the Fiscal Year 2005 Mayor's Report on City Services, and look forward to continued approval in our efforts to care for the city's green spaces.

We are also working to promote regional greening efforts through the Tree-Vitalize Program.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the School District of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Eagles have teamed with the commission in a major public/private partnership to restore the tree cover in Philadelphia and our surrounding suburbs.

This $8 million program targets neighborhoods and cities and townships where the tree cover, that being the percent of land that is shaded by trees, is less than 25 percent.

Tree-Vitalize is designed to revitalize older communities, improved air and water quality, and enhance the quality of life for citizens living in urbanized areas.

Ultimately the program will plant more than 2,700 shade trees and create 84 acres of forested riparian buffers. Those are the strips of land along our creeks and streams throughout the City of Philadelphia.

We are working on the restoration of the Swan Memorial Fountain landscape in Logan Square. To enhance the safety, use, and appearance of this area, the Commission is working with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society implementing a much-needed landscape improvement project.

With the $750,000 grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts and over 400,000 from the park's Capital Budget, a new landscape design prepared by renowned Philadelphia landscape architect, the Olin Partnership, is being implemented and will be completed in the very near future.

The Cobbs Creek recreation trail. This long-awaited Cobbs Creek rec path was completed and dedicated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony last November with Councilwoman Blackwell presiding.

The 8-mile trail runs from Market Street, along Cobbs Creek Parkway, through the Cobbs Creek neighborhood, to 84th Street and Bartram Avenue. 80 percent of the one and a half million dollar project funding was provided by PennDOT, with the remaining 20 percent coming from the city's Capital Budget.

Some of the initiatives we are planning on working on in Fiscal Year 2007, including support of the River City Initiative.

The Commission will continue to work with the Schuylkill River Development Corporation, our partners, our long-time partners, on the Schuylkill River, to implement landscape improvements to the section of Schuylkill banks between Martin Luther King Junior Drive and Race Street, and to extend Schuylkill banks from Locust Street to South Street.

On the other side of the town, along the Delaware River, we continue to work with partners such as the Pennsylvania Environmental Council implementing projects, such as Lardner's Point Park, the North Delaware Greenway, and the extension of the recreation path through the wetlands at the mouth of the Pennypack Creek.

We will continue to focus on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway to prepare for the relocation of the Barnes Museum and the expansion of the Free Library.

We will work with our partners, such as the Center City District, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia Holocaust Remembrance Foundation, the Art Museum, and The Pew Charitable Trust, to make additional landscape improvements to the Parkway.

And, finally, in Fiscal Year '07, we will continue to expand our Growing The Neighborhood Program, known as GTN. GTN makes community-based renovations to small neighborhood parks throughout the park system. It is funded by grants to the Fairmount Park Conservancy from ACE, NovaCare, and the William Penn Foundation

To date, seven neighborhood parks have received improvements selected by park users and leadership groups, including items such as new plantings, renovated paths and play areas, signage, and guide rails.

Since the program began in Fiscal Year '04, this private investment of $150,000 has leveraged an additional investment of 400,000 from public and private sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the state of the Fairmount Park system.

Aside from the significant physical assets that we manage and care for, we are extremely grateful for our extensive network of volunteer resources and our friends groups. And we owe tremendous gratitude to all citizens who love their parks and continue to support them year after year.

We would be glad to answer any questions.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

You know, for many, many years my constituents were asking for new tennis courts at FDR Park.

And I guess last week I received several calls from my constituents who were of the understanding that they would not be able to use the tennis courts unless they paid a $100 fee. I found that very, very annoying.

A member of my staff did in fact call the Fairmount Park. And they were told that my constituents misunderstood; that what the Fairmount Park Commission was doing was asking for a donation.

What happens if the users decide they cannot or will not donate? Will they still have their requested usage?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, they will still get their permit to use the tennis courts.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You know, most of the people that use those tennis courts do in fact volunteer a great deal of their time to the park, and why something like this would have been said is beyond me.

Who would do something like that?

MR. FOCHT: Well, Council President --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Was there a notice

that was sent out? And I would like to see a copy of it, if you have it.

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Did it specify "volunteer"?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, it does. A little bit of background, if I may.

We have had a system in place for 15 years that asks for voluntary contributions when any individual or adult requests the use of a ball field or an outdoor recreation facility, the concept being that that facility is being taken out of general public use and provided to one individual or adult group.

We do not require or ask for a donation from any youth-based organization, schools, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, any youth-based organization.

Again, it is a requested donation. No one has ever been denied a permit in the 15 years we have done this.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, I just don't understand that.

Because it is my understanding that

the people that apparently were told this have used the tennis courts at FDR Park for quite some time and have never, never been informed if they were willing to donate.

But they do actually spend a great deal of time down there, volunteering much of the time. And I was rather surprised to hear about a $100 fee.

That, for the record, is untrue?

MR. FOCHT: Correct, that is untrue.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. The Mayor's proposal -- and I would like to see a copy of the letter, please.

MR. FOCHT: Certainly. Absolutely.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Mayor's proposed General Fund for FY '07 Operating Budget for the park is $12.9 million.

Can you tell us, what was the park's request of the Administration for 2007?

MR. FOCHT: It was actually 12.7 or eight. And then when the mandated increases in Class 100 were calculated in, it became 12.9.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Was the basis of

your request the park's master plan?

MR. FOCHT: The basis of our request was working with the Administration and budget and finance office on looking at the needs of the park and the staffing levels of the park, which is -- we're working constantly to implement our strategic plan, yes. So, the two are tied together.

PRESIDENT VERNA: What does the strategic plan suggest?

MR. FOCHT: The strategic plan suggests increased funding for the park over time. But --

PRESIDENT VERNA: What would it be for 07?

MR. FOCHT: There was no specific recommendations in the strategic plan. The strategic plan does not contain specific numbers for funding levels for the park.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So you actually had requested 12.8, and your budget is 12.9?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

PRESIDENT VERNA: On Page 4 of your testimony, will you please read into the record Footnotes 2 and 3.

MR. FOCHT: Under the Key Performance Measures?

PRESIDENT VERNA: On Page 4.

MR. FOCHT: Under Key Performance Measures, Footnote No. 2 is Street Trees Removed. "Street trees removed include operating and capital dollars. Fewer prunings and removals will occur in Fiscal Year '06 based on anticipated budget reductions for these services."

Footnote No. 3 is, Ball Fields Maintained and Renovated. "The reduction in the targets projection for ball fields maintained and renovated is directly related to anticipated reductions in available staff to perform this work."

PRESIDENT VERNA: How many staff are we short?

MR. FOCHT: In the last two years, the work that's done on both of these issues, both street trees and ball fields, falls within our operations group.

We currently have in Fiscal Year '06

113 budgeted positions in our operations group. In Fiscal Year '05, we had 127.

So there has been a decrease in 14 positions in our operations group, and we have had a number of folks leave recently for health or personal reasons. So the current staff level as of yesterday was 107 employees in that division.

We are in the process of working with personnel to fill those positions to bring it back to the budgeted 113. But because there has been a decrease in the operation staff at the park, there's a decrease in those two performance indicators, also.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So, actually, you say you are down to 107 as of today?

MR. FOCHT: 107, correct.

PRESIDENT VERNA: 107.

MR. FOCHT: In our operations group.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And do you have approval to hire the 20 that you had in '05?

MR. FOCHT: No. We are working on approvals to hire the 6 to bring us back to the budgeted 113.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you think that is ample?

MR. FOCHT: Well, it will help us meet our performance measures, yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So when I call to have street trees pruned, how long would I have to wait before that's done?

MR. FOCHT: Well, street tree pruning is done by contractors. It is not done by Fairmount Park staff; it is done by contractors.

PRESIDENT VERNA: How long would I have to wait to have that done?

MR. FOCHT: Let me ask our director of operations on what our current wait time is.

MR. CHRISTOPHER PALMER: Good morning. I am Christopher Palmer.

Pruning requests, removal requests, planting requests come into our street tree management office. We are currently working on our list for this contract year.

We do approximately 12,000 prunings

a year, and that list has been established for this year.

So if you had contacted us today for pruning, the earliest that we could prune your tree, because all the slots are filled for this year, would be after July 1.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And I believe you indicated that the ball fields were also included?

MR. FOCHT: Yes. The ball fields are maintained by park staff.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And you feel that you have ample staff to take care of the ball fields?

MR. FOCHT: To meet our target projections, yes; the performance indicators, the performance measures on Page 4.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I do have other questions, but at this time I would recognize Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning.

MR. FOCHT: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let me first commend you on the work that has happened around the Fairmount Park website. It really adds a new dimension to the broader community knowing about the work there at the Fairmount Park.

You are aware that City Council is currently contemplating the idea of our city having a wireless environment. Give us some sense of what the feedback activity has been on the current Fairmount Park website.

MR. FOCHT: Anecdotally, the response has been very good from park users across the city, as we meet them and I meet them in public meetings and make them aware of it.

We do not have a tracking system in place yet as far as numbers of hits and things like that. But, anecdotally, it has been very well received.

We continue to make modifications to it. We have a web master that updates it regularly and makes sure the information is timely and pertinent.

But I would say, again, anecdotally, the response has been very good. We are quite proud of it.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You also stated in your testimony some discussion around the great activity that's happening on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

The restoration of Logan Square landscape program, we have to thank Pew Charitable Trust for the huge contribution they have made towards this effort.

Give us a sense of the time line for completion, where we are, and how far -- what remains to be done in terms of major partner contributions and where we will end up.

MR. FOCHT: Certainly. As far as partner contributions, all the funding is in place to complete the project with the money from The Pew Charitable Trust and the money that Fairmount Park has put in through our Capital Budget.

As far as actually completing the project, with this unseasonably 70 degree weather we have been having, our contractors are back on the project working and our target completion is currently Friday, April 7.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Of this year?

MR. FOCHT: Yes.

We traditionally turn the fountains before on the weekend before Easter, and that is again -- which would be that weekend. And that is, again, our target. And from what I saw this morning, the contractors are right on pace for that.

So unless we get snow, which we might get in a few days, but, otherwise, we are on target for April 7.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So, in your view, the fundraising piece of that is intact and in place and solid?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And the list of other agencies involved, you mentioned again in your testimony, are the Center City District and -- name the others, if you would. Just restate the others.

MR. FOCHT: We are working on our projects on the Parkway, not specifically on

Logan Square.

But we are working on other projects with the Center City District, with the Horticulture Society and Pew Charitable Trusts and the Philadelphia Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What about the neighboring local community groups? They are part of that picture. Are they at the table?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely. The Logan Square Neighborhood Association, we have very strong ties to them and they have been brought in on every project we have done.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Now to the neighborhood parks that have received improvement.

You have indicated that seven neighborhood parks have received improvement. And is there a wait list, if you will, of remaining parks that are due to receive similar renovations? I think you discussed that on Page 3 of your testimony.

MR. FOCHT: Yes. That's part of our Growing The Neighborhood Program, Councilwoman. Growing The Neighborhood is the name of the program. And we pick parks for that on a year-by-year basis. So we don't have a waiting list of parks, if you will.

We have a criteria that has been developed with our funders. And there is three funders: William Penn Foundation; NovaCare, the physical rehabilitation company; and ACE INA, the insurance company.

They have each committed funding for this program for four years. We are in the third year of it.

Our additional partner is the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. So park staff, PHS staff, and the funders get together, and we have developed a criteria for selecting parks to bring into this program.

And so far we have completed or are working in seven parks, and next year we will evaluate other neighborhood parks.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That's a novel, nontraditional partnership, wouldn't you say?

MR. FOCHT: I must give credit to the PHS and the Recreation Department and the

Parks Revitalization Program, which has been in Recreation Department for about 11 or 12 years, I believe. This is modeled on that model for Fairmount Park neighborhood parks.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Excellent.

You have discussed already criteria that you use in the selection of the parks. I am aware of the fact that the city Managing Director's Office has written maintenance standards to be consistent throughout the parks.

Is that practice, or whatever, being used throughout the entire park system? Is there a measure to monitor the completion and performance of the work that comes with the whole grass-cutting process and the application of those maintenance standards?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, we do. Particularly on the area of turf management, which is mowing of our grass, we have a whole structure of staff that goes out and monitors the contractor's performance, make sure they are out at the appropriate places at the appropriate times at the appropriate intervals, and signs off on their work, make sure it is being done to our satisfaction.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And what you do in Fairmount Park, there is some consistency with what is happening with rec department along the same lines?

MR. FOCHT: Correct; yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: A few questions just regards to the strategic plan. We know where we have been, and we all are aware of where we hope to end up.

Let me just put on the record and commend the working groups that have been established to move us to a different place and to eliminate the status quo when it comes to the world of Philadelphia Fairmount Park and the Philadelphia Recreation Department.

And, so, to that end, give me an update, if you will, first on the -- I have a number of questions here around the strategic plan, and I may end up on a clock.

So let's speak first to the development and implementation of a golf management plan that is discussed in the strategic plan.

It is my understanding that there is a mutual agreement to terminate the relationship with the former golf vendor. Give us a sense of where that is and where you hope to end up.

MR. FOCHT: That relationship has already been terminated. It was terminated last year.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Forgive me?

MR. FOCHT: The former operator, that relationship has been terminated. That was with Meadowbrook.

And we have a new operator on an interim basis called Liberty Golf. They are managing our courses not as a concessioneer, but as a direct management entity for Fairmount Park.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: As a direct manager?

MR. FOCHT: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: For the golf courses?

MR. FOCHT: For the six golf

courses.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How does that differ from the past, or does it?

MR. FOCHT: That was a long-term multi-year concession agreement. This is a management professional services agreement.

It was for one year, which that first year expires on March 31, in about two weeks. We have several six-month extensions. We have just extended that contract to September 31 of this year.

We are constantly evaluating both their performance and also looking at other models for the golf courses.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And in the looking at other models of the golf course, what is your goal; to ultimately adopt a different model going forward, or what?

MR. FOCHT: We are trying to find the model that will provide good quality golf services to the users and also generate revenue for the city.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any time line attached to that?

MR. FOCHT: We are trying to get it accomplished in the time line of this interim agreement with Liberty Golf, which would be either by September 30 of this year, or we do have one more six-month extension on the agreement with Liberty, which would carry it through to next March.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

MR. FOCHT: The key here being that we are not locked into a long-term management agreement with anyone currently on our golf courses.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Update us, if you will, on park rules and regulation ordinances to reduce the inappropriate uses of the park.

