COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- - -

Monday, March 18, 2002
9:54
Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, PA

- - -

CONTINUED FY '03 OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY

(BILL NO. 020001)

PRESENT: COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA, Chair
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN FRANK J. DICICCO
COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY
COUNCILMAN ANGEL L. ORTIZ
COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

- - -

VINCENT VARALLO ASSOCIATES, INC.
Registered Professional Reporters
Eleven Penn Center, Suite 600
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 561-2220

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MR. MCPHERSON: Bill No.'s 020030, 020031, 020035, 020092, 020144, 020145, 020116. Bill No. 020031 will be recessed until tomorrow Tuesday March 19 at 9:30. The other bills are recessed until Monday April 8th at 9:30.

Those tax bills in front of the Committee of the Whole are being recessed are being recessed at the request of the Chamber, as the Chamber and other institutions asked for some additional time to review the bills so that they can give testimony.

Today is a continuation of the hearings on Bill No. 020001.

And the first department we would like to call back is MOCS, the Mayor's Office of Community Services.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning. First let me say that I deeply appreciate you coming back today, Mr. Blakney and Tom Conway and Pat Smith. I think

on the day of your original appearance here in Council, unfortunately, I was in the building that day but was in another meeting with some constituents, which I could not get out of at that time, so I appreciate your returning. Therefore I did not have an opportunity to ask some questions at that time. I just had a couple items and I'd appreciate your assistance in trying to get to them.

One is, I've had a couple discussions with you, Mr. Blakeny, and other people involved with MOCS, and it would be very helpful if you could explain at this time, I guess, the nature of the relationship or the interrelationship between MOCS and the Neighborhood Transformation Office which will run the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, the number of employees, the interworking between the two entities, and some level of an organization chart, and maybe some are short explanations as to who reports to who or whom under what circumstances and who directs who or whom to do what.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you. Ralph Blakeny, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of

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Community Services.

The Mayor's Office of Community Services, since the beginning of the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, has been involved. Primarily, we have a number of workers who have been involved and are identifying people in the community who are interested in being involved with NTI. MOCS has been taking direction regarding our involvement in neighborhood transformation from the Neighborhood Transformation Office.

So I would like to refer things to Pat Smith, who could talk about what she has asked the Mayor's Office of Community Service to do regarding NTI.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I appreciate that. Before we get to that, I need to, for the moment, be at a very fundamental level.

MR. BLAKNEY: Okay.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: MOCS existed before the NTI existed, before the Neighborhood Transformation Office existed. How many people work at MOCS?

MR. BLAKNEY: We have, as of December 31st, 300 employees.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: According to who?

MR. BLAKNEY: Central Personnel, 300 employees.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 300.

MR. BLAKNEY: Last count.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Are they all throughout offices in various neighborhoods in Philadelphia and are there any in what's generally referred to as the "downtown triplex"?

MR. BLAKNEY: People are working out of a number of offices, and for some people on the MOCS payroll, their supervision is actually in other City departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. For the 300 people as of -- you're saying it's as December 31, 2001

MR. BLAKNEY: That's correct

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's what you have, okay. Could you provide to us, through the Chair, a detailed listing of all of the sites that MOCS has? You have offices in different parts of City, right?

MR. BLAKNEY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, give us a

detailed listing of all of the work locations and what people work at what locations and what their position is.

MR. BLAKNEY: Okay. As a result of the last testimony, we did furnish, through the normal channels, responding to questions, a list of our various program sites and the number of people who are working at each site.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, yeah, all right. One day I'm going to ask for an explanation about "normal process," of how the information gets from the person who asks for it to how it ultimately ends up here. Apparently, something came in this past Thursday or Friday, and I think it's working its way to the rest of us.

What I have is a piece dated March 15th, in response to a question apparently asking you to provide a breakdown of MOCS employees, including information on race. Is that what you're talking about?

MR. BLAKNEY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And it has program...

So it's really question 3, I guess, or

maybe it's 3 and 4: "What is the cost of renting MOCS office facilities?" which, I guess, that gives you a listing of the facilities. What does question 4 mean?

MR. BLAKNEY: Question number 4?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yeah.

MR. BLAKNEY: This was a question that came from Councilman --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Ortiz

MR. BLAKNEY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. BLAKNEY: This is a response to his question.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is LIP?

MR. BLAKNEY: List Initiative Program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And is that something that runs throughout the system? Or those five people, are they located in a particular place or --

MR. BLAKNEY: Yes, they actually work out of MOCS's main office, 909 Spring Garden Street.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Did the Councilman ask at the time -- again, I know you

have that breakdown by type of program. Did the Councilman ask for any listing of staff by site, by work site?

MR. BLAKNEY: We did furnish -- in question number 4, the response does give the total number of staff in the respective programs.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. BLAKNEY: But not necessarily the address.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Again, I'm regretful that I missed that hearing. Maybe we could have had all of this kind of coordinated.

What would be helpful for me today is to understand where everyone works, where the different programs are, and probably some combining, I guess, if you will of the information on question 3 and 4, and the response in question 3 and question 4 would help me to get a better understanding of the program and the -- or the agency and how it functions and operates and where people are and what they do.

MR. BLAKNEY: So would adding the actual address to number 4, another column, would that suffice, Councilman?

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yeah. Or you -- I mean, I think if you could -- I mean, let me ask this question: For everything that's listed in 4, do all of those items take place in the locations that are listed in 3?

MR. BLAKNEY: Not necessarily.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Not necessarily. Well, is there a location of a program in 4 that's not listed as one of your sites in 3?

MR. BLAKNEY: What I'm saying is that some of the people who are listed in number 4 actually work in the field.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that. But they must work from somewhere.