Again, pulling from some of the recommendations of the strategic plan, and clearly recognizing that all of this is not going to happen over the next 6 months, 12 months or 24.

But we want some sense that some movement is happening with regards to what was recommended out of that $600,000 document.

MR. FOCHT: Certainly. On that point, Councilwoman, several things are ongoing.

One is that we are making sure that all park rules and regulation signs are updated and current and that, in fact, all parks have them posted in them.

Because then, obviously, in our conversations with the Philadelphia Police, it is very difficult for them to enforce regulations in the park if, in fact, those regulations are not posted.

So one thing we are doing is that. We are just making sure all the signage is current and that it physically is present at all of our parks.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So what percentage would you say -- where are you in terms of percentage of completion?

MR. FOCHT: Oh, that I would say we are probably close to 100 percent.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

MR. FOCHT: The other aspect of that is looking at our deployment of the Fairmount

Park Rangers; looking at updating some of their equipment, including vehicles and mountain bikes so that they can have more of a physical presence in our major parks. That process is ongoing. So, we are working on that with the Rangers.

We also have restructured the Rangers slightly to create more of a management structure.

We created a position called a lead ranger position, which provides for more management oversight in the field. And we have also looked at a reallocation of some funding from the Ranger core budget in order to slightly increase the number of Rangers.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. That's encouraging, knowing how many of us care very much about that core of professionals.

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Speak to us, if you will, about communications both internally and externally, again as it relates to one of the objectives called for in the strategic plan.

MR. FOCHT: Well, certainly communications externally, again, our two principal vehicles have been the new map and visitor's guide and the website.

As I said in my testimony, we think the website is the primary portal for information on the park, and that's where we direct folks to.

And if I could go back, when I mentioned updating our rules and regulation signs, we are making sure we are now adding our website to the bottom of all of our signs, so people know they can go there to get additional information.

So as far as external communications, it is really around growing awareness and use of our website.

Internal communications, since I have become director we have restructured slightly internally so that we now have a senior management team that meets once a week, every Friday morning, for internal management, and then once a month with our extended senior management staff in the park, going out to the districts and pulling in our operations folks, Rangers, special events from the districts.

So that has greatly facilitated --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I didn't mean to cut you off.

MR. FOCHT: That has greatly facilitated our internal communications.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Where in that lineup that you just described is there a connect or bridge with the rec department, where appropriate?

MR. FOCHT: Well, with the formation of the administrative cluster last year, now all human resources, fiscal, technology, and stores, those four areas for both Fairmount Park and Recreation, are in one cluster.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Repeat those four areas.

MR. FOCHT: Fiscal, human resources, technology, and stores. Those four things are now in one cluster.

That's under the leadership of the Deputy Commissioner of Recreation, Mary Platt-Coles, who is with us today.

So internally communications, as I communicate regularly with the Recreation Commissioner and with Mary around all those issues.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Does that require expenditure of dollars?

MR. FOCHT: Excuse me?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: To put that new systemic piece in place, did that call for the expenditure of any dollars?

MR. FOCHT: No.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What would be the dollar amount attached to the new website that you spoke about, and dollars required to moving forward with regards to the maintenance of the website? Just some round figures.

MR. FOCHT: Say again.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The dollar amount attached to the start-up and the maintenance of the website, and then dollars that need to be expended going forward around the maintenance.

MR. FOCHT: This is a really good news story.

The website development was managed through the Fairmount Park Conservancy, and it was all donated professional services. It was the equivalent of approximately a quarter million dollars in donated services.

Excensure donated staff time to develop the website. Mighty Smart donates all of our web hosting services. Hewlett Packard donated all the hardware, and Microsoft donated all the software.

So the entire development of the website, other than staff time, which was involved in it, was donations from the corporate community.

The maintenance of the website is done by a Fairmount Park staff employee in our operations group, so it is part of his regular responsibilities to manage the website on a day-to-day basis.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That is a great news story and a clear example that, when we approach the business community and invite them to contribute, many of them step up.

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Another objective, recommendation of the strategic plan was that there be a quarterly reporting process to the Park Commission.

Speak to us about where that is, has it started, how is it going, does it work.

MR. FOCHT: It has started. I last reported to the Commission in November, 2004 -- excuse me, 2005, last November, on the update of the strategic plan. And that document was also delivered to all members of City Council.

It is a two- or three-page document with bullet points of updating. And now that occurs on a periodic basis.

I report at the Commission meeting every month, the monthly Commission meeting there is a director's report.

And if there is specific movement or update on a particular item in the strategic plan, I will include that in my executive director's report.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So the written report is how periodically?

MR. FOCHT: The written report would be quarterly.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

I have many more questions, Madam President, so I am willing to do the round and come back, please.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning.

MR. FOCHT: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I just have a couple of questions pretty much around the street tree maintenance program.

I would like to get an update on what trees or what streets you have removed trees from, planted new ones, or pruned some.

In the 8th Council District, there are many trees, you know, just like many other parts of the city. And I know there used to be a large backlog for street tree removal, and then there was special funding under NTI.

And I used to -- we used to receive an update, but I haven't -- I don't know that I have received one lately, and I have no idea what's happening in the 8th Council District as it relates to tree removal.

MR. FOCHT: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That seemed to be a big problem at one point.

And I do want to thank you for the most recent tree removal. We got a call yesterday from our constituent thanking us. And I want to thank you for taking care of that problem.

MR. FOCHT: You are welcome.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The other question I have -- you know, maybe you don't know because you are kind of new. When did you start? Or you have been here?

MR. FOCHT: I have been with the park for eight years. I have been the director since August 1 of last year.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I have been an active member of this Growing The Neighborhood Program and giving money to parks in my district.

I would like to just ask -- maybe Stephanie can answer this, Stephanie Craighead -- when is Kimble Park's renovations going to be completed?

MS. STEPHANIE CRAIGHEAD: Good morning, everyone. My name is Stephanie Craighead. I am Deputy Director of Planning, Preservation, and development for Fairmount Park Commission.

We opened bids on Kimble Park, and that project should be under construction shortly. And we expect it to take about three months to complete.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Because we did go over, you did report to us, unfortunately, that we just put new play equipment there and someone burned some of the play equipment, set it on fire. And we were over just last week trying to get a handle on that.

But people from the neighborhood keep calling about the tree lighting -- I mean, about the additional lighting and whatnot. And I really want to be able to tell them.

So, basically, I guess I can just say, then, before the summer is over, the lighting will be completed?

MS. CRAIGHEAD: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That's good.

And Aubrey Park is one of the parks where we get lots of calls about the people not following -- users of that park for picnics and birthday parties and family reunions are not following the rules around the loud music.

Do you know whether a sign has been posted? Because, actually, the community, the local community group, was going to call to set up a meeting, and I don't know that they have done that yet. They haven't contacted me. But, when I met with them, that was one of their plans.

Do you know that signs are posted in Aubrey?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, they are.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That's good. And then, therefor, we can do enforcement.

But I do want to thank the park for paying attention to our constituents' needs.

And that's all, Madam President. That's it.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: While you were testifying, a member of my staff brought in a copy of a letter that one of my constituents received.

Would you please read the last paragraph for me, please, for the record.

MR. FOCHT: "Please return the completed form with any required donation in the form of a check payable to the Fairmount Park Commission. The Fairmount Park Commission will begin processing the spring 2006 season athletic field requests on Monday, February 27, 2006. If the Fairmount Park does not receive your completed application, along with the required payment, by March 10, 2006, we will begin reassigning fields to new applicants. If you have questions, please call me."

PRESIDENT VERNA: What is the required donation?

MR. FOCHT: I would say, Councilwoman, that was unfortunate wording of that letter, and I will look into it.

There is no required donation, there is only a requested donation.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And what have the donations been heretofore? How much was received last year from donations?

MR. FOCHT: We will get you that information. I am sorry, I don't know specifically for FDR Park.

PRESIDENT VERNA: On Page 28, Budget in Brief, under Fairmount Park Commission, it says, "Other," and it is estimated $290,000.

MR. FOCHT: Excuse me. I am sorry. Which page?

PRESIDENT VERNA: It is the Budget in Brief. And Ms. Reed is here, so she can come up.

Do you see it?

MR. FOCHT: What line is that?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Line 42. I am

sorry, for you it is 34.

MR. FOCHT: Council President, 150,000 of that is our Johnson collection, which is the Art Museum's Johnson collection. The city is responsible for $150,000 of the cost of that collection annually. And the balance --

PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sorry. This is revenue.

MR. FOCHT: I am being told -- I apologize. I am being told it is not Johnson.

The other thing that would be in that would be the reimbursement of overtime. When we have special events on park property, the organizers are responsible to fund the overtime expenses for city employees.

That money is shown as revenue coming into the city. It comes in through Fairmount Park, and then goes to the General Fund.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Don't they abate that?

MR. FOCHT: The procedure changed this past year. Where we bring the revenue in, the overtime is not abated. We bring the revenue in, and then it flows through Fairmount Park to the General Fund. And, so, it is shown as an increase in revenue coming in.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I am sorry. Would you repeat again, how much was that?

MR. FOCHT: We will get you the exact number. I don't know what exactly of the 270 that amount is. We will get you that number.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And, again, I want the record to be crystal clear that there is not a required donation --

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT VERNA: -- for the use of the fields or the tennis courts.

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Back to some additional discussion

regarding the strategic plan. It calls for -- it discusses maximizing contracted services, and our ability to do that.

First let me ask the question. Have you developed a master list of contracted services? Since this was a high priority, has it been done? And have you had a chance to do that yet?

MR. FOCHT: No, we have not.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any sense on the when?

Let me ask this: Of the strategic plan, what are the one, two, three, four, five priorities you have placed in terms -- as leadership, you have placed a priority on?

MR. FOCHT: Okay. The strategic plan contains, as you are probably very well aware, 80 recommended strategies. There are 6 majors goals, 27 objectives, and 80 major strategies.

Of those 80 major strategies, we have completed or are in progress on 39 of the 80, so about 50 percent in about 21 months.

The plan was completed in June of

2004, that's when it was accepted by the Administration and the public, the Commission. So it has been about 21 months.

And we have either completed our are working on about 50 percent of the recommendations.

We have been working on the recommendations that we can advance with park staff and in combination with our partners.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So that's been a broad priority?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Continue.

So is this included in -- of those 39, are contracted services a part of that?

MR. FOCHT: I would say they are a part of the ongoing.

We know what services we already contract out. I can't -- there is not a written list of them. We know what we contract out currently.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So, then, the ask is to please develop a master list as part of the strategic plan, please share that with City Council.

MR. FOCHT: Certainly.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What about a list of preferred service providers for tents, catering, portable toilets, et cetera? Where are you with this?

MR. FOCHT: We haven't done that because it is not really our place. We haven't felt -- we have not made that a high priority.

We don't think it is our place to tell our folks that come in and request a permit to do something on park property, we are not sure what the benefit is of giving them a list of preferred users.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. I will certainly respect that position.

What I do know is that a number of arts and cultural institutions in this town do have what they call a preferred catering list, wherein those caterers meet criteria established by that particular arts institution, which then gives them the opportunity to do business with the broader community.

So it is your point of view that you simply don't see the value in telling vendors to -- where to do their business; is that what I am hearing?

MR. FOCHT: Well, I think there are two different things.

Here, in the case of the park, we are not talking about facilities. The example of a large family reunion comes in and pulls a permit to do a picnic at one of our sites.

And we can reconsider this, but to date it hasn't been our sense that it is appropriate for us to tell the family that they need to go to one of these places to get their caterer or their tent.

We do have insurance requirements, absolutely, that protect the city and the park and the public.

So where they go to get those services, they then have to provide us with the appropriate insurance coverages and security deposits and things like that. We can certainly revisit it, though.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let me ask a broader question.

Where, then, do you apply MBE/WBE opportunities and guidelines and criteria, which is a real requirement for government?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely. Those are applied, basically, for us on our behalf through the procurement process on all procurement contracts that are done, through procurement, like our lawn cutting and street tree pruning and things like that. Those are all done by procurement.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right, then.

I am deliberately today staying away from questions related to the Commission, because I think that's a whole other session. Okay?

The plan calls for a comprehensive recreation program plan for Fairmount Park in conjunction with the rec department.

Update us on where those discussions are, what kind of planning has taken place, and what lies ahead for the future.

MR. FOCHT: Beyond the transfer of facilities to Recreation Department, which, as you know, occurred in Fiscal Year '03, when we transferred to the Recreation Department, our outdoor swimming pools and our recreation centers.

Beyond that, we have not developed a comprehensive plan, no.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What's the time line, timetable, action plan, contingent plan for that?

MR. FOCHT: I would have to look at the strategic plan to know what the recommendation was, but we will certainly get back to you on that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So of the 39 -- you mentioned that there are 39 priority areas. That is not one of the 39?

MR. FOCHT: That's not something we are currently working on, no.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Could you provide to the Chairperson those 39 priority areas you are currently focusing on as a department?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The report also calls for performance measures. It states best practices that we know happen around the country with regards to the operation of Parks and Recreation.

Have those performance standards been established, discussed? What's the status of that conversation?

MR. FOCHT: That is in progress. We have revised our performance measures. You see some of them in the back of my testimony.

Some of the performance measures that we have historically used for our operations group have been revised.

We have established new performance indicators for our environment stewardship and education division, which is a division that manages our natural resources, runs our environmental centers, and cements our relationship with all of our friends groups.

Those are all new performance indicators that have been established. So now we will be working into the additional groups in the park. But, that's definitely an ongoing.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And projected completion of that piece?

MR. FOCHT: I would say probably several months, yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: In the new performance standards for the environmental aspect, are there any conversations with Mike DeBerdinis and all they are doing at the state level in this particular area?

MR. FOCHT: Absolutely. I have, actually, regular communications with the secretary as recently as this past weekend on some matters.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So then by this time next year, we can expect that this particular part of the plan will be complete?

MR. FOCHT: Definitely, yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It was revealed in the public hearings on the proposed Charter change that the Commission had retained a public relations firm, a lobbyist, to do what they do.

It was unclear precisely what that individual or individuals were charged to do and who was paying for them.

Please clarify what the responsibility is.

MR. FOCHT: I believe the company that you are referring to was engaged by the Fairmount Park Conservancy, it was not engaged by the Commission.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very well. Thus the need for clarification; right?

So it was the Fairmount Park Conservancy that hired the firm.

So I need to reserve those questions for the Conservancy on the 20th. All right, then.

I need to review my notes, Madam Chair, to make sure I have covered my questioning, so I will come back around on the next round.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much.

FY '07 OPERATING BUDGET HEARINGS - 3/14/06

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam President.

Mr. Focht, just a couple of questions. Am I reading correctly from Section 40, Page 5, you are projecting for FY '07 170 full-time employees? Is that correct?

MR. FOCHT: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And in FY '06, you had 180?

MR. FOCHT: There were 180 prior to the transfer of ten positions to form the administrative cluster in Recreation and Park. And that has already occurred.

So currently we have 170 employees now in Fairmount Park.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And, now, your document indicates that your proposed budget for FY '07 is $12,952,858; is that correct?

MR. FOCHT: That's correct, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And, now, do you have access to other funds or are there other funds in other budgets, other departments, that are utilized on behalf of Fairmount Park?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, there are.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What are those?

MR. FOCHT: Well, we receive support from several city departments, including the Law Department, certainly Fleet Management, the Capital Program Office. And then, by extension, I would say possibly, when we are doing special events, Public Property. And the Managing Director's Office, certainly, for our tree work.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So the money for street tree pruning is still in the MDO?

MR. FOCHT: The majority of it is, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how much is the street tree money?

MR. FOCHT: Excuse me, Councilman?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How much is the street tree funding?

MR. FOCHT: Councilman, let me confirm. You are asking how much money we have to do street tree work?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes.

MR. FOCHT: 2.3 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So --

MR. FOCHT: Excuse me, Councilman. I apologize. 2.3 million is from the Managing Director's Office. We have an additional 400,000 in our Operating Budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: For street trees?

MR. FOCHT: For street trees.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So the $12,952,858 does not include the $2.3 that's over in the Managing Director's Office?

MR. FOCHT: Correct, it does not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And the rest of the services, I mean, all the departments get some amount of service from the law department, fleet management, and all the rest. So, I mean, I can't get too excited about that.

Capital Program Office, this is to assist you in capital projects?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is this for salaries of individuals who work with the park?

MR. FOCHT: Correct. There is a Fairmount Park team within the Capital Program Office.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That work on capital projects. Okay.

Can you give us an assessment of the current condition of the park system from a user standpoint?

MR. FOCHT: I can give you, perhaps, several indicators.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I mean, you know, of course you have the big areas, East Park, West Park, the Wissahickon, the Pennypack, FDR; and then, obviously, a bunch of neighborhood parks and trails, et cetera, et cetera.

Just can you give us your in-the-field assessment of, what's the current state of the parks?

MR. FOCHT: Generally, I think we feel the park is well maintained. We have -- in the last Mayor's support in city services -- report on city services, excuse me, we received an 82 percent citizen satisfaction level with Fairmount Park system. That, I believe, is the highest we have been in the last several years, something we're quite pleased with.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why do you think it is so high?

MR. FOCHT: Because I think we are providing very good services to the citizens.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's your assessment of the cleanliness of the overall system, trail maintenance?

As I go through various parts of the park, I am left with the impression that we are still trying to recover from -- we had a series of storms in August, September time frame of, I think, 2004.

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Isn't some of that debris and trees and a bunch of that stuff still hanging around in different parts of the system?

MR. FOCHT: Some of it is, yes. We are working with -- we have several initiatives. We are working with the Philadelphia Water Department and their waterways restoration team to remove debris dams, when the wood is choking up our streams.

And in particular in the Wissahickon, which was particularly hard hit by those storms in 2004, the Friends of the Wissahickon have stepped forward in a major way with fundraising and providing in-kind services, working with our staff to rebuild trails.

It is a constant challenge.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do you think are the -- I will use your word. What do you think are the major challenges going forward to improve both the look of the park, as well as enhance the user experience?

What kinds of things should we be doing that we're not doing today?

MR. FOCHT: Some of the things -- I will take the second one first.

Some of the things to enhance users' experiences are some of the things that are in our strategic plan, like implementing the parkwide sign program to provide updated information to park users, interpretation, directions, maps, things like that.

We have applied this in several sections of the park; such as, the Wissahickon along Forbidden Drive at our environmental centers.

We are currently talking with our partners to try to apply it in other sections of the park. It is going to be a multi-year process to roll out the program.

So I think that's one of the ways we can certainly enhance the user experience in the park.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have you taken the strategic plan and -- my recollection from reading it, tons of ideas and proposals about what we should be doing to make Fairmount Park one of the best parks in the country.

Many of those recommendations, as they often do, come with cost factors associated with them.

Have you taken the report apart and cost it out, what it would take to implement many of those recommendations?

MR. FOCHT: We have not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You have not. Okay. Any particular reason?

MR. FOCHT: No. We have been focusing on implementing the recommendations that we can with park staff and our partners.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are there some recommendations that you would like to do that you decided not to do?

MR. FOCHT: Well, we would like to, in the end, do them all.

It is a ten-year strategic plan. We are in the second year of it. It would be our goal, by the end of the plan, to have the plan fully implemented.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. Well, but, let me go back to the earlier question.

I mean, maybe I missed something. You don't have unlimited funds; right?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And as much as you will try to implement what you think you can with the resources that you have, I mean, there are some components of the recommendations that are beyond your current resources; is that correct?

MR. FOCHT: Correct; yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So do you have a sense of the scale or magnitude of what it would take to implement, you know, 25 percent of the plan, 50 percent of the plan, 100 percent of the plan?

MR. FOCHT: No, I don't have those figures. We haven't calculated those figures.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, could you forward to the Chair your best estimate of what it would actually cost to implement the strategic plan?

MR. FOCHT: Certainly.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last question. Tell me about any activities or steps that have been taken with regard to -- I read in the -- and you alluded to it earlier, but I think it is mentioned in the Recreation Department testimony, who is coming up soon.

I guess this is probably the ten positions that you talked about, but

Recreation in their testimony mentions that eight full-time positions from Fairmount Park are now a part of the Recreation's budget.

Is that from this cluster of administrative services?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have there been any other consolidation steps or reorganization steps internally between Recreation and Fairmount Park in recent times?

MR. FOCHT: Yes, there has. We transferred our three outdoor swimming pools and our six recreation centers to the Recreation Department, consolidating active recreation and rec. That was in 2003.

In 2004, Recreation transferred to us their tree-maintenance crew, and we are now responsible for all tree work on all Recreation Department sites, in addition to Fairmount Park sites.

And then in Fiscal Year '05 was the formation of the administrative cluster.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what's happened in the course of 2006?

MR. FOCHT: Right now the Recreation Commissioner and myself and senior staff and the Managing Director's Office are working together in looking at other areas between the two departments that could be realigned.

So, that conversation is continuing.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What are some of those areas?

MR. FOCHT: There is three areas we are looking at right now. One around fleet. We both obviously maintain fleets of vehicles, we both have fleet liaisons. There were probably some alignment possibilities there.

The second is around volunteer services and support. We both have friends groups. We both provide similar outreach to our friends groups, and there is things we could learn from each other, and combined resources on that.

And then the third is around the very basic but important issue of trash pickup in Fairmount Park sites and Recreation Department neighborhood parks.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And those are

items that are under current discussion at the moment?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Any other consolidation thoughts or ideas taking place?

MR. FOCHT: There are other ideas that are out there for the future that are brought up, but there is nothing else that we are currently discussing.

Those are the three that we are currently working on.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President. Point of information.

You said in 2005 the major move between the two departments was what? I am just trying to keep a record here.

MR. FOCHT: That's the administrative cluster.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes. Okay.

And as a footnote to Councilman Nutter's question, wherein he made the request to indicate dollars needed to implement the strategic plan, with his consent I would like to add a friendly amendment.

And since the strategic plan calls for a ten-year roll out, knowing that it is virtually impossible to do all of that in 24 months, if you could add to that incrementally -- an incremental assessment of dollars needed to roll out the various -- to roll out the execution and implementation of the recommendation in the strategic plan.

MR. FOCHT: Certainly.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you. I was in error. Can I have Ms. Reed up to the table, please.

Good morning, Ms. Reed. How are

you?

MS. DIANNE REED: Good morning. Dianne Reed, Budget Director.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Ms. Reed, I wanted to ask you about one of the components of the Five-Year Plan. It is in the, I guess, the introduction, or I guess the commentary section.

On Page -- I guess that's small 19, from a Roman numeral standpoint.

MS. REED: Page what? Sorry?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In the introduction, small Roman numerals 19. It would be the xix.

MS. REED: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In the Fairmount Park section, it reads, "Completed the first comprehensive strategic plan in 20 years in 2004 and began implementing recommendations regarding governance operations and funding for the future of the park system."

Can you tell me what funding is anticipated in the Five-Year Plan for the future of the park system?

MS. REED: This -- the bullets for Fairmount Park came from the park relative to their achievements since 2000. So this reflects what is in the text of the strategic plan, not in the Five-Year Plan.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But it is in the Five-Year Plan.

I mean, the park didn't write the Five-Year Plan; right?

MS. REED: No, the park did not write the Five-Year Plan.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You can put whatever you want in the Five-Year Plan?

MS. REED: This just refers to what the goals in the park's own strategic plan are.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, what are the goals of the Administration as it relates to the park for the Five-Year Plan?

MS. REED: The park system took a cut, along with other departments, for Fiscal Year 6.

And we at this point are pretty much holding to that strategy, given the Five-Year

Plan outlook that we have with respect to fund balances, of which the lowest is Fiscal 8, at only 4.3 million.

So that we are including the raises; and they are subject to the same hiring freeze, conditions, as other departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I mean, that's a good technical explanation.

I mean, so, the goal here is to keep it flat at -- what are we at, 12.9 now? That's the --

MS. REED: With the assumptions about increases for raises, which occur in Fiscal 7 and 8, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Look, I mean, you don't get a gold star for funding the raises. I mean, people are going to get the raises as they are due to get them. I mean, so you kind of don't get much credit for that.

What is the goal down the line for the future of the funding of the Fairmount Park system? I mean --

MS. REED: The goal is to manage with the resources that we have, which are, you know, constrained.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, Ms. Reed, I mean, I could possibly go along with that, but for the fact that we have got a budget and a Five-Year Plan in front of us that, in some areas, I mean, has the government on a, you know, wild spending spree.

I mean, what are you talking about? I mean, you have got more borrowings than a small bank in this plan; and, you know, a variety of new initiatives, some of which could very well be good.

But, I mean, you can't -- it is impossible for you to sit at the table and try to make a case that the city is broke, when, by your own testimony, probably two weeks ago -- what's the current anticipated fund balance for FY '06?

MS. REED: The fund balance for '06 is about $168 million. But that goes down --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Over budget.

MS. REED: No, that's not over the budget; that's just what the fund balance is. It was higher than anticipated.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When we passed the FY '06 budget, what did you anticipate the fund balance to be at the end of the year?

MS. REED: Let me just check on that for you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I mean, you were up $96 million in FY '05.

MS. REED: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In September of last year.

When you anticipated, I think, the fund balance was going to be $26 million; right? Or something like that?

MS. REED: I don't have that handy with me right now, I am sorry. I will have to get back to you on that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What? What the anticipated FY '06 fund balance was?

MS. REED: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Wouldn't that be in the Five-Year Plan?

MS. REED: It is going to take me a while to look it up. I could just get back to you on it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I mean, why don't we do this: Do you have a vague recollection of what you thought the FY '06 fund balance was going to be when we passed the budget last spring?

MS. REED: I'm sorry. I don't remember what the number is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. All right. That's fine.

So what we should take out of this is, the park is pretty much -- at the moment, the park is anticipated to stay at a flat funding level for the foreseeable future, or at least through the course of this Five-Year Plan?

MS. REED: Yes. We have no plans for extraordinary increases in funding.

We also did not receive any requests from the department for extraordinary increases for '07.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, then, my last question is, how would you envision the implementation of the strategic plan for Fairmount Park would take place?

MS. REED: That's a document that is a document of the park system. We just will have to have a dialogue about that every single year, depending on what our resources are at that time.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you are taking the position that this is a park system plan, which has no relationship to the city government? Or, you are not acknowledging it? Or, I mean, is this, like --

MS. REED: I mean, what we -- we can't afford in any one year to accommodate all of the implementation strategies that there are in the plan.

So it is, you know, as the director said, it is a ten-year horizon, and we will have to see what our ability to pay is in any one year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

I mean, has the Administration taken a position on the strategic plan for Fairmount Park?

MS. REED: Not that I am aware of.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me finish. Have you seen it? Have you read it? Have you accepted it? Have you rejected it? Do you like some parts, not like some other parts?

Have you indicated what, if anything, within the strategic plan the City of Philadelphia thinks should be implemented?

MS. REED: Those discussions are ongoing.

I would say that we -- just at a policy level, there are discussions about this, and the department and the city come to an agreement on what will be in the budget.

We did not receive any requests for strategic-plan-related initiatives, extraordinary ones, for '07.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is an extraordinary request?

MS. REED: It might be the implementation of a new plan. A nonextraordinary one would have to do with, you know, lump sums, full funding of positions that were partially vacant from the prior year, and that kind of thing.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, do you think any of the elements of the strategic plan should be implemented?

MS. REED: I think that we cannot afford to do anything that has a multi-year impact at this time because of the Fiscal 8 fund balance, which is only $4.3 million.

If we were to implement something that costs 2, 3, 4, 5 million, we would have a deficit in '08, and we would have to cut other parts of the budget in order to cross the '08 threshold.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, are you proposing a large borrowing this year?

MS. REED: There is a borrowing in the budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How much is it?

MS. REED: $150 million.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Over what period of time?

MS. REED: The debt service for that will probably go 20 years.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Would that be a multi-year commitment?

MS. REED: Yes, it is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what's the annual debt service?

MS. REED: It is about $12 million, although 6 are what is in the '07 budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So in some situations we should make multi-year commitments?

MS. REED: Yes. I mean, debt service, it just goes with the territory, of course.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand that. Which you don't have debt service, if you don't have a borrowing.

MS. REED: True.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The purpose of the borrowing is?

MS. REED: Is to stimulate arts and culture development, which has proven to result in a lot of economic impact development; and also the neighborhood commercial corridors throughout the city, which will also help stimulate the economies, you know, the micro economies in those areas.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have you read the strategic plan for the park?

MS. REED: No, I have not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I believe there might be a section in the strategic plan that indicates that parks can be revenue generators, as well.