MR. BLAKNEY: Right. They work out of locations that are listed in number 3, by and large.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. BLAKNEY: We do have people whose supervision is in other departments, and so those locations are not listed.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right. Well, why don't we do this: Why don't you take all of the people who are listed -- the people in the

programs that are listed in item number 4 and associate them with the location from which they work, that you've listed in your response to number 3. And if a person is being supervised by somebody who's not actually at that site, make a note in another column, a comment column that, you know, five of these seven people are actually supervised by somebody over somewhere else.

MR. BLAKNEY: We would be very happy to furnish that information, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, thank you.

And then in the context of what you were you were just trying to share with me or take me through, it would also be helpful to get a fairly detailed organization chart of the entire MOCS operation.

And then, now, if you want to transition to Miss Smith and talk about how any of the MOCS people, staff, if they are supervised or directed by someone else possibly over in NTI or if they're supervised by someone else, you can tell us that here this morning. And also, if you can give us a detailed explanation as to how the two agencies work, what the nature of the relationship is, and

as I said earlier, who directs who or whom to do what, that would be most helpful.

It has been a little difficult for me.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: My name is Patricia Smith, and I'm Director of Neighborhood Transformation Initiative.

From the outset, we recognized that as we go out into communities with respect to different components of the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, one of the most important pieces would be outreach into communities.

As you know, with respect to NTI, there's two, I think, fundamental projects which are going forward. One is the Vacant Lot Cleaning Program, which we kicked off last June and is on -- underway.

With respect to that citywide Vacant Lot Cleaning Program, there are organizers who work out of the office of MOCS, who go out and, as the crews clean lots, reach out to neighbors, businesses, and other individuals in those communities. They're there to answer questions about what's going on, to

encourage people to play a role on a volunteer basis in terms of maintaining the lots after the City leaves. If there are any community meetings, which are being set up, the MOCS organizers are there to answer questions and things of that nature.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Miss Smith, I hate to interrupt you.

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But why don't you walk me, kind of step by step, through that process. We've now experienced it and so we have some information about it. And then I'd like to talk about going forward.

Let's go back to the kickoff with the vacant lots.

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: My recollection is that we were contacted -- this is the event that was on a Saturday.

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right? I think it rained in the morning and then a little sunshine in the afternoon.

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We were contacted and asked to make a recommendation on a particular lot, and we gave one. Who actually does the work?

MS. SMITH: The actual cleaning of the lots?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The actual cleaning of the lots.

MS. SMITH: Yes, the City, for the first year, has set out in our financial plan that last year hired temporary workers, which are under the direction of the Managing Director's Office. Mr. Conway is the immediate supervisor of those individuals who are cleaning lots.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, where do they come from?

MS. SMITH: I can defer to Mr. Conway, 'cause the hiring was done by the Managing Director's Office.

MR. CONWAY: My name's Thomas Conway, Deputy Managing Director.

There's approximately 80 employees in the Mayor's Office of Community Services with regards to the vacant lot cleaning. Most of them are temporary employees.

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We also have about 20 L&I employees who operate the equipment, front-end loaders and trash trucks and so on and so forth.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: These are full-time employees?

MR. CONWAY: Yes, in the Department of Licenses and Inspections, they are full-time employees.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The 20.

MR. CONWAY: The 20.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What about the 80 employees in MOCS?

MR. CONWAY: The 80 employees, the majority of them, are temporary employees.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, and what does that mean?

MR. CONWAY: Well, they're hired for a year, and basically when the time's up, we're looking at different avenues to pursue regarding the maintenance of the vacant lots, you know, contracting out or other means of keeping 'em clean.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And how did you hire them, where did they come from? What was

the process of hiring people?

MR. CONWAY: Basically, I think it was through community activists and outreach in the neighborhoods to hire as many people that care about the community and want to make a difference in it, and the attempt to put them right back in their own communities to make sure that they're going to make a difference.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Tell me a little bit about the nature of the outreach. I mean, in every neighborhood of the City, you talked to people about making recommendations for people who wanted to work; was that the process?

MR. CONWAY: That's correct. And we also looked at different drug-treatment facilities to work with them, the people that need a second chance to come out of there with a temporary employment opportunity.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, when did that start?

MR. CONWAY: Well, the cleaning started last June. Basically, they were hired last June.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, you didn't hire them all in June.

MR. CONWAY: No. That was the beginning of the hiring was in June.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right. So you hire the people. And then, Miss Smith, you made mention that around about the time of the cleaning, there's some organizing activity that goes on?

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, who does that?

MS. SMITH: They're sort of, like, answering and having the presence on the street while the -- 'cause, as you know, when the City goes out in any type of, you know, visible way, a lot of times people in the neighborhoods come up, they ask questions, they want to get information, they want to know what's going on. So we thought it was very important so that the individuals who were doing the work could, you know, do what they had to do to have, you know, someone there to answer questions.

So we looked to the existing MOCS organizing staff to play that role. We gave them the name of the Neighborhood Transformation

officers. We spent time with them to talk about different programs and services in the City. I think we even brought them and had a series of workshops around, you know, housing programs and L&I's role and things of that nature, so --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, the MOCS organizers are full-time people who work at MOCS?

MS. SMITH: Yes, mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And before NTI came along, what did MOCS organizers do?

MR. BLAKNEY: Prior to NTI, we had a number of people called "community organizers," and they actually worked out of different offices, MOCS offices, providing what we would be akin to constituent-type services, making referrals, actually helping people to make applications for entitlement programs and those types of things.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Are they still doing those things, or have they shifted over into NTI orientation?

MR. BLAKNEY: We are providing some level of those services in addition to -- developing block captains was another one of those services.

What we found is that the types of things that the community organizers were doing was easily -- a easy fit for what we were trying to achieve with neighborhood transformation.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So people went out, they cleaned the lots, you have your organizers, and that was last year's activity. What's to be anticipated for this year?