And they are one of, you know, the prime amenities that attract people to the city, may keep some people in the city. I mean, I don't know.

There aren't many cities in the country that have 9,200-acre park systems.

Have you -- are you okay?

MS. REED: I think that all of the projects that will be included in the borrowing have not finally been determined. I am not aware of what they are.

It is possible that there is something for the park in there. I just don't know at this time.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I mean, you wouldn't be saying that because we're now talking about the parks?

Because I think I asked you last week what was in the borrowing, and you indicated that you did not know.

MS. REED: Yes, I still don't know.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But now you think the parks might be included?

MS. REED: I just -- it's possible, you know, in relation to the Parkway or -- but, I don't know. So, it could be.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last question. Do you spend any time in Chicago?

MS. REED: I have been to Chicago, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have you ever seen their park system?

MS. REED: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Nice park system?

MS. REED: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Does it attract a lot of people?

MS. REED: I don't know. Probably. Especially the New Millennium Park, which I have not seen.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Nice park. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman Brown, did you want to be recognized?

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

I had a chance to see that Mr. Binswanger is here. I wanted to pose a couple of questions regarding the Conservancy.

If we could ask Mr. Binswanger to come to the witness table.

Good morning.

MR. JOHN K. BINSWANGER: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I have a few questions here regarding The conservancy. And I can seize the opportunity now, versus on the 20th, when we will be together again.

It is my understanding that there is no longer a master concession management plan or agreement.

And we know that in our park systems this is used, it is a great source of revenue for the park, as Councilman Nutter has already outlined.

First give me your opinion or perspective with regards to having a master concession management plan, and then speak to where the Conservancy may or may not be with regards to this particular opportunity.

MR. BINSWANGER: The Conservancy hasn't addressed that issue specifically, at least not yet. We are looking at different revenue-generation issues, but we have not addressed that at all.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right. And the reason for that would be?

And the only reason I say that is because, again, of these numerous recommendations cited in the strategic plan, that is one of them.

MR. BINSWANGER: I can't give you a reason that we have not, except it has not been on the agenda yet.

We are looking at all phases of revenue generation, and I am sure it will come up as we go through that.

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COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right.

The report calls for, and I quote, maximizing the effectiveness and fundraising capacity of the Fairmount Park Conservancy.

Speak to, if you will, what type of coordination has happened around fundraising and what's being done. Just simply give us an update.

MR. BINSWANGER: The commission -- the Conservancy continues to address the private sector for funding.

I don't have the exact number in front of me today, but approximately $11 million has been received or pledged since we started.

We are still actively involved with major projects with the Commission and the waterworks and the gardens around the waterworks, the trail issues.

They are all on part of our agenda, as it is on the Commission's. And I think we are supporting each other in getting that done.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You say since

you started. What was the start date?

MR. BINSWANGER: I think we are five years, approximately five years, since we were put in place.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So is there a standing committee of the Conservancy that is dealing with the issue of coordination with the Fairmount Park Commission around fundraising?

MR. BINSWANGER: There isn't a standing committee. There is the -- Mark sits on our Board, so he knows what's going on. Commissioner Nix sits on our Board. So there is overlapping issue between us.

We are, obviously, meeting with the Commission -- or, Mark and his staff, on issues on a continuing basis. So I think there is a reasonably good coordination at the moment.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there a formal plan in place?

MR. BINSWANGER: I don't think there is a formal plan. I think we are working through, as we are with the whole reorganization commission, and so forth, a lot of different issues.

But I think the Conservancy looks at itself as an independent body, as far as raising funds. I think we feel that we should continue to be that way.

But, from an operating standpoint, we are communicating on a regular basis.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mark shared with us in your absence a good news story, wherein a number of, I would call them, members of the business community, with some level of civic pride, came, stepped up to the plate with regards to all the good stuff that is happening on the Parkway.

So it is a clear indication of what can happen when the business community is intimately engaged and pushing forward an agenda of the city.

Final question. It was revealed after the public hearings on the proposed Charter change amendment that the Commission had retained a public relations firm lobbyist. It was unclear precisely what that individual or individuals were charged to do and who was paying for it.

I have been informed that this is a question more appropriate for the Conservancy.

Clarify for us what the responsibility is or was. And has there been any consideration given to using some of those dollars to help the staff implement the strategic plan?

MR. BINSWANGER: In the latter, the answer is no.

In the former, we were using public relations purely from a communication issue; as far as how we should communicate with the public, is what we were doing.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Are they still in place?

MR. BINSWANGER: No.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Binswanger.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. BINSWANGER: Excuse me. Can I be excused?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Certainly.

Are there any other questions from members of the committee for this witness?

Seeing none, Council will stand in recess until 12:45. Thank you.

(Short recess.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon, everyone. This is the continued Public Hearing of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. McPherson, who is our next department to testify?

MR. McPHERSON: The next department is the Recreation Department.

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

MR. VICTOR N. RICHARD, III: Good afternoon, Madam President and City Council members. My name is Vic Richard, and I am the Recreation Commissioner for the City of Philadelphia, Department of Recreation.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce our executive team. To my far left, your far right, is Deputy Commissioner William Carapucci; Deputy

Commissioner Mary Platt-Coles; and to my far right is Deputy Commissioner Tom Fox.

We would like to thank you for your leadership and for giving us the opportunity to present our requested budget for Fiscal Year 2007.

Fiscal Year 2007 budget request. The Recreation Department is requesting $35,218,738 in the General Fund. That includes an increase of $1,459,000. This increase is due to the wage increases and also the retirement lump sums.

The department's budget spending is broken down by $29 million, which is 84 percent in Class 100; $2.4 million, which is approximately 7 percent in our Class 200; $1.2 million, 3 percent, in Class 300; and $144,000, which is 1 percent in Class 400; and $1.9 million, 5 percent of our total operating General Fund budget, in Class 500.

Our grants funding, we are also requesting $8.3 million in grants fund for a total budget of $43.5 million for the Fiscal Year of '07.

The Rec Department's grant fund appropriation will provide for the summer food and afterschool snack programs, our older adult senior programs, our local law enforcement block grants, human services development fund, and also the juvenile accountability incentive block grant.

Our intent is to maintain the staffing levels and service delivery. Consistent with that intent, our General Fund position levels from Fiscal Year '06 to Fiscal Year '07 are as follows: In Fiscal Year '06, our full-time positions were 494, and in Fiscal Year '07, 502. Permanent Fiscal Year '06 part-time positions were 142, and Fiscal Year '07 are 140. Seasonal positions in '06 were 1,837 and are unchanged for '07 at 1,837.

The changes are due to the consolidation of an administrative services cluster for the Recreation and Fairmount Park Commission. Eight full-time positions from Fairmount Park are now part of the Recreation Department's budget.

Our service delivery impact. In

maintaining our core mission of public recreation and leisure services, in Fiscal Year '07 we offer the following: There will be no change in service involving afterschool programs.

In Fiscal Year '05, citizen satisfaction survey reported this program at 90 percent from those who reported using the recreation center afterschool program.

There will be no change in service involving summer day camps. In Fiscal Year '05, the citizen's satisfaction survey reported this program at 95 percent effective from those who had a child that participated in the programs.

There will be no change in our ice-skating rink season.

The summer aquatics program will consist of 8 weeks, from June 21 through August 25 for pools, and 12 weeks of operations for the spraygrounds. In Fiscal Year '06, the summer aquatics program consisted of eight weeks.

Neighborhood park maintenance will

continue to be maintained by the seasonal maintenance attendants; and there will be no change in that service, as well.

Our turf management is improved from cutting once every three weeks to once every two weeks for approximately 265 Recreation properties across the city.

Some of the accomplishments in Fiscal Year '06. Our maintenance and capital projects. In Fiscal Year '06, we continued to demonstrate our commitment to excellent service delivery through the dedication, hard work, ingenuity, and skill level of the men and women of our maintenance division.

We were able to open three new teen centers; one at Martin Luther King, Feltonville, and Dorothy Emanuel Recreation Centers.

We are proud to say now that we have 19 centers in operations across the city; Rivera, McVeigh, Francis Myers, Kingsessing, Shepard, Simons, Feltonville, Martin Luther King, and Dorothy Emanuel.

We also demolished three pools,

Smith, 48th and Woodland, and Waterview, and replaced them with new state-of-the-art spraygrounds to maintain water play activity in their respective communities.

A fourth sprayground has been installed at Ferko Recreation Center, and that grand opening is scheduled for the spring of '06.

We installed state-of-the-art play equipment at eight recreation center facilities throughout Philadelphia; Olney Rec Center, West Mill Creek, Simon's, Conshohocken and Windemere, 29th and Chalmers, Kingsessing, Sacks, and McPherson Square.

Right now we have on the table scheduled four more rec facilities with new play equipment before Fiscal Year '06 is over. And that's at 33rd and Wallace, Holmesburg, Columbus Square, and at McAlpin.

We started our major in-house renovations again at Waterview Recreation Center, along with Smith Playground and also Chew Playground.

The pride in our daily maintenance

of our facilities is the key to our quality service delivery.

And our Administration and development unit, that division manages the fiscal, personnel, procurement, and warehouse functions for the Recreation Department and Fairmount Park.

With the implementation of the clustering of these services, the city has realized an annual savings of $550,000 annually, while improving services to both departments.

Administration is also involved with program development and works closely with our program division, social services departments, and other outside entities to create new programs and identify programs and new funding sources.

Due to these working relationships, the Recreation Department was able to provide enhanced programs; such as, the teen girls personal development program and the newly created opera program.

The opera program was recently

conducted at three rec centers, where teens attended instructional classes to prepare for attending the opera Margaret Garner.

Administration also manages the older adults program at our five older adult centers, where program participation continues to grow for programs; such as, the senior art camp and craft workshops which served approximately 75 senior citizens in the spring and the fall, the senior holiday party which is hosted and held at the Marriott Hotel which served over 2,100 senior citizens this past Christmas, the Philadelphia senior games which is a mini Olympics created for our senior citizens which served over 435 senior citizens, and Rally in the Park which served over 647 older adults in June.

The Administration is also responsible for the management of Camp William Penn.

In our program unit, as mentioned, the department opened three new teen centers, being Martin Luther King, Feltonville, and Dorothy Emanuel, bringing the total number to nine.

Since the opening of the first two teen centers, the department has provided programming service to thousands of youth, ages 14 to 21, who participate in classes, tournaments, dances, field trips, or just drop in to enjoy the teen lounge.

Currently there are approximately 3,155 registered teens as official members of the teen centers throughout the Rec Department.

We have converted Fisher Park into the permanent headquarters for our year-round and summer visual arts camps. We are now converting Waterview Recreation Center into a year-round performing arts theater facility, similar to the Fisher Park model.

Through our ongoing partnerships with the Philadelphia Phillies, the 76ers, and the Eagles, we are able to maintain our special athletic programming in our neighborhoods.

In addition to the ongoing soccer, basketball, softball, baseball, and gymnastics program that operate year-round, the department will continue to serve over 8,500 children and teens in the community day camps and sports and athletic camps, which include golf, baseball, tennis, and swimming instruction.

We are continuing our work in relationship with the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Center and the Settlement Music School for our performing arts camp, serving over 400 children and teens.

Our afterschool programs are held at 89 facilities -- 81 in the rec centers, 8 in partner sites this year -- and will continue to serve over 2,600 children between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday during the academic school year.

The Department of Recreation is the recipient of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society Award for Excellence in Programming.

Tonight our staff will receive from the state association eight awards. The awards will be given to the department tonight in the following categories of programming: Pool Cool, Personal Development for Teen Girls Program, Jardel Recreation for its special kids program, the Philadelphia Department of Recreation's boxing program, the model and the business model on the sprayground conversion, Grandparents Day, the National Senior Health and Fitness Day, and for diversity at Camp William Penn with the Latino Family Camp Encampment.

As you can see, we are just as committed today as we were yesterday to play our role in enhancing the quality of life in Philadelphia.

We thank the City Council for its support, its leadership, and we are glad to answer any questions that you may have for us. Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

I would like to start out by thanking you and members of your staff for working so diligently in certainly making recreation a top priority.

And I see Tom Fox up there with you, and Bill Carapucci, who have been with the department for as long as I can remember. And I want to compliment them publicly for really doing a great job.

And, of course, you and the rest of the department, Commissioner. I really appreciate it.

Getting back to the budget. On Page 4 of your testimony, under Measurement, can you explain the sixth item, which is Percent of Centers in Compliance with Recreation Standards.

And what are the standards that you refer to?

MR. RICHARD: Thank you. I will let Deputy Commissioner Carapucci respond.

MR. WILLIAM CARAPUCCI: Deputy Commissioner Bill Carapucci.

In our centers, if they are open 40 hours, what that means is that there's programs 20, 40 hours, 60 percent of the time. So about two-thirds of our facilities are now compliant.

Now, what that is, is a standard, it is a national standard. We took that off of the NRPA convention. And we never started doing this until a couple of years ago. And it just started now, to where we are above the average.

If you go across the country, the average recreation facility run by a municipality is less than that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So, in your opinion, 65 percent is adequate?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Well, we could do even better. It depends on, you know, our future staffing.

At this point in time, we are doing better than we did in the past, but there is always room for improvement.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, I see that it has been 65 percent for the last couple of years. And --

MR. CARAPUCCI: Our staffing has been fairly stable, it hasn't increased in the last couple of years.

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PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay. On that same page, for the ice rink attendance -- I don't have any in my district -- I am just rather curious to know why there is such a drop in attendance on that.

In FY '03, we had 52,000; and in FY '06, we had 32,000.

MR. CARAPUCCI: Well, this year, actually, we only operated three ice rinks. Two ice rinks are down.

PRESIDENT VERNA: How many do we have?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We have five.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Why did we operate only three?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Because the two that are closed, Tarkin and Scanlon, they are in need of major capital renovations.

MR. RICHARD: If I may jump in, as well.

The latter part of last ice-skating season, one of the rinks lost, I think, 22 days of operations due to the failure of the refrigeration system. I believe the other one may have lost 8 or 11 days.

We knew that we were having to replace one of the rinks, and we had $2 million in the bank to do that. But, we did not anticipate two of them blowing out at once.

So right now we have a $3 million project going on to refurbish both Tarkin and also Scanlon.

I believe that the capital projects department is on schedule to have both of those rinks back up and running for the '07 calendar year season.

So that's the reason for our attendance drop in the rink.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

How many maintenance positions will be funded in your proposed 2007 budget?

MR. THOMAS FOX: Tom Fox, Deputy Commissioner, Recreation.

233.

PRESIDENT VERNA: How many maintenance positions did you request?

MR. FOX: 233.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You don't need more than 233, Tom?

Come on, you are leaving anyway.

MR. FOX: Well, I think we could all say that we could use more, and we could do more with more.

PRESIDENT VERNA: So you are totally satisfied that 233 maintenance people are ample for the Recreation Department?

Now, you are under oath. Look at me in the eyes and tell me.

MR. FOX: Again, we could use more; and we could do more, if we had more.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I just feel that we don't have enough maintenance and we don't have the appropriate maintenance personnel. But you are standing there -- sitting there telling us that we do.

I have enough confidence in you, Mr. Fox, to believe that. And all of my other questions were, why don't we have the personnel that we should.

So if you are satisfied, I guess I'm going to have to be satisfied.

Commissioner, on Page 19 of your detail, you are requesting $50,000 for the Mayor's Fun and Fitness Program.

Can you explain to me what that is and why is it in your budget? I mean, how do we go about becoming members of this Fun and Fitness Program?

MR. RICHARD: Madam President, I believe that is a social service initiative that has been in our budget, and it is a line item in our budget.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I still don't know what it is.

MR. RICHARD: That's part of the Mayor's Health Fun, Fit, and Free Initiative. And I believe it is part of the program that Gwen Foster runs, as well.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Well, weren't they given a grant for that from someone?

MR. RICHARD: I'm sorry, I don't know any other detail besides that.

PRESIDENT VERNA: And is that operated out of your department?

MR. RICHARD: No, ma'am. I believe

they are housed in the MSB Building somewhere.

We all work jointly together on certain projects, but it is not a direct responsibility of the Rec Department.

PRESIDENT VERNA: How does one go -- I can't even say it without laughing. I guess I have to go further.

How does one go about enrolling in this program for $50,000?

MR. RICHARD: I can't give you the detail of the program.

I know they do have a structured program relative to smoking prevention and weight loss and healthy lifestyles. And I am sure they could give you more detail.

But I know the office is housed in the MSB. And they do stuff for the public, and they also do a lot of programming for city employees.

But, I'm sorry, I can't expound on the details.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That's okay. I am questioning you only because it is in your budget.

On Page 30 of the quarterly city manager's report, your department shows an average sick leave usage of 26 days per employee.

What do you think are the reasons for this high usage?

MR. RICHARD: I apologize, I don't have that document with me.

But I believe part of it may be from -- I know we had a few employees that had long-term terminal illness.

It may also be that some of the employees may also be towards the end of their careers, as well; that they may be --

PRESIDENT VERNA: Trying to use up their sick time?

MR. RICHARD: Some of their time, as well. So that is something we have been paying attention to.

We are one of the departments that will experience and has been experiencing some of the high attrition.

But I appreciate that question. That is something that we do pay attention to.

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Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam President.

That was kind of a surprising number, 26 on average. What does that represent in dollars?

MR. RICHARD: I'm sorry. I don't know. I would have to get back to you.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Could we try to find out what it represents in dollars and what efforts are being made to reduce that number? I mean, I don't know anybody that's sick that much in here.

MR. RICHARD: Okay.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It just seems like an awful lot of money that's going to pay for people who aren't there, that really could be used for something else.

Could you try to find out what that represents?

MR. RICHARD: I agree.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And have we

hired a consultant or brought somebody in to try to figure out how we get that number down? Or what efforts are you doing internally?

I don't know how any company could run like that, with that many on average. So I would appreciate seeing what that number is.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you, sir.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: There has been a lot of discussion in here about capital needs, capital budgets, and whether or not they are adequate, and the amount of money we are borrowing, and how much is going to take care of the facilities we already have, as opposed to some new incentives, new projects.

What is your estimate of your current capital needs annually, per year? How much money do you need to maintain your facilities, existing facilities, on an annual basis?

MR. RICHARD: You are asking me to give you my professional opinion?

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Whoever's.

MR. RICHARD: I don't have a hard number myself.

I know we are still working from the assessment that Capital has done. But I can talk about my professional experience and what I have done in the past.

With my knowledge of the age of the city, the age of the infrastructure, we could probably spend right now $100 million just to clean it up.

We have infrastructure that needs to be totally torn down and rebuilt at today's standards.

I understand some of the buildings may be or may not be an historic, or they should be, but some of the other facilities need to come down.

I'm not saying that they shouldn't be rebuilt. Because we have some of that data, as well, from what we did a year ago.

But to invest money into an 80-year-old nonhistoric building, versus being able to tear it down and build a new one between 6 to 8 million dollars.

So if you are asking me right now, we could spend $100 million.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Over what period of time would you be able to spend that $100 million?

MR. RICHARD: Probably in four to five years, without any --

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So $20 million a year.

MR. RICHARD: Without having to put any contractors in default, we could move $100 million.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So $20 million a year over five years?

MR. RICHARD: Exactly.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What is your Capital Budget now, proposed for 2007?

MR. RICHARD: I don't have a capital budget.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You don't know?

MR. RICHARD: Well, I don't have management of the -- the Capital Budget is in each perspective district, each perspective Councilperson's district.

And, from my understanding, that came down from $1.2 million annually per district, which is approximately $12 million a year, which is about half of that right now.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we are about $6 million a year for ten districts, when the need is 20?

MR. RICHARD: Approximately.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And, in your opinion, or in the opinion of any of the facilities people, Tom or whoever, what does that cost us in the long run by not maintaining our facilities to the level they should be maintained, and replacement cost and the expiration of their usefulness?

I mean, in the end aren't we going to spend a lot more money, if we don't get a handle on what our facility needs are now?

MR. RICHARD: Yes. Exactly. Yes, the costs will rise. We will lose the infrastructure.

If you do have an opportunity to do something, you can reshape the face of the city on the types of facilities, the standard modernization of the facilities, the new technology, and the type of programming that the changes of society dictate.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: In your opinion, do you believe that a state-of-the-art Recreation Department and facilities is a major factor in people wanting to stay in a neighborhood or move into one?

MR. RICHARD: It is part of the personality and characteristic of any community, whether it is an urban or a rural environment.

It is part of the personality and characteristic; just like your neighborhood school, your neighborhood church, and your library. It is part of the everyday life.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So it is part of the attraction or possibly the detraction?

MR. RICHARD: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Madam President, I mean, we have had this discussion through the Capital Program discussion.

Again, we are slated in this budget and Five-Year Plan to be borrowing a substantial sum of money for programs that are, at this point, nonexistent. And we are shortchanging our own physical facilities to the detriment of the taxpayer, because in the end they are going to have to replace it at a higher cost, if we don't maintain it on a regular basis.

So, I mean, I would argue that we seriously as a Council should be looking at moving that $6 million number up to a substantially higher number; and perhaps using some of the borrowing power the Administration is intending to use on other projects heretofore nonexistent, to make sure we maintain our facilities.

I mean, it is not only not in the best interest of the taxpayer and the citizen not having a facility that's up to speed, but it is crazy in the long run not to pay attention to those needs.

When we have the ability to borrow money for other things, we should be borrowing it to put into facilities that people use the most.

I can't think of a department in this city that gets more use than the

Recreation Department. I mean, and it is positive use.

It is not like your contact with the Fire Department, God forbid, or your contact with the Police Department that could be a negative one. All of the experiences at the Recreation Department are positive and affect every neighborhood.

I mean, I can't think of a better way and a fairer way to serve the public than taking care of the Recreation Department's physical needs throughout the city on an equal basis.

So, I mean, I would be looking at hoping to gain some support from Council Members before we approve this budget to do something different on the capital side as it relates to Recreation.

And I just have just one other request. I know I have gone higher. We have had this discussion. But, in your testimony, you said you were going to do the grass cutting from every three weeks to every two weeks.

If you could just do me a favor and make sure that, if we have a drought this summer, that the contractor we hire does not cut the dirt.

Because I don't care -- I would like to see it cut on a regular basis. But if it is not growing and it is burning out, I want those guys off those riding mowers.

Because I had to chase one down at Murphy Recreation Center one day, after we had seeded. Actually, at Murphy you guys did a great job of putting the irrigation system back in place, so hopefully we won't have that burn-out problem we had for the last couple of years.

But if you could maybe clearly identify with the contractor that, if they get out there and the place is a dust bowl, please don't cut the grass.

MR. RICHARD: Certainly, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

MR. RICHARD: Madam President, may I ask the Councilman a question?

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: He can.

PRESIDENT VERNA: If you want to respond, please do.

MR. RICHARD: In earlier testimony in another hearing earlier in the year, I had responded back about creating designated plan sites.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: We have had that discussion, yes.

MR. RICHARD: Is that something you all would like?

PRESIDENT VERNA: I don't think the stenographer heard you, either.

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The Commissioner and I have had discussions in the past about designated playing sites, as they do in suburban communities; where you would construct three or four fields that were nothing but little league baseball that could be used by the whole city and many of the other leagues. Same thing with designated football facilities or designated soccer facilities.

A lot of our facilities get used, for example, Murphy, in your district, gets used for football, baseball, softball, and soccer, whatever else, and it just gets torn up.

And because of the usage, it never gets any down time to grow the grass back and to do what's necessary.

So maybe as part of this capital effort that some of us in here may try to approach, we could talk about some of those fields.

Because, I am telling you, I think one of the things that's embarrassing to me is to have our leagues, whether it is football, soccer, baseball, be in conjunction or be in a league that plays in the suburbs, and the suburban people come here.

It is embarrassing sometimes, because of the amount of use that the fields get, the condition of suburban fields as opposed to our stuff.

I mean, our kids are playing on hard

dirt. You go out in the suburbs, and they are playing on nice Kentucky bluegrass grass. And it really is depressing. And our kids deserve as much as the kids in the suburbs do.

And I think if we invested the money we need to invest, we would have those facilities that we would be proud of.

And it is not through any fault of the maintenance people, because they are understaffed and they are working hard. But we really have to put some money into these things so that our people can enjoy what suburban people enjoy.

Thanks, Commissioner.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you still want to be recognized, Commissioner, or was it all said?

MR. RICHARD: No, ma'am. We are fine. The Councilman, he has it, yes.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon, everyone. Let me

seize the moment and publicly congratulate the entire department and the leadership for the recognition you received this past Sunday with the Philadelphia Horticultural Society. Well deserved. And just a good indication of what lies ahead with the department.

So I really congratulate all of you for that.

Very quick question. Does everyone in the department that has any involvement or interaction with children receive background checks?

MS. MARY PLATT-COLES: Mary Platt-Coles, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Recreation.

Yes, they do now, Councilwoman Brown. About two years -- about four years ago, actually, we instituted that all new hires for rec leader trainees, NRLs, were to receive background checks.

And for this coming season, we now require even seasonals of 18 years and older, as well as seasonal maintenance attendants. Because they work near the children as well, everyone will have it.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Does that include those persons who handle food, as well?

MS. PLATT-COLES: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. All right, then.

On Page 2 of your testimony, there is discussion that eight full-time positions transferred from Fairmount Park budget into the Recreation Department, into the recreation budget.

Just discuss with me what they do.

MS. PLATT-COLES: The eight positions are part of the administrative cluster. Four of those positions are --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Talk louder, if you would.

MS. PLATT-COLES: Sure. Four of the eight positions that came over from Fairmount Park -- actually, if I could go back and state that it was ten originally. But we have recently moved RIT people, two of which came from Fairmount Park, and one recreation IT person, to MOIS, so that we could have RIT needs better managed. And so far it is working very well.

Recreation, as you probably know, as well over a hundred sites with computers, and Fairmount Park has a dozen or more. So that we believe this is going to be a very good relationship.

But back to the eight that you are asking about. Four of those staffers work in our personnel unit, headed by Linda Turner. Two of those staffers work in the fiscal unit, headed by Janice Chen.

And there are two people running -- working at the storage warehouse out in Fairmount Park.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

Last year there was much discussion and, some might say, anticipation, others might say reservation, with regard to the installation of spray pools.

Just give us an update, if you will, on how that has come along. And has there been, as best as you can tell, a significant decline in either pool or playground-related incidents?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Bill Carapucci.

The spraygrounds have been very well used. We had three operating last year.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How many?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Three.

And this year we will have four.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Four more or four total?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We will have one new one, so that will give us a total of four.

And it is actually going to give the neighborhoods a longer season. Because we are going to open up the spraygrounds around Memorial Day, and they will stay open until Labor Day.

And they have been very well received, and they are geared towards the younger kids.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Have there been fewer incidents of injury and the like?

MR. CARAPUCCI: Well, that I know of, no incidents of injury. And that's a lot safer environment for the younger kids in many cases. And the neighborhoods have tended to like them.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And now with the benefit of hindsight, I mean, last year you indicated that it would also be a significant cost savings to the department, but you are achieving the same end.

Has that proven to be true?

MR. CARAPUCCI: It has been cheaper to operate because we hire less seasonal staff, without a doubt.

And we hire one staff person, versus, when you operate a pool seven days a week, you have to hire ten. You have to hire five lifeguards, one or two night watchmen, and three other what they call pool maintenance aides.

When you have a sprayground, you really only have to hire one person to be there during the day when the kids are operating the spray pool. And that's it. It is a lot cheaper all the way around with operating costs.

And, again, this is not a panacea, where you wouldn't have any pools. But, in communities where there is other pools nearby, this is an added -- it adds to the overall community.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That leads to my next question. Because we do not want to be completely insensitive to adults wanting recreation, and we know that spray pools are for the children.

So any level of consideration given to having options, if you will, available for adults who like to recreate by swimming, as well?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We take all that into consideration, sure.

MR. RICHARD: For the record, the purpose of the spray parks is not intended to eliminate swimming pools; its intention is to replace antiquated facilities and, also, as we restructure and realign the city based on its population density and its usage.

And, also, if I could add to your previous question relative to the cost, from the numbers that we have posted and printed, the difference in the operating costs annually on the pool at $40,000 versus $14,743. That's the difference between the spray park and a pool on an annual basis.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you. Substantial.

Please define, quote, state-of-the-art playground equipment that's going to be installed at eight recreation centers.

And is there a distinction between new play versus state-of-the-art?

MR. FOX: State-of-the-art -- Tom Fox, Deputy Commissioner of Recreation.

The state-of-the-art equipment we are referring to there is, since 1991, they have come up with very good, strong standards for installation and the type of equipment that's installed, how it is manufactured, especially keeping in mind safety of the children that use it.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure.