MS. SMITH: Well, I mean, that's ongoing activity. You know, the lot cleaning program, as structured, we anticipated cleaning the 31,000 vacant lots over a one-year period of time, so the organizers are still working with the crews and still go out to answer questions.

Looking forward, we also know that once we begin the demolition activity that we are planning, you know, a great deal of community meetings, working with the District Councilpersons, you know, to schedule those meetings.

And we think it's very important again to have the MOCS organizers to do a couple of things: Leafletting, letting people know about community meetings, you know, before the activity, to get the word out, to touch base with community

leaders, churches, you know. So it's sort of a outreach to say that, you know, we're scheduling a meeting to talk about the demolition activity that's taking place in your neighborhood. So that's sort of what like what I would call the "pre-demolition activity."

We also, in anticipation and based on experience, recognize that often as demolition work is going on, issues, you know, come up. You know, there may be a problem. Historically, the organizers oversee the demolition contractor. They take -- you know, historically, they've been taking neighborhood complaints, but we thought to augment that so that the MOCS organizers would be there, so that if an issue comes up, they become kind of the interface, you know, into government.

If a question comes up about, let's say, you know, unfortunately, there's an issue about a damage to a property, and instead of having an individual trying to figure out government on their own, they'll know to refer that person to, like, the Risk Management Office. They'll have brochures and information on, you know, what is a dangerous building, why is it dangerous, that sort of thing.

So it's kind of like a education piece and the idea of a liaison and entry point.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. You mentioned that the lot-cleaning is ongoing. One, how many -- since the kickoff last year, how many lots have been cleaned?

MR. CONWAY: As of March 15th, 22,500 vacant lots have been cleaned, with 15,000 tons of debris removed.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And the game plan going forward is that we're just going to continue to do this?

MR. CONWAY: Well, we're going to continue doing it this way until July 1st.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And then what happens?

MR. CONWAY: And then we're going to look at different options regarding contracting out the work or other avenues.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Who might the work be contracted out to?

MR. CONWAY: Landscape.

MS. SMITH: One of the things, if you recall from the Neighborhood Transformation Program

framework, we always envisioned, because of the scale of the problem and the amount of debris, that the City would go in and try to get the lots down to a manageable level, something akin to the abandoned-car program, you know, so like it's up front, let's get the backlog taken care of.

Then what we had contemplated is, how do we begin to do other -- involve other people. So, like, we were talking about issuing an RFP or a bid document to solicit community groups who may want to say, We want to bid on cleaning lots within our neighborhood.

We haven't completely figured out kind of like the follow-up mechanism, but we're looking at all kinds of options from doing a -- it's not actually a request for a proposal, but a bid document through the traditional procurement mechanism, looking at, you know, both for-profit and nonprofit as a way to carry on the regular cleanup activity.

One thing I want to stress is that we always envisioned this is not to be a maintenance program, but after the initial cleaning, to be a periodic cleanup, so that things don't get out of

hand so -- in that sense. And we haven't completely structured it.

That's what we'll be working on this spring is a delivery system going forward. We may want to keep a blend of continuing to use temporary workers combined with, you know, contracting out some of the work.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When do you think you'll have a decision as to what the final program is going to be?

MS. SMITH: I think probably in another 30 to 45 days.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right. Tell me a little bit about any protocols that have been developed either presently or that you anticipate going forward. Obviously there's going to be a tremendous uptake in work and activity between MOCS, NTI, and citizens, as well as the need to coordinate with a variety of elected officials.

What is -- let me rephrase that. Is there a protocol in terms of the work that MOCS may be doing or NTI workers who are directed by MOCS, or MOCS workers who may be directed by the NTI

Office, in terms of work to be done in the neighborhood and the nature of your contact prior to with any of the elected officials or other representatives in the area?

MS. SMITH: As we indicated, again, in the NTI Program framework, we always envisioned particularly around the demolition activity to work with the District Council office in terms of setting up community meetings. Once the, you know, we've gotten the date and the location, then we can think of the MOCS workers kind of like the foot soldiers. You know, they'll put out the brochures, they would attend the community meetings, they would be there to answer, again, questions.

I mean, one of the things that we know from experience is that when you go into a neighborhood meeting, you may go with one particular, you know, agenda or objective, but often, if there's other issues within the community around City service people, you know --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand about the demolition-related activity; I'm also asking about other activities that may take place in the community that are not related to

demolition.

And, again, what is the -- is there an informal or formal or written document that details what MOCS or NTI people are supposed to do when they set up meetings, again, not related demolition but a wide variety of other services that may be provided in terms of notifying elected representatives as to what their doing?

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm. The other respect to NTI that's significant is the lot-cleaning activity and what we have been using some MOCS workers is that we were able to raise some dollars to do some greening. So the MOCS workers have been working with individuals in and around the original eight kickoff sites, because we were able to get some private dollars to get what we call "stabilization work" on that lot; you know, putting in some topsoil, some tree planting, and some greening activity.

But their primary role, with respect to NTI, is, one, being deployed along with the cleaning crews, if people are interested in playing a volunteer role in terms of ongoing activities with the lots, we have an application so that they

can become a caretaker of the lot, and we're trying to work with, you know, just giving people support that way.

And then the second major area that we contemplated was with respect to the demolition activities. We weren't using them for other types of community services.

Those are the two areas related to the vacated lots and the demolition.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, I understand that, and those are primarily NTI-related activities.

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me ask Mr. Blakney. Mr. Blakney, you and I have had a couple conversations about the need to coordinate activities by MOCS personnel out in neighborhoods, whether it's meetings or community information and the like.

What direction do you give to staff as it relates to the need to be in touch with local-area representatives if MOCS is organizing an activity in the neighborhood?

MR. BLAKNEY: Basically, we've been

responding to the request of elected officials. In the one meeting that you and I had, you had expressed a concern about not being informed of a community meeting.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mm-hmm.

MR. BLAKNEY: So as a result of that meeting, if I can use that for an example, we had agreed that MOCS community organizers would do whatever is possible to make you aware of activity, you know, in your respective district.

Other Councilpeople have not necessarily made such a request, so we have not been doing that across the board. But we are, you know, most certainly willing to cooperate and respond to requests of the individual Councilperson or to Council as a whole.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Excuse me. I don't think that Councilmembers should have to make such a request. I think that you automatically should notify the Councilmembers as to what activity is going to be going on in their districts.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you. We will comply with that, Council President.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam President. And you are actually correct.

And it's not -- I mean, I'm not asking -- you and I didn't have that conversation because I'm newsy about what you do and how you do your business; it's primarily because we all work for the same people, we're trying to provide representation and service to folks, but we also should do it in a coordinated fashion so that at least the citizens have some reason to think that we actually know what we're doing and that we're working hand in hand to support each other's efforts.

You are correct, we had that meeting, we had this discussion, and with regard to that particular situation, it has worked out very well. We are having continual discussions about a particular project out in West Philadelphia, and the organizers have been most cooperative with my office, for which I'm very appreciative.

On the other hand, I did receive a copy of a flyer the day before a meeting was proposed to put together, and I'm assuming that the

arrangements for the meeting were done not the day before, when I found out about it. This is related to schools and school safety; again, obviously something that I'd be very interested in and very concerned about. I have a member of my staff who works on school issues, and it was not by way of notification by MOCS. It's my understanding that we learned about this particular meeting but by other people in the community.

Again, I would say, Mr. Blakney, this has not helped the nature of the relationship between the various elected offices and the MOCS operation. To the extent that we can better coordinate what we're all doing, be involved in the start of the process, and help in any way we can do to support what MOCS is trying to do, but also share either insider information with the agency so that the meetings can be productive so that people can participate, it would certainly be very helpful.

It is not a good position for our office to be in a situation where if people have questions about what you guys are doing and the first response is, "What meeting?" That doesn't portend

well for your office, doesn't portend well for my office. It doesn't make the government look like it really knows what it's doing, so why would anybody listen to us if we're not even talking to each other.

All I'm saying is, if somebody wants to have a meeting, be in touch with us. We're not an obstacle, we're not a barrier. We will be cooperative. But I can't participate in something that I don't know anything about. That one's a really hard one for me.

If I know about something and don't participate, that's my problem, but if I don't know about something and you go ahead and do it anyway, that makes it very difficult to come up and support what it is that you're doing if it appears that you're working across purposes.

And I'm not you directing that at you personally; it was not your meeting. But, as you well know, when you're a director of an agency, oftentimes you hear a lot of stuff from people; some you know about, some you might not know about. I'd be glad to give you a copy of the flyer.

Again, at least to a lack of

coordination, and quite honestly, it's hard to have a good feeling about an agency, if not what your level of cooperation might be with the agency, if you don't think that they're working well with you.

MR. BLAKNEY: Yeah, I'd be very happy to receive a copy of the flyer. And I can assure you that the lack of notification to your office was an oversight on our part. We will be, you know, working more diligently to make sure that all staff who are involved in respective Council districts, that we at least notify the District Councilperson in the future.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, let me just add on to that. I mean, you obviously have to run your agency.

I think, and in conjunction with what the Council President said, there's notifying someone that you're going to do something, and then there's calling someone and telling them, This is what we're thinking about doing. We'd like to seek your input, your insight, you ideas, and your suggestions about what our thought is.

If you call me the day before a meeting and say, I just want to let you know we're having a

meeting tomorrow at such-and-such a location, you're not going to go to get any brownie points for that. As a matter of fact, all you're really going to do is really piss me off. So that doesn't get you anywhere.

What gets you somewhere is, We're thinking about having a meeting in about two weeks at such-and-such a location. What do you think about that? This is the purpose of the meeting, this is who we're thinking about inviting, this is what we're trying to get done. Could you help us with that?

Then I'll be real interested in that conversation 'cause that's a true partnership. If you're just inviting me late, I mean, you know, that's the guy that's going down the list, and the first three girls said no, and you're just getting the last invitation.

MR. BLAKNEY: I understand your point, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

Lastly, I understand that there is -- you have a new service-request form?

MR. BLAKNEY: We have a form that we use

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internally, and it's primarily used just to document requests being made by various, you know, people in the community.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So it's only used internally?

MR. BLAKNEY: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Would this be the form?

(Councilman Nutter holds up document.)

MR. BLAKNEY: Yes, it looks like the form from here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, but this is not to be used external to the NTI office?

MR. BLAKNEY: No, it's a form that MOCS uses, that the Neighborhood Transformation organizers use to documents requests for service.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Is there anything that our offices should be using in terms of communicating with MOCS or with the NTI Office in terms of service requests, whether it's block cleaning or anything like that? Or is it just a phone call, is it a fax, is it on a form, is it not on a form, is it a blank sheet of paper,

stationery?

Do you have any particular way that you like to receive information?

MR. BLAKNEY: We have not developed anything to -- actually a tool to give to Council offices at this time, but that's something that we can definitely explore, and any such tool would be overseen by the Neighborhood Transformation Office.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, then what I would like to request, similar to reports that we receive on a regular basis from the Streets Department and L&I -- we get at a minimum, I believe, a monthly update on work done by those agencies, whether it's street repavings. If you check with Streets Commissioner Johnson, I think I get almost a weekly report of activities in the district from the Streets Department, L&I gives you an update on demolitions, clean-and-seals, and a wide variety of their activities.