MR. FOX: And the equipment that we

have installed recently and we anticipate installing in the near future all meets these standards for surfacing and the type of manufacture of the equipment.

MR. RICHARD: So, for the record, the eight facilities, they are installed. They are not being installed; they are installed. They are in now.

And we are looking at trying to do four more before the end of June. So, the eight are in place.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So is there a long-term plan to install new playground equipment systemwide?

MR. RICHARD: That is part of the plan that we are looking at with the facilities assessment that happened through CPO with all the A's and B's. We are piggybacking on that, as well.

Initially we started out on our own, prior to the assessment being done. And what we did was, we immediately ripped out any piece of play equipment that could cause imminent danger, a fatality or either loss of a limb on a child. So we immediately ripped those out.

And then, from there, we started evaluating what we could repair in-house until we were able to get the funding needed to totally redo it.

So some systems we totally ripped out immediately, some systems we replaced. And this is where we are now on that progressive plan.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Did you hear that, Councilman Clarke?

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The opera program at the older adult center, my personal opinion, they serve as great outlets for seniors.

Please speak to some of the other partnerships you, meaning the Department of Recreation, has with other entities around the city.

For example, are there any partnerships with any of our professional sport teams, University of Pennsylvania --

well, I know about Annenberg. The summer program is there; correct? The summer performing arts program.

Any others that are underway in the ranks for being established, or in the pipeline for being established?

MS. PLATT-COLES: As you mentioned, the opera program, that is a program we rolled out this winter with the Philadelphia Opera Company for children. Or teens, actually. And we took about 50 teens and chaperones to the opera for the first time ever.

The older adult program, as listed in the Commissioner's testimony, those programs are always very successful.

We have other partnerships with other Department of Social Services departments. And we work -- we are working currently on a Philadelphia Obesity Task Force, Childhood Obesity Task Force with DHS, the Health Department, Behavioral Health, Recreation, of course, MOCS, and OESS.

So, yes, we have several other things going on with other entities.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So is the opera piece, is that going to be ongoing, or was that a one-shot opportunity?

MS. PLATT-COLES: We plan to do it each year, as long as the opera company is offering it to us.

This was the first time for Recreation. This was traditionally done with the schools.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I am aware.

MS. PLATT-COLES: So I did hear something that they may be cutting back on that program, but hopefully it is not going to be Recreation that's cut out.

And we are going to see to it that, if they are doing this program, our rec kids get to go.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: On Page 4 of your testimony, on Table 4 of your testimony, I know that there has been an effort underway to bring all of the rec centers in compliance with recreation standards. And right now there is a 60 percentile with regards to those standards.

Is that a level that is satisfactory, or not? And what are the plans going forward to raise that?

MR. RICHARD: Based on the national standards across the country, that is an acceptable rate. Myself personally, it is not where we want to be.

But we needed to start somewhere a few years ago, so we could track and also cost justify the usage and the percentage of utilization of the facilities across the city. So, this is where we are now.

We also use these numbers, along with the citizenship survey, also along with the last census report, when we are working with the Planning Commission, to dictate should this facility be there, why it should be there, or why it shouldn't be there.

And, if it should be there, what size should the facility be, what amenities should be in a facility, and what type of programming.

We also take into consideration the prorated growth in the population that is presented to us by the Planning Commission, as well.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Tell me about this census survey.

MR. RICHARD: This is a starting point. Eventually I would like to see us make 80 percent.

And I believe if we could serve the population at 80 percent, I think we are doing a decent job, an excellent job.

I think we are doing an excellent job now, but we can do better with the capacity.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Tell me about the citizen survey report. I mean, that's a new practice of the department, is it not?

MR. RICHARD: I couldn't hear you.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The citizen survey process that you utilize, just tell us about that. What is it and its purpose, citizen survey.

MR. RICHARD: I am sorry. I can't tell you when, because I don't know off the top of my head, when the survey actually began. I know it has been in effect at least in the last five and a half years that I have been here.

But I believe that it is a report card or a measurement. And it is conducted out of the Mayor's Office and through the Managing Director's Office on how well we are viewed by our customers --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

MR. RICHARD: -- being the citizens.

From the conditions of the facilities that we have, how well we maintain them, versus the type of programming that we offer, versus delivery of that program, along with the staffing that delivers it.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: My final question is around the afterschool programming.

Is there a thread of discussion between School District, Free Library, Rec Department, and Safe and Sound on the standards, if you will, of afterschool programming?

I mean, we know that they are

stellar -- and that's based on data -- with regard to the Rec Department.

But is there a sharing of that information systemwide with those other entities that are in the business of providing afterschool programming?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We have worked with Safe and Sound over the past six years, where we have traded information with Safe and Sound extensively.

So as far as the Library and the School Board, we really haven't had a lot of communication in that area.

But when it comes to Safe and Sound, I would say over the last six and a half years, there's been a lot of communication.

And our program today is compliant with all standards.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I am very much aware of the fact that that's the case with the Rec Department.

I mean, I clearly remember the days when you were ramping up to do that. And that's been since I have been here.

The broader question is, is there a uniform standards document on how afterschool programming should be run?

MR. CARAPUCCI: We don't have that with the other agencies of the city.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. Any discussion about the value and need, really, for -- so that when parents are making decisions about where they want to send their children after school, they know that others who run afterschool programs, that the standards are similar to those that's practiced with the Rec Department?

MR. RICHARD: Those are some of the practices that are being discussed through the leadership of Julia Danzi. And that was one of our concerns relative to rec afterschool, a nonprofit after school, a Beacons afterschool, or any after school, that they would have at least a minimum requirement.

So when those discussions first started -- and the push is still going -- and I believe it is a 24-hour certification. Is it 24 or 18? It is a 24-hour classroom certification that the staff has to go through, including child and infant CPR, basic first-aid kit, the background check, and the rest of the criteria.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Could you please forward to the Chair a document, if you will, that speaks to what the standards are for the Rec Department?

MR. RICHARD: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let me just review what I think I heard.

I heard that Julia Danzi, or those around her, are taking a leadership role and looking towards having anybody who is doing business in the area of afterschool also know that there are legitimate standards that they need to be reaching towards.

Is that what I am hearing?

MR. RICHARD: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank four your testimony.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman

DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Madam President.

I would like to add to the comments made by Council President and Councilwoman Brown about the fine work the department does.

I have been saying this every year since I have been here, and will continue to say it, hopefully, for the next few years.

I just have one question. Does anyone have any update on the Franklin Field issue? I know it was reported in the paper a couple of weeks ago, and either the Mayor or someone from his Administration, contacted me that Paul Vallis is now having second thoughts about taking that facility, due to the fact that there are several hundred grave sites possibly on that location, 200 or 300 grave sites.

I mean, my understanding is, you know, we agreed to sell the property, Department of Recreation, with my recommendation, and the community's support a new Willard School at that site.

Is there any movement in the last couple of weeks?

MR. RICHARD: I am sorry to say that I can't give you any definitive answer. It is being handled out of Public Property.

Once it leaves the ownership of the individual agency, Public Property, with the help of the Law Department, consummates the deal.

So I am sorry to sit here to tell you that I don't know, but I don't.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I appreciate that. I will contact Public Property. Thank you.

I really have no other questions, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam President.

Good afternoon. A couple of quick questions. Commissioner, during the course of your tenure and, I guess, also with your predecessor, you have had an opportunity to solicit and receive funds from the state, am I correct, for capital projects?

MR. RICHARD: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Can you give me a sense of the dollars associated with that? I mean, the amounts? Or just some examples of facilities that, were it not for your ability to solicit dollars from the state, possibly federal or other funding entities, would not have happened?

MR. RICHARD: I'm sorry. I wouldn't be able to tell you the total amount that we have been able to leverage, but I can give you some examples on how we have leveraged city dollars to do projects.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Can you give me a couple of examples?

MR. RICHARD: Probably one of the last biggest ones is the Dorothy Emanuel job. And I am sorry I don't recall the -- Eric, you can step up if you remember how much state money was leveraged there.

We also --

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Excuse me, Commissioner, because that's important. I want to talk about dollars specifically.

I see Eric is over in the corner.

MR. RICHARD: Eric would remember.

And, also, another one we just finished, I want to say it was approximately a one and a half million dollar project where the city, we started out with only a half a million dollars, but it was the total exterior renovation at Kingsessing, where we were able to leverage the city dollars against state dollars, and we reconfigured the outdoor basketball courts.

With that reconfiguration, we were able to add an additional court. They were built at today's standards. Also, we were able to reconfigure and refurbish the outdoor tennis courts, and they were enclosed.

We were able to demolish a 1957 pool that was also one of very few that still had a deep end. And we took that pool out, and there is a brand-new pool at today's standards, in compliance.

Also, all of the new play equipment. And, also, the picnic and leisure seating area for the parents and the children. That's one that we just finished in July.

MR. ERIC IFFRIG: Eric Iffrig, Capital Program Office.

The Dorothy Emanuel Recreation Center is a new construction. The final cost is around $5.2 million. The state grant for that center from the state's capital redevelopment assistance program was one and a half million dollars.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So in terms of the process, essentially the department works with, in some instances, elected officials or community organizations and identifies a facility that needs some work or restoration; then the department interact with the state elected officials; and the department, who runs the funding program on a state level, and you guys actively go out and solicit money to leverage recreation projects?

MR. RICHARD: Yes, sir. That's correct.

With the unique situation, we have to have the District Councilperson on the front seat, as we can justify the project to say, this is what we have in the hole, this is what we don't have.

And we have an obligation to you and the citizens to present the pros and the cons to why we should move forward or try to pursue certain things. But it has been very, very successful.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Commissioner, under your tenure, I know that you have gotten very aggressive and creative during a number of programs.

One that comes to mind is one that actually opened up recently in my councilmanic district, the teen center up at Martin Luther King Center.

Can you kind of talk to me about some of the other programs? And my assumption is that that was not totally funded with city dollars, or was it?

Were you able to get some external dollars to support some of those programs?

MR. RICHARD: Part city and -- Mary knows better than I.

MS. PLATT-COLES: Mary Platt-Coles.

Yes, a lot of the teen centers were funded with Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant money that we received over the past four or so years.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The block grant money came from the federal?

MS. PLATT-COLES: The federal, that's correct.

As well as, we have been able to use some other grant money as it comes our way to keep continuing to open some centers. And that would be something called JAG money, Juvenile Accountability -- I am sorry, I forget the full name for the acronym.

And we use HSDF money, where possible, to also fund some things in the teen centers.

MR. RICHARD: We were also instrumental in having one done in Councilman Nutter's district, with his leadership, and also when the city hosted the NBA All Star

Week.

So with the help of the Commissioner of the NBA and Councilman Nutter, that's how we were able to get the one done in Haddington over at Shepard, as well.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: The NBA?

MR. RICHARD: Yes.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Solicitation from a nongovernment entity?

MR. RICHARD: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Do you have any others? You don't have to give me the specifics.

But are there other occasions where you were able to get external dollars from nongovernment sources?

MR. RICHARD: That is correct. We have relationships with other corporate citizens.

As a matter of fact, we are working on two real big ones right now that haven't come through yet, and hopefully they do. It will make another major impact.

In my testimony, if you look at that

refurbishing of that playground at McPherson, library and park, that is an example of one that just got done at the end of this summer. And that was done by a responsible corporate citizen, along with city employees.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Commissioner, during the course of the last almost a year now, as a result of discussions about the possible consolidation of the Departments of Parks and Recreation that would subsequently create the Department of Parks and Recreation, it has been suggested by some of the opponents of that proposal that the ability of a department would eliminate the city's ability to get external dollars to leverage developments in our city, be it parks or be it rec centers.

And, based on your testimony, or your responses to my questions, it appears that your particular department has been able to do that relatively dramatically, given some of the numbers that have been spoken of.

If you can, can you get to the Chair, I would say over the last three, four years, the dollar amount of money that you got from nonPhiladelphia government sources, be it federal or state, capital grants, federal/state operational grants, and private-source contributions over the last four years that have gone to the Department of Recreation to provide assistance to programming and capital projects?

And can you get that through the Chair for us, please?

MR. RICHARD: Yes, sir, we will provide it. We will have to put it together, but we will get it for you.

COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner.

Thank you, Madam President.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you, Councilman.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I need to ask for -- I do not have at the moment a question for the Recreation Commissioner. I do not have at this moment a question for the Recreation Commissioner, and I actually need to leave the chamber for a minute.

I wanted to take a moment in the course of the Operating Budget and Capital Budget hearings to put forward an amendment, or a proposed amendment, to 060001 and 002, which are related to our Capital Budget, and the issue of allocation of dollars with regard to City Council, to start a process that goes through the Planning Commission.

It does not require any action by the body, merely it is introduction. I wondered, with the Chair's permission, if I could put amendments forward and move on?

PRESIDENT VERNA: I certainly would agree.

However, I think it would be very nice if each of the Council Members had a copy of it.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That would be preferable.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you. Please proceed.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I can give them to a sergeant-at-arms. But, they are just two proposed amendments to our Capital Budget that need to be put forward to enter into this part of the process.

PRESIDENT VERNA: That's fine. They will be submitted, and the stenographer will get a copy. Please make certain that the stenographer gets a copy. Thank you.

Are there any other questions for the Recreation Commissioner?

Seeing none, thank you very much.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you, Madam President, City Council members.

MR. McPHERSON: Camp William Penn.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, are you going to be testifying?

MR. VICTOR N. RICHARD, III: Yes, ma'am.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Would you proceed, please.

MR. RICHARD: Yes, ma'am. Good afternoon, Council President Verna and honorable members of the City Council. I am

Vic Richard, the Recreation Commissioner.

I would also like to take the opportunity to introduce our Camp Director, Michael Shelton. I am presenting testimony in support of Camp William Penn's budget.

Camp William Penn is requesting a total of $283,000 in our General Fund appropriations for Fiscal Year '07.

The '07 budget supports four full-time employees; being a camp director, a secretary, and two property caretakers. It would also include seasonal employees; 58 seasonal employees, 18 of them who are also hired contractually through Camp America.

In Fiscal Year '07, Camp William Penn will offer five encampments of six days each. The Camp can currently manage 180 children per encampment, 90 males and 90 females.

In the summer of 2005, the Camp was inspected by American Camping Association, an independent agency that inspects camps for health, safety, and programming.