What I would like to request is a monthly report showing service requests or services performed by the NTI Office, and your internal form indicates that you're asking not only for Councilmatic District information, but also census

tract designation. So it would seem that you'd be able to computerize it in such a way that you would be able to give us a district-by-district breakdown.

MR. BLAKNEY: Right, it's already computerized in that fashion. We can actually provide you with the service requests in your Councilmatic District to date.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. From when to when?

MR. BLAKNEY: I can't give you the actual day, but we began using the form in July of last year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So you could give us from July to date by district all of the requests that have either been received or actions performed?

MR. BLAKNEY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. If you could provide that to us through the Chair, I'd appreciate it.

Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam

Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I want to thank you for providing us information on some of the questions that we asked the last time you were here, and I noted that it said that in my district, there are approximately 46 vacant lots of which MOCS has responsibility to arrange caretakers.

How many of those lots have been adopted? And do we first offer the lots to the adjacent property owner for purchase before asking if they're interested in being a caretaker?

MS. SMITH: There are sort of, like, two programs.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: If it's not City-owned, we can't do that.

MS. SMITH: Right.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: However, is it with the understanding if you're going to be the caretaker, that the City will start to implement the necessary steps for the acquisition of that lot?

MS. SMITH: It really depends on the interest of the individual. Not everyone wants to end up with the legal title to the lot.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I understand that.

MS. SMITH: But, yes, we want to move to the point where we initiate the acquisition, like, through the Small Vacant Lot Abatement Program, if the property is eligible under that program. And under that program, it does speak to the adjacent owners. You know, we have very clearly set out policies and procedures.

What we're finding is that the number of requests so far, at this point in time, has outstripped our capacity to process all of them. We are -- I can get you a report on the number of small vacant lot applications that we've received and the status on that. We're looking at that.

But we will be honest in that the number of requests for title, to start through the abatement process, is -- far exceeds kind of like our ability to mush it through, and that's one of the things we're focusing on, how we can expedite some of those applications.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And once the people acquire the lot, naturally, they have to pay taxes on the lot.

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MS. SMITH: Once they get title to it.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And I see that in one block, apparently there are eight lots that were cleaned, and maybe that's something that NTI should be looking at. If we have eight lots in one block, there should be some program for that block.

MS. SMITH: With this -- with respect to when we have large parcels and they're not in public ownership, we are doing things to -- that's something that you may not give away as a side yard, under the Side Yard Program.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I understand that, but many of them are not adjacent to each other. You can one at one end of the block and then another at the other end. I'll talk to you about that privately.

MS. SMITH: Mm-hmm.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are there any other questions from members of the committee?

The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning.

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When I was up speaking to the Council President, I apologize if this question was answered. I think during the questioning round with Councilman Nutter, someone made mention of the fact that some of the people who are hired to do some of the lot cleanups are the -- their names are being submitted from community-activist groups or community organizations; is that correct?

MR. CONWAY: Yes, that is correct.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: How does a community organization know to contact your department?

MR. CONWAY: Well, basically, we work with the Mayor's Office of Community Services on that, doing outreach in the areas where we'll be cleaning the lots up prior to that. It's the same type of concept that used for the Anti-Graffiti Network where we try to get as many community activists as possible involved in the process.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Is there a specific number of individuals who you look to retain in a particular neighborhood, or does it depend on the volume of work or a combination of both?

MR. CONWAY: Well, basically, it depends

on the lot, what's on a lot, per say. All of the lots were categorized in three different areas. One was a heavy short-dump lot; the other two was just maybe a medium-sized lot with debris on it, little amounts of debris, where we just use workers; and the other lot is just a small lot that just needs to be raked and the grass cut.

What we do attempt to do is definitely put them back in their own communities, so they know the area, they know the civic groups, the block captains so that they can all work together.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: That's a good idea, but are these people the ones that eventually become your part-time employees, or is it just for that lot, or lots, and then -- is it that temporary or is it a year temporary job?

MR. CONWAY: It's a year temporary job

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Is there any attempt to notify the District Councilperson about the need for X-amount of employees in that district, or do you just go right to the community groups?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman, I would think that you are a community activist, so

why wouldn't you be --

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Well, that's my -- I've resigned from being the president of the two nonprofit that I created a few years ago, and I do appreciate the work that you do, Tom, and you know that.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: But I think Councilmembers are community activists, too.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Well, I would agree. So I'm just curious as to whether or not -- I mean, the Italian Market Civic Association-I'll just use that as an example -- was the group that I founded. I don't know if they've ever been contacted about this. My guess is, they were not, and I'm not suggesting it for any specific reason.

But how would they know? I mean, is there a notification that goes out, or how does a community group, notwithstanding what I think the Councilpeople should know, how does a community group know that you're coming into their neighborhood to clean up a certain number of lots and that you will accept names of individuals from that community to participate in the lot cleanup as employees? How do we get to that?

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MR. CONWAY: Well, the 80 temporary employees, approximately 80 temporary employees that we have now have been on board for the last, I guess, seven months, and I guess we can do a better job at outreach to the various Councilmembers to see if they have a list of names of people that they need to be hired temporarily.

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: You know what my concern is? I'm a politician, and I don't have a problem with that. But, you know, a year out from an election, a year and a half out, I'm under attack, and a lot of people in this room may be under attack from opposition; that's the political process and I understand that.

But as an example, without mentioning names, I know an individual who is funding, or will be funding, someone to be running against me, who is also -- the person who's funding someone is also the president of the community group. My guess is that as the president of that community group, he's going to try to access you folks to make sure he puts on 10, 15, 20 people in my district to work in my neighborhoods -- my neighborhoods being the district that I represent -- and get some political

mileage out of it.

And I don't want to turn this thing into a political football, but the reality is, that can happen, and I know it will happen.

And I'm not suggesting that I need it all; I just want to be a part of that process. I'm elected to represent these folks until 2003. Whether I get reelected or not, you know, who knows? I'll worry about it at that time.