Its average score of 98 percent

places the Camp in the top 10 percent in the country. This is a strong indication of the quality and safety of the camp, the characteristics we will fully exploit in the Camp's advertising.

In regard to diversification of our participants, our first effort was to increase the number of Latino children attending the camp.

Our efforts were rewarded by the recognition from the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society for a Hispanic Family Camp that was held at the facility in August of 2005.

Finally, the Camp is collaborating with social service departments to create targeted encampments that will meet the needs of specialized populations. These collaborations additionally will offer a steady stream of new camp participants.

Camp William Penn is truly an asset for the City of Philadelphia.

President Verna and members of City Council, this concludes our testimony on Camp

William Penn's '07 budget request.

I will be glad to answer any questions that you may have regarding the testimony or the operation of Camp William Penn.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Commissioner.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Does Camp William Penn, in response to the interest to raise the level of presence of Latino families, does the Camp William Penn have a website?

MR. RICHARD: Yes. Three years ago, we redesigned the website, last year we upgraded it. This year we have upgraded.

And we have also just been awarded a grant by Fels Institute to help us to develop a professional advertising piece for the camp.

There is also a business plan that was completed, with the help of the Budget Office, through Dianne Reed, Jerry Buck, and a the Managing Director himself, along with Dianne Reed and our staff, as well. A business plan has been done.

Also, there was a weekend that was taken by the Managing Director himself, along with the Budget Director, Dianne Reed, to come and tour the facility.

As well, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Joyce Wilkerson, also took a day last year while the children was at camp to actually see the improvements, the changes.

So we are very proud and excited about the opportunity that has been presented, and even more so Fels thinking enough of the facility to lend its money and its credibility to the facility.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Did you apply for that grant?

MR. RICHARD: Yes. The grant was applied by the department through the Managing Director's Office, with his help and leadership.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there someone on your staff, Commissioner, whose principal responsibility is that of fundraising, or do you do that in concert with the Managing Director's Office?

MR. RICHARD: Myself, along with the -- to answer your question, no, we don't have designated staff.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: But it is --

MR. RICHARD: I beg, borrow as much as I can any given day, wherever I can get it from, along with the help of the executive team.

But, no, we do not have a designated area of our organization that is geared towards strictly planning, development, and outside funding.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The grant from Fels is a one-time gift?

MR. RICHARD: I believe it is.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: For how long a period?

MR. RICHARD: Three years.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Really. Fantastic.

I see, too, the interest to increase

Latino enrollment, which I think is a noble goal, given the presence of the Latino population in our city.

On the flip side of that, are efforts underway to have a fair representation of Latino faculty? Are there any bilingual brochures as a part of the tools required to attract Latino students?

MR. MICHAEL SHELTON: Michael Shelton, Director of Camp William Penn.

Yes, last year we had our brochure translated into Spanish.

MR. RICHARD: This year will be the first year that it will be a professional, totally color, glossy layout of the camp, pretty much what we did with the department's brochure five years ago.

We also have a brand-new brochure that's coming out for the teenagers, with all of the information on the teens, as well.

So, we are getting there.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Let me commend you, indeed, for the progress.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you for your

help.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

Councilwoman Blackwell, your light is on. Did you want to be recognized?

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, Madam President.

Certainly we want to thank the Recreation Department for all the things that they do. We have just learned that they are looking at boxing in West Philadelphia. And, you know, that was the one last thing we committed to Lu, while he was still here on earth. And certainly we are looking forward to working with them in that regard.

And we only wanted to thank them, again, for all that they do.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Commissioner, it is a very rare day when a Commissioner comes before us and everybody has nothing but praise for them. So I certainly want to applaud you. You are doing something right.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT VERNA: Any other questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, I thank you, sir.

MR. McPHERSON: Atwater Kent Museum.

MR. RICHARD: Thank you for your leadership.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

Good afternoon and welcome. We do have copies of your testimony. So if you would simply abbreviate your testimony, we will make absolutely certain that the stenographer has a copy, and it will be transcribed in full.

MS. VIKI SAND: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I am expecting the President of the Museum's Board of Trustees very short.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are going to have to identify yourself, and please speak closer to the mike.

MS. SAND: Thank you. I am Viki Sand, Executive Director of the Atwater Kent Museum. And I am expecting my colleague, the President of the Board of Trustees, David

Seltzer, very shortly.

I am here to present testimony on behalf of the Atwater Kent. And I do appreciate that you have the testimony before you.

Obviously everyone associated with the museum appreciates the leadership of the City Council and the Administration to continue support for the Atwater Kent, along with the Museum of Art and other cultural institutions.

I am here to just highlight some specific items that I think we are delighted to talk with you about.

First and foremost, over the past three years, the museum has generated $2.1 million in noncity funds to renovate the Atwater Kent Museum and to really develop the kinds of programs that reach across communities in this city and really create an institution of pride.

Key and central to that is the Atwater Kent Museum's highest priority, to serve school children.

And we have worked diligently with federal money over the last year and a half to develop curriculum-based programs for K through 8th grade, but also a dynamic new program, a new game simulation, called Experience Philadelphia, that will be available for high school students, to have them envision the kind of city they want to live in, to create strategies to develop that, to reach their dreams, and then to negotiate it.

It meets all of the curriculum cross-cutting competencies, or cross-competencies. And we are very excited to be working with the Curriculum Office of the Philadelphia public schools in creating that program.

I also want to note that the Philadelphia city history collection now includes not only the art and artifacts of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania collection, which we acquired two years ago, but the Philadelphia material from the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies has also come to the museum.

And, finally, I want just briefly to mention the passing of Council member David Cohen. He was for many years the Council's representative on the museum's Board of Trustees. And through his office and his aide, Bill Greenlee, I must say that we received always very good attention and very good support during the last two critical years.

I am very pleased to be here today to specifically ask for the appropriation of $270,000 for the Atwater Kent Museum in Fiscal Year 2007.

And I am pleased to answer your questions.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you. Thank you, Madam President.

I just wanted to know what your total Operating Budget is for the Atwater?

MS. SAND: The total Operating Budget is -- separate from the city is

$800,000, about $870,000.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: 870,000. And out of that 870,000, you are asking the city for 270,000; correct?

MS. SAND: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And how is the additional 500-some-thousand dollars? Is that through private contributions? How is that raised?

MS. SAND: The 870,000?

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yes.

MS. SAND: Well the total Operating Budget for the museum -- I may have misunderstood your question -- including city funds is about $1.2 million.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: So 870,000 is raised privately?

MS. SAND: We raise $870,000 privately every year.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And how many employees do they currently have?

MS. SAND: We have 11 full-time employees and we have five part-time employees. We also contract with three people to provide professional services.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And what would you say, the $270,000, how is that appropriated? In other words, is it for the maintenance of the facility?

MS. SAND: No.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: It is just for general operations?

MS. SAND: No. We get, the museum's direct funding from the city, is in five key positions for the museum.

One, the Executive Director; the curator; registrar; semi-skilled laborer; and security person, municipal guard. And that is the museum's appropriation, $264,000.

And this year $6,000 is used for the purchase of collection insurance.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Then this represents no change from --

MS. SAND: No, no change at all.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: -- from 2005.

You just need the same amount you received previously?

MS. SAND: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good afternoon.

On Page 3 of your testimony, you give some discussion, or mention, I should say, of a Capital Master Plan starting in March.

Can you just share with us where you are with that, what some of the short-term and long-term goals are there?

MS. SAND: We have needed for our historic 1826 building both a historic structure report, but also a master plan for the use of that building, and we have been working with the Capital Program Office to do that.

The priorities of the Capital Master Plan are really three: One, to improve the environment of the building. We have about three different heating and cooling systems in the building. And it is very difficult both for the collections, as well as our visitors and staff. And there are dramatic changes. So we want to reduce the extremes of that.

The second priority is to improve our visitor services amenities and to make the building -- "amenities" meaning toilets, so that they meet standards for accessibility and make the lobby a space that we can use more successfully for visitors.

And the third priority is to renovate the third floor of the building, which is where we house a part of the collection. But we want to open that so that we can use it for public research and work space for our exhibition programs.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure. Your Experience Philadelphia currently focuses on involving and engaging high school students.

Any thoughts or inclination to partner with neighboring universities not only for funding, but for possibly interns and/or volunteers?

MS. SAND: We do have a number of interns who come from colleges and universities at the present time.

And one of the keys to our Experience Philadelphia gallery and the activities that we're running with the public schools, but also the different kinds of -- all of the different schools in the Philadelphia area and in the region, we support that in part through -- at the moment through staff people, but have had over the last three years four interns annually who work with us to support our programs.

So we are reaching out to the colleges and universities in the area and engaging their students to help us do this.

Temple University has, for the last three years, provided a doctoral student to help us with historical research. And Temple University, their data project was also the source of information around the Experience Philadelphia game simulation.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any partnership with the Moore College of Art?

MS. SAND: We have not at this point done that.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Just curious.

And currently does the partnership still exist with the Department of Recreation?

MS. SAND: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That completes my questioning. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

Are there any other questions or comments from Council Members?

Good afternoon. Welcome. You were a little late, so we started without you.

MS. SAND: I would like to introduce the President of the Board of Trustees of the Atwater Kent, David Seltzer.

MR. DAVID SELTZER: My pleasure, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Welcome.

Is there anything that you would like to add to the testimony that has already been given?

MR. SELTZER: I think not. Thank you.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Fine. Thank you for coming in. Thank you.

MR. McPHERSON: The next department is the Art Museum.

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

MS. ANNE d'HARNONCOURT: Good afternoon and greetings, City Council President Verna and members of City Council.

I am Anne d'Harnoncourt, Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. And have the pleasure of being joined today by Gail Harrity, Chief Operating Officer; Robert J. Morrone, our Director of Facilities and Operations; and Cheryl McClenney-Brooker to my left, the Director of External Affairs.

As you all know, the Philadelphia Museum of Art has one of the great collections of art in the United States and encompasses a great diversity of cultures and historic periods.

I won't rehearse so much of my written testimony; but to say that, as you all know, we are housed in a city-owned building and the responsibility is ours to care for city-owned collections.

And we have depended on city operating support to pay security, maintenance, and utility costs since the museum opened its doors in that magnificent main building in 1928.

And I should just note that, when those core expenses of security and maintenance are funded through a stable annual stream of public support, that is what really gives the museum the ability to successfully solicit additional support from individuals, foundations, and corporations to do the exhibitions, to take care of our great collections, and create the education programs that have such a deep and positive impact on the city's quality of life, its educational opportunities, and its prosperity.

We are very grateful this year for the Administration's recommended appropriation of $2 million for operating costs.

We do hope that the Administration, together with City Council, will consider over time incrementally restoring the museum's appropriation to a level that will actually cover 100 percent of the security and maintenance costs.

And that was the case in 1928 and as recently as Fiscal Year 1992, when the city's appropriation of $4.6 million covered those costs in full.

And I won't rehearse the intervening years, but the appropriation was lowered to $2 million in Fiscal 2005 and 2006. And it is proposed currently that that remain flat for the next five years, while over the same period of time our security and maintenance costs have actually risen, not surprisingly.

The appropriation of $2 million for Fiscal '07 will cover, in fact, only one-third of what it costs to secure the museum and its collections, to operate the systems, and maintain the building.

So we hope for consideration from the Administration and the Council for gradual restoration to previous levels to cover 100 percent of those costs.

Because we really believe, and we hope you concur, that the city's investment in the museum is a sound and a fruitful one. And we think that was demonstrated in a number of ways last year.

In particular, you all remember the great Dali exhibition, which opened in February 2005, and was such a resounding success that those mustaches, let alone those paintings, will not be easily forgotten.

I mean, his art was really presented as never before. And visitors came from all 50 states and 33 countries to Philadelphia, our Philadelphia.

And my colleague, Gail Harrity, will briefly talk about the economic impact of Dali and of the museum. But suffice it to say it was, I think, a thrilling experience for all of us.

And last fall we were also thrilled to provide an array of experiences. We are always looking for a variety. A great Dutch 17th century landscape master painter, Jacob Van Ruisdael, we borrowed paintings from as far afield as Paris and Russia.

And an exhibition of the really extraordinary modern painter, Beauford Delaney, the African-American artist whose portrait of James Baldwin is a recently acquired treasure of our own museum.

And, on top of that, we not only helped things to happen and make things happen in our own building, but we were one of five institutions that came together in an unprecedented collaboration to organize the celebration of Ben Franklin's 300th birthday.

And we lent both expertise and works of art to the fabulous show, "Ben Franklin, In Search of a Better Life," which is on show as we speak at the Constitution Center.

Also as we speak, we are preparing for a March 29 opening of Andrew Wyeth, Magic and Memory, which we hope will be another cultural milestone for the city.

At the age of 88 and still actively painting, he is not only among the most beloved artists living today, but he is a life-long Pennsylvania resident, fan of the city, and his subject matter is often the landscape of rural Pennsylvania and the people that he knows so well. And it celebrates seven decades of his art.

The lead corporate sponsor of the exhibition is the Ford Motor Company. And we are really proud to have created a partnership that brings the corporate leaders of Ford from Michigan to Philadelphia.

This spring, I should say, is also the 50th anniversary of the wedding of Philadelphia's own Grace Kelly to Prince Rainier of Monaco.

And, as I think you all know, after the wedding, she gave her wedding dress to the museum. So we are going to be celebrating that very Philadelphia occasion, as well, in the near future.

And, as you know, her brother, Jack Kelly, was Councilman-at-Large. So he is part of the history of this august institution of City Council.

And as we sit here, also, the Perlman Building, the great building built as an insurance company and a private corporate headquarters across the street from the museum, is being transformed into a new part of the museum, into a new public institution, which will open in the summer of 2007.

We are already enormously excited. And we plan for a whole array of programs for the public, for the, really, myriad art students and art history students in Philadelphia, and for citizens from Philadelphia and well beyond.

You mentioned Moore College of Art in the previous testimony. And we hope that Philadelphia's great wealth of art students will find particularly exciting things to see in the Perlman Building when it goes public.

And I would just say that education is really the business of the museum day in and day out, and an investment in the museum is also an investment in one very important aspect of education.

We collaborate with schools in every councilmanic district. We serve 75,000 to 80,000 school children annually. And we have programs for adults, families, teens, children, special needs, audiences, all together serving about 212,000 individuals in Fiscal '05. And, in fact, many of those programs are filled to capacity.

And I would also just like to note that in Fiscal '05, over 3,000 teachers from throughout the city and the region worked with our museum educators to learn innovative strategies of employing the arts in a range of classroom experiences not only in the arts, but in mathematics, in history.