But it's already happening in my neighborhood, a couple of weeks ago with some meetings that were taking place and which were basically a setup to attack me, and that I don't do anything in a particular neighborhood in my district, that I'm some sort of a ghost, as they claim.

So I have to be sensitive to that. I mean, that's the political world that I live in -- I don't want to drag you into it, but you get dragged into it anyway. You understand what I'm saying?

So I would think that it would be important that the District Councilpeople are given notification that, as Councilman Nutter, I think,

pointed out, that, hey, you're going to be coming into the community and you have a need for a number of people, 'cause I get applications all week long for full-time jobs, part-time jobs, you name it, and I don't pick and choose individuals who I may be able to assist in seeking employment by the neighborhood that they live in; I just want to see if I can help people in general.

And I get that information from ward leaders, community people, community groups. So we're kind of like this central nerve system, this bank anyway, so I think it might actually even make your job easier, and it would cause us probably less aggravation, and we won't take that out on you in the end and say, Why did you give so-and-so five jobs.

You know, we're getting close, we're a year out -- actually less than a year out. And, again, I can't help but speak that way because it is a reality of where we find ourselves in, unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on how you look at it, and I just want to make sure that I'm a part of that process.

And, again, I do thank you for all of

the work that you do, you've done a great job in my district, I've never had any complaints. Tom, I call Tom up about removing posters and things like that all the time you. And guys get out there and ladies get out there and you do the job. So I'm not criticizing you; I'm just asking you for cooperation and a level of cooperation that I think will make all of our days a lot easier.

thank you.

Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Based on the fact that it sounds like there's going to be more information flowing, we're talking about the District Council -- the distribution of District Councilpeople, I'd appreciate you sending to this at-large member everything you have, and I'll tell you what I don't want, okay?

MS. SMITH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So representing the entire City, I want to be aware of what's going on in every neighborhood, and don't perceive it to be a burden.

And also publicly, I'd like to express my condolences, Mr. Blakney, in reference to the loss of your dad.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Are there any other questions from members of the Committee?

(No further questions.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm sure all Councilmembers offer their deepest sympathy on your

loss. We're sorry.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you, Madam President.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I wanted to reiterate my sympathy as well, and certainly to thank the MOCS Office for what they do -- I see Joanne Kilabrew (ph) and Marty Cabry (ph), who work hard in our area.

And certainly with regard to employees, we've had this discussion in our meetings with the Administration on NTI and, obviously, we agree that it's less complicated when the issues, the controversial issues or choice issues come through the District Councilperson. It just makes life easier for everybody and then, obviously, doesn't put them in a position to have to make a political statement that we're happy to make.

So, again, we want to say thank you and thanks for the work that you do.

MR. BLAKNEY: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Are there any other questions from

members of the committee?

(No further questions.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you all so very much.

The next group to testify?

MR. MCPHERSON: Fairmount Park Commission.

(Witnesses come forward.)

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good morning.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning, Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Please identify yourself for the record. Thank you.

MR. MIFFLIN: My name's William Mifflin, the Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission. I'm accompanied here this morning by Mr. Paul Nice, Deputy Director of the Fairmount Park Commission; Mr. Dennis Waller, Deputy Director for the Fairmount Park Commission; Mr. Mark Focht, who is the Project Administrator for the Natural Land Restoration Program in Fairmount Park.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much. I assume that we will take questions, and

then you will field answers; I assume you have no specific testimony.

MR. MIFFLIN: That's correct.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you.

Councilman Nutter, you had questions for Mr. Mifflin?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes, thank you.

Two primary things: Thank you for coming back.

MR. MIFFLIN: You're welcome.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Good morning, Mr. Mifflin.

MR. MIFFLIN: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I had a faint recollection that a question had been asked, and I subsequently confirmed from the notes of testimony that Councilman Rizzo had asked a question -- it's on Page 1066 of the testimony from when you were here with regard to the Environmental Education Centers and some staffing issues.

Now, I had a faint recollection about it, but as you may recall that day, there were a wide variety of topics that were discussed.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But it was in the back of my mind and it got beyond me, although I knew that Councilman Rizzo had done a very good job at asking questions about it and I knew that you had given an answer.

Subsequent to that, I have received a couple letters about this particular issue, which then, when I received those letters, reminded me that something had come up about this issue, but I was not crystal-clear on it at that particular time.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I need to get a better understanding and also remove any confusion, which I may be the only person confused about this, the distinction between the five volunteer coordinators, which, I know, for the most part, as soon as we pass this budget, I think that will be resolved, but those people are not the same as these other staff at the Environmental Education Centers.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And so the solving of the volunteer-coordinator problem has nothing to

do with environmental objection; is that correct?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. Can you go back for a moment to how many Environmental Education Centers are we talking about, how many workers, what do they do, and what does it mean for them not to be funded?

MR. MIFFLIN: Okay, I'm going to ask Mark Focht, the Project Administrator, to assist in that question, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

MR. FOCHT: Good morning. Mark Focht, Program Administrator, Natural Land Restoration and Environmental Education Program.

Councilman, there are three Environmental Education Centers in the Park: Cobbs Creek, Wissahickon, and Pennypack. Currently, there are five environmental-educator positions funded through the program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Five?

MR. FOCHT: Correct, five positions.

There are two environmental educators currently based at Wissahickon, two based at Cobbs Creek, and one based at Pennypack. To complement,

there's one City-funded environmental educator at Pennypack also.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And do these people also have supervisors?

MR. FOCHT: The positions all report to the director, the Park's director of Environmental Education and myself, jointly

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And those are City-funded positions?

MR. FOCHT: The Director of Environmental Education is City funded; my position is grant-funded.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. I was left with the impression from somewhere in the testimony that there were upwards of eight or nine positions in question, not five.

MR. FOCHT: Correct. There are nine positions in question. We have the five environmental educators, then there are four administrative assistants, one at each of the centers -- in Pennypack, Wissahickon, and Cobbs; and one administrative assistant for the Environmental Education Division. Those four positions are all grant-funded.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So one admin. assistant at each of the three centers?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And one --

MR. FOCHT: For the Division.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So it's not just five positions we're talking about; there are actually nine positions we're talking about.

MR. FOCHT: There's nine positions in the Environmental Education Division that are currently funded by the grant, correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, let me just -- let's do a little bit of the history here. The original proposal was to have these centers -- let me step back for a second. These centers existed before the William Penn Grant; is that correct?

MR. FOCHT: Two of them did -- Pennypack and the Wissahickon -- and the Cobbs Creek Center has been opened -- was just opened that past fall.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right, but Cobbs Creek didn't open soley as a result of the William Penn Grant, right?

MR. FOCHT: Correct, correct.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So I'm not discounting at all the support from the William Peen Foundation for Cobbs Creek, but Cobbs Creek pretty much, for all intents and purposes, was going to happen?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right? Okay. All right, so we have these three centers. The William Penn Grant comes along, we then fund these new positions.

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And we funded these positions because we thought that environmental education was important?

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what was the proposal at the time of the grant -- I mean, I understand that things often become even more important when you have grant funding for them, but you don't necessarily expect them to then go away, so you get them started with the grant, and then you expect to continue the program -- I mean, we've had this back and forth and kind of the up and down with the Rangers Program, for instance but, I mean,

no one thought that the rangers were going to be a kind of a one-time thing or a five-year thing or a ten-year thing, however long it's been, and then it would just go away. I mean, generally, you try to keep the good ideas, right?

So what was the original proposal to have these environmental educators or the admin. assistants stay in their positions?

MR. FOCHT: Our approach to this, Councilman, from the inception of the grant, has been to try and sustain the positions through a combination of public and private funding. And as part of that, in the recent application to the William Peen Foundation for what we consider the next phase of the program, we requested funding from William Penn to continue the positions.

We also requested funding in the Park's FY '03 operating budget for three environmental educator positions.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what happened?

MR. FOCHT: (Addressing Mr. Mifflin.) You want to address that?

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm. Sure.

The William Penn Foundation, in

February, decided not to continue the funding of the environmental educators; that would be the nine positions that we spoke of earlier.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And on the City side?

MR. MIFFLIN: And in addition, on the City side, we were not able to successfully parlay those into our FY '03 Operating Budget.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Back at the time of the start of the grant, was the concept here that over the five years, we would try to figure out a way to have these people transitioned from grant-funded positions to full-time public-employee positions? I mean, was that a part of the strategy?

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, I think the strategy was that once the program started, we would, you know, make every attempt to keep them in place from a number of different partnerships and funding sources. And we're still hopeful, here in March, that to some extent, that will continue.

I think we've learned a lot since we've -- since we've began this program in finding folks who can support the program in a number of

ways and other organizations. And on February 27th at my operating testimony, I did speak to some of the initiatives that we have underway.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I read through that. I guess what I'm not so clear on -- and, again, Councilman Rizzo raised the question at that time. He said back then -- naturally, this is February -- "June 30th is coming."

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We're now, you know, three weeks later, I think, and June is still coming.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is the game plan for -- I mean, let me -- I mean, in the worst-case scenario, where nothing happens and positions go away, what happens to environmental education at those locations? Let's start with that scenario first.

MR. FOCHT: At Pennypack Environmental Center, there is a City-funded staff position, a nature specialist, who is at that facility so that facility would remain open and continue to offer programs to a lesser extent than it does now with

its staffing levels, but it would remain open and offer programs.

Cobbs Creek --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand that and -- okay, you tell me what's going on at each place, I'm sorry.

MR. FOCHT: Cobbs Creek has staffing through the nonprofit tenant organizers of the building; the Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Education Center, Inc. would continue to offer programming with their own staffs through the center as a lessee.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: As a what?

MR. FOCHT: A Lessee.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: A lessee, okay.

MR. FOCHT: And at the Wissahickon Environmental Center, there's been some discussion of the Environmental Education Division's director, Debbie Carr, who used to work out of the Wissahickon Center, moving back to the Wissahickon Center in order to offer programming out of that facility.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where is she now?

MR. FOCHT: She's currently in the Case

Building.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, let me ask this question; I mean, you alluded to it when you started. I mean, whatever their current staffing levels are at the various centers, Cobbs Creek basically loses three people, the Pennypack loses two, the Wissahickon loses three. I mean, how do they provide the level of service from those particular centers with three fewer people?

MR. FOCHT: They couldn't provide the same level of services.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, then, I guess, from a Park perspective or a City perspective, is environmental education important?

MR. MIFFLIN: From the Park's perspective, I can answer the question as, yes, I'm very committed to environmental education.

I think what you have here is a series of events which have unfolded recently that has placed the Park Commission's ability to continue at the same level as a real challenge. As we were nearing the completion of the five-year grant, we, as Mr. Focht had indicated, had a certain level of expectation that the William Penn Foundation would

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in fact continue to fund, among other initiatives of the original grant, environmental education.

When they chose not to -- and, again, we were informed of that in February -- we have strategized as to how we can continue to meet our goal of environmental education.

Last year, we served 53,000 people through environmental- education outreach programs and educational programs that this expanded staff has been providing. We've always had a commitment to environmental education, as we think that it's, in the long run, going to help improve the Park.

Some of the strategies that I alluded to on February 27th, none of which I can sit here this morning, Councilman, and say that they will absolutely occur, and we are mindful of the deadline, and we are working expeditiously -- include partnershipping with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resource, who had indicated in a number of ways -- most recently on March 6th, signing a memorandum of understanding in partnership with the U.S. Department of Forestry that they will commit resources to Philadelphia in environmental education.