And you can use art to do an awful lot of things, opening kids' eyes to a great deal of the rest of the curriculum.

And we just in a second, we are going to show you, if you will bear with us, a very brief three-minute version of a longer video which the museum has produced in collaboration with school teachers.

It is at, really, their request to -- it has the title kind of a little school group visit at the museum, Look, Learn, and Discover. It was made possible by the support of Comcast. And it is really preparing kids for their visit.

We have discovered that if kids are -- if they are secure, if they feel good about what they are going to be doing, what they are going to be seeing, where they are going to be having lunch, that it makes them open up and enjoy their experience and actually take information in and command a lot more knowledge when they come out, than if they are going with a sense that they don't know what's going to happen.

So this video is in the hands now of every teacher in advance of a school group. And take it away.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Before we see the video, may I ask what plans you have about parking? Aren't we going to have a parking problem?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: We always have a parking problem.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I think it is just going to be exaggerated.

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: I might, if I

may, Council President, could I defer that question to my colleague, Gail Harrity, who will be talking a bit about the capital needs right following this? Is that appropriate?

PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Thank you.

(Video presentation.)

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: So thank you very much for the opportunity to show that. We are really so excited about it getting into the schools.

We have sent copies of this to each City Council member at their office. If anyone would like additional copies, we would love to provide them.

And the teachers, who are the real judges of this, together with their kids, are really saying it really makes a big difference to do what we want to do.

So this is -- I will conclude my portion of the testimony just saying, we really can only do what we do with the help of that steady stream of support from the City of Philadelphia.

We appreciate the current proposed allocation of $2 million in operating funds, and we look forward to working with the Administration and with every member of City Council to make the most out of this great educational cultural resource for all the citizens of this great city.

And now I am handing the microphone to my colleague, Gail Harrity, Chief Operating Officer of the museum.

MS. GAIL HARRITY: Hello, President Verna and members of City Council. Thank you.

I am Gail Harrity, I am the Chief Operating Officer of the Art Museum. And, as Anne mentioned in her testimony, I will just add a little economic impact information to our testimony.

As she said, last year the Dali exhibition was a great success, attracting visitors from 33 countries and all 50 states.

Over the course of the three-month exhibition, there were 370,000 visitors going through the exhibition galleries; and, during that period, 580,000 visitors to the museum.

We generated over 20,000 hotel room nights. And the museum was very pleased that the Hotel Association awarded the museum a congratulations for booking so many room nights for the city's hotels.

What was also encouraging is that visitors to the museum exhibition, to the Dali exhibition, 52,000 of them, visited other historic sites, art programs, and, you know, theatre programs in the city. So we had a wonderful effect of sending visitors throughout the city.

The economic impact was $55 million, creating 830 jobs and over $4 million, or $4.5 million, in tax revenues for the city and the state.

But what our Governor is often heard quoted as saying is that the museum is a block-buster all year round.

And for Fiscal '05, the museum conducted a survey with urban partners to assess the economic impact of the museum for the full year during the Fiscal '05.

And it was clear that the museum

generated over $235 million in economic activity for the city and region. It created over 3,800 full-time jobs and $17.4 million in tax revenues for the city and state.

Last year when we testified, a number of City Council members asked for a breakdown of our economic impact numbers. I won't go through this in detail.

But of that total economic impact for '05, over $122 million of it was in direct economic activity, broken down in what you see; $74 million for hotels and restaurants, retail and transportation; about $26 million in food, or almost $6 million in beverage and $42 million in other hotel and local transportation costs. It also generated over $48 million in payroll goods and services.

The indirect economic impact was also significant. Over $63 million by museum visitor spending and $49 million spent by the museum on goods and services.

So it creates jobs. The museum creates jobs. For every one job created, more than eight -- at the museum, more than eight are created in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania.

We think we are a wonderful investment, and certainly appreciate the city's recognition of that in their support for the museum's Operating Budget annually.

I thought I would just conclude our testimony with, really, responding to your question, Council President, about the parking garage. Because, indeed, the museum is working on Phase Two of the master plan, which includes four different projects.

One, an external envelope renovation, which is, really, the facade and roof repairs; two is a parking garage; three is the construction of a new loading and improved loading dock; and four as central plant.

Now, as you know, the museum is 78 years old and in dire need of repair, upgrade, and modernization.

So we are particularly thrilled that the city has committed, through its Capital Program and through the Mayor's recent announcement, generous support for capital improvements of the main museum.

I will just conclude with a few images here showing you the need for repair, particularly on the facade of the museum.

Here are some close-up shots showing the need for rejointing throughout the building. There are missing joints that all need to be repaired.

All of the spectacular columns on our landmark building are cracking, which needs to be addressed in order to prevent further deterioration.

In some cases, the terra cotta tile decorative elements along the roof are in very poor repair, as you see in this image. They are cracked entirely. In other areas, segments of the tile is missing entirely.

We have got stone. Here is an image of the limestone along the roof, where a portion of the stone has cracked and fallen from the building.

There are smaller segments of limestone that have fallen from the building around it. And there are some segments, such as this one, which, you know, could be repaired and, hopefully, addressed before we lose the stone.

So the support from the city capital project would help to repair the facade, repair the 78-year-old roof, and also address what you see here are the -- address the window grills, these bronze grills, around each of the windows.

Again, if you look at close-up images -- and I hope this is clear -- you will see that the bronze grills are breaking and splitting. And, to a large extent, this deterioration can compromise the structural integrity of the system.

So I just wanted to conclude by adding to our operating statement that we are also enormously appreciative for the city and its support, for City Council's support, for the capital needs of the museum.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Point of information, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The reason I am

asking for a point of information, there has been a conversation piece, and you have just made me think of it. Could you go back to one of the slides of the facade.

MS. HARRITY: Tell me when.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: There. Go there.

Could you tell us, every time I am over there, somebody stands, if we're waiting to go up into the museum, they point up to one side of the museum that's got the facade and the other doesn't.

Is there a story behind that?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: I think you are on the east side of the museum. There is a one pediment that has been filled initially when the museum was built in 1928. And the remaining pediments around the museum do not have any decorative elements.

The museum was fortunate enough to receive a gift by a Mrs. Greenwood. And I would have to remember the exact date.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Is that what you are referring to there?

MS. HARRITY: No, this is not. This

is the pediments are a series -- let me see whether I can -- this is an empty pediment. And there is one that is filled with figures that were -- that is just absolutely exquisite. And only one was completed when the museum was completed in 1928.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Everybody, that's like a standard conversation piece. Look at that and look at that. And I never really knew how to answer the question, other than, we're getting to it.

MS. HARRITY: Well, I think the hope is that -- the most important part of the master plan is to address these pediments, particularly all of the brick work. And maybe Bob Morrone can add to this.

But certainly repointing the brick and repairing the roof is our first priority.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Thank you. My testimony is concluded therewith. And if there are any questions, we would be happy to answer them.

PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Have you requested additional operating funds from the Administration? If so, in what amount? And if you have not, can you tell us why not?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: The answer to that is that, we were very pleased with the Administration's proposal to maintain the $2 million, which had been last year's appropriation and the previous one, and not to propose any further cuts in it. And we were happy to receive that.

However, we -- as I said in my testimony, we would look forward to the opportunity to work with the Administration and Council over succeeding years to come closer to restore that funding to previous levels.

PRESIDENT VERNA: For the record, can you tell us what the previous levels were?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Yes. The $4.5 million was in Fiscal '92, I believe, which was the last year in which the museum received full funding. That covered the then full costs of the security, the maintenance for the building.

Since that time, the funds have decreased over time to the point of just being the $2 million that has been flat over the last three years now, two years and then the proposed next year, and is flat in the current Five-Year Plan. And our hope is to gradually increase that.

That appropriation, that $2 million, would cover only one-third of what it will cost to secure the museum and its collections in Fiscal '07, which is approximately $6 million.

PRESIDENT VERNA: I have other questions, but I see that we do have Council members that would like to be recognized.

Councilman Kelly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you, Madam President.

Ms. D'Harnoncourt, I just wanted to know what is your present Operating Budget?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: It is roughly

$40 million.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: $40 million?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And how much of that $40 million is the city's contribution?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: $2 million.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: $2 million.

How is the other remaining $38 million raised?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Oh, Councilman, it is a combination of -- we raise annually, we have an annual fund, in which we go to foundations, individuals, and corporations for annual funding.

We also have made a valiant and an ongoing effort to increase the museum's endowment, so that there is a stream of funding from the endowment. It is often for specific positions or for support of specific areas of the museum.

And, also, we obviously have some earned income from admissions, from exhibition programs, from some of the education programs, not those provided to the School District of

Philadelphia and so on.

So there is a whole -- every large museum, almost every institution, depends on a variety of income streams. What is so important is really that the city operating support provides a kind of reliable base on which to go to our other partners.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: But the city's contribution is approximately about 5 percent of your budget, then?

MS. HARRITY: And if I may add to that response. That's correct, the city's contribution is approximately 5 percent. The endowment income contributes approximately 25 percent. And the contributed funds each year are 35 percent. The earned income is also 35 percent.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: Of this operating cost, how many employees do you have presently for maintenance?

MS. HARRITY: For maintenance. Total number of employees are approximately --

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And security.

MS. HARRITY: Are approximately 400.

The maintenance and security contracts are not full-time employees to the museum. And the number of maintainers --

MR. ROBERT J. MORRONE: My name is Robert Morrone, and I am Director of Facilities and Operations at the museum.

We have approximately 120 full-time equivalent security guards, and approximately 17 or 18 maintenance mechanics, and about 11 or 12 custodial workers.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And of those employees, would you say that the city's contribution of $2 million covers?

MR. MORRONE: No, definitely not.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: That's my point.

In comparison to other facilities, especially museums around the country, can you give us another museum about the same size, and could you give us an idea of how many employees they would have for security and maintenance?

MR. MORRONE: I mean, for an instance, the National Gallery, just in the area of, say, maintenance personnel, custodial workers, they have approximately around 70 people, last count I understood, compared to our, you know, 15, 14, 15 people. And it is the same square footage.

And if you talk security guards, I'm sure that's a number we can provide you with. I don't have that number at my fingertips right now.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: You mentioned in your testimony that, on the Dali exhibit, that you did extend, you did extend the hours to midnight on some days and an additional two weeks.

How did you pay for the additional security for that? In other words, was that included in your budget or did you have to seek additional funding for that?

MS. HARRITY: Well, the exhibition itself, we did seek additional funding, corporate support, and the like.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: I am just thinking about security.

MS. HARRITY: Security was the responsibility of the museum. And to the extent that the city support funds a portion of that, one-third, the city did contribute partially to that cost.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: You just went over something about the infrastructure problems that you are having, and they seemed to be serious.

That is a city-owned facility; am I correct?

MS. HARRITY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: What would happen if someone was injured in that facility for something falling on them or whatever? Who would be liable?

Would the city be liable for that?

MS. HARRITY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: They would be liable?

MS. HARRITY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: So it is the city's responsibility, then, to maintain that as well as they can, I guess.

MS. HARRITY: As in all city-owned buildings, I believe.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And one of the things I would just like to point out, Madam President, if I can, is that you mentioned in your notes that I am getting here that every dollar spent by the museum produces $4 in economic activity in the region. I think that's important.

That's important to know, that every dollar we invest, we get $4 back in return.

And I think that not only the Dali exhibit, but you're also contemplating I'm sure the Wyeth exhibit is going to be, I'm sure, maybe not as successful as the Dali, but darn close to it.

MS. HARRITY: That is our hope, certainly.

COUNCILMAN KELLY: And, of course, I want to thank you for bringing cousin Grace's gown back. That's always nice to know.

If I may, I just want to commend you, Anne and Gail and Bob and Cheryl, and I see Bill back there. I want to commend you for the hard work and effort that you put in, especially working with the school children in

Philadelphia. Without your programs, I think they would have no idea what art is all about.

I think it is very important for us to do what we can to make sure that these programs continue. And I just want to give you, I think, something, a pat on the back, I think it is long overdue, that we sometimes take you for granted that you are going to continue these programs without any support.

But I think you absolutely need additional support from this city and Council, and I would just like you to know that you have a good ear here that you can get to.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome. The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you, Madam President.

Let me go on the record as well, following Councilman Kelly's remarks, to commend you on the enormously good work you do across the board.

And we all know that the Dali exhibit was a hit. Was that the first time that the museum stayed open until midnight many nights?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: I think we have done it once or twice before, but it was great to have that demand.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We know the work you do in a very important way with the Philadelphia public schools.

I am curious to know if you have any other partnerships of the same type; namely, the Department of Recreation?

Any kind of partnership currently in place, considered, for existing city departments, like the Department of Recreation, which also is in the business of providing activities for children and adults?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: It is my belief -- and I can't answer that directly -- we have lots of kids coming in for summer programs, from summer camps, I think some of which are run by the Rec Department and others by other entities.

And, so, that's been -- our education department always looks for new ways to collaborate and cooperate with other entities in the city and outside.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right. So there is a lot of work that's happening with persons, I would call, in the dawn of life.

What about those in the twilight of their lives? For example, do you have any relationships with the Philadelphia Corporation of Aging and seniors programs to bring in seniors who, where many of the senior centers gets a budget, a program budget, that allows senior citizens to visit institutions around the city? Any ongoing partnerships of that type, as we speak?

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: We do a lot of senior programming. And I know we work with senior centers both in the city and outside.

I will ask, and we will let you know, about specifically dealing with city-run, city-sponsored senior centers.

We do a program called Art Talk, in which people who cannot leave where they are can have telephone conversations looking at illustrations of works of art. We do as wide a variety, as you know.

We also work with prisons. We've got a good program going with many of the incarcerated people who have creative abilities and have no other way to express them. And we have teachers who work with them.

And, so, there is a -- this is not chapter and verse, but there is a very broad wealth.

And we have recently published, I should say, a new brochure that begins to summarize all of our -- encapsulate all of our education programs, and we will make sure that every Councilperson has one.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please. I would be interested in reading that.

That concludes my questioning. And just let me close by saying thank you for the update on the master plan. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: You are welcome.

Are there any other questions from

members of the committee?

Seeing none, I thank you very much.

MS. d'HARNONCOURT: Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT VERNA: The committee will stand in recess until tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock. Thank you.

(Hearing adjourned at 3:25 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 Tuesday, March 14, 2006, 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