So it is examples like this, funding support from the recently-established Fairmount Park Commission Conservancy, which has identified environmental education as one of their primary goals. So we have a number of sort of irons in the fire.

As I said on February 27th, my goal is to maintain at least the level of commitment of 53,000 people for FY '03, and that's what I keep my eyes on. And the full funding of the Park Ranger Program as an example, many of our rangers have been trained in conservation and in environmental education, so I see a role for our Park Ranger Program.

So it's most likely going to come down to a series of programs and partnerships that will provide the ongoing commitment.

It's not unreasonable and certainly the William Penn Foundation can speak for themselves, but it's not unreasonable to expect that they won't receive requests for funding of environmental education in Fairmount Park either directly from Fairmount Park or from some of the Friends groups as well.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. Well, I understand that and, I mean, obviously, the Foundation has a process that they go through. I guess what I'm trying to understand is -- I mean, by your own testimony back on the 27th, you indicated that these people were hired with a full understanding that this grant was for a five-year period. Is this the total number of people who were brought on at the time of the grant, the nine people?

MR. FOCHT: Councilman, are you speaking specifically about environmental education?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes.

MR. FOCHT: They were brought in -- they were brought on board over a series of almost a year and a half, as we built the program.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I guess what I'm trying to figure out is, again, knowing that there was a five-year grant and knowing that you cannot count, no matter how well the program is going on, extensions of funding, was there an attempt over that five-year period of time to transition some of these people from grant-funded positions to City-funded positions such that --

I mean, maybe the math just kind of works out this way, but it's nine positions, it's a five-year grant. If you brought along two people every year transitioned from grant funded status to City-funded status, all of these people would be working as City employees by the start of the next fiscal year, and as the grant ends, you still have nine people on the payroll.

Was that ever done? Or attempted? Obviously, it wasn't done. I mean, I understand why you're not getting nine people on the payroll in your FY '03 budget. I mean, as -- I mean, I tease him often but, I mean, as difficult as Rob Dubow can be, I mean, I'd understand why he wouldn't approve nine people in one fiscal year for Fairmount Park. I mean, nobody's going to do that.

But I think to some extent, if you nickel and dime them every year or so with two people here or one person there or something, I mean, he might not even notice.

MR. NICE: My name is Paul Nice, Deputy Director.

Our primary focus was on the volunteer coordinators trying to get those hired over the

last few years. But as little as three years ago, and it could have been four even, we hired a consultant through the grant to look at the possibility of making the Environmental Centers self-sustaining so we could continue with, as we brought those people on, after the end of the grant, to continue providing, you know, those programs through self-staining educational programs, charging some minimal fees and applying for grants and doing that.

We spent quite a bit of time with the consultant and we have a report that they've produced and --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And the result is...?

MR. NICE: Well, it got into basically building the other -- well, part of it was building the other environmental centers and how much revenue the total all these centers could generate in charging for the programs and --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But that didn't happen.

MR. NICE: That did not happen, no, sir. But we did spend a lot of time looking at and

trying to explore that aspect first.

And the last thing we've done is this last budget, knowing that there could be a possibility of losing the grant funding, 'cause we hadn't requested an extension, was to try and get some of the positions hired for '03, and that request, as the director has explained, was not --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many volunteer coordinators were there ever? What was the total number of volunteer coordinators that ever existed? Was it this five?

MR. FOCHT: It was the five positions, yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, and that just happened this year, right? Are we funding the five this year for the first time, or were they funded last year?

MR. FOCHT: No, beginning Fiscal Year '03, July 1.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The five?

MR. FOCHT: The five, correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, the testimony earlier was that you've spent your time over the past few years trying to get the five on. Are you

saying that in the past years, you were not successful and that for this upcoming budget, this is the result of that multi-year effort?

MR. FOCHT: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So your real problem is, you were trying to get the five at the same time that people were talking about the nine, and there was no way in the world that you were going to get fourteen, so then you had to apparently make a strategic decision of which group is -- I don't want to say "more important," but, I mean, you had to make a priority decision about these groups.

You chose volunteer coordinators; is that right?

MR. FOCHT: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MR. FOCHT: And also, there are actually 23 staff positions funded by the grant, and ideally, we would want to institutionalize all 23. So it wasn't just 14; we are looking at 23, prioritized the 5 volunteer coordinators, and took several cycles to achieve that funding.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, of the 23, how

many actually have, or will, transition from grant-funded positions to public positions?

MR. FOCHT: The five volunteer coordinators.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The 5 out of 23?

MR. FOCHT: Out of 23.

The William Penn Foundation will fund 9 others, 9 of the 23 positions for the next fiscal year, and then the 9 environmental-education positions that we're talking about today are the ones we do not have funding for. That totals 23.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What are the other 9?

MR. FOCHT: The other 9 are 4 field supervisors that support the volunteer coordinators, a natural land restoration manager and project coordinator, 2 positions that run all of our contract restoration projects, and --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, is this being funded through Now Reap or through the Conservancy? 'cause, again, I was under the impression that June 30th --

MR. FOCHT: It's money from the William Penn Foundation through the Conservancy to fund Now

Reap.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And that starts up in the next fiscal year?

MR. FOCHT: July 1, correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So the bottom line of all of this is, as we speak at least, there is no certainty with regard to the nine positions at the three Environmental Education Centers.

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And between now and the end of the fiscal year, you're seeking, through various partnerships, to see how you're going to be able to serve, in essence, the same number of people that you're currently serving in environmental education, notwithstanding the fact that you might be a total of nine positions down.

MR. FOCHT: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: When do you think you'll have an answer to what the future's going to be?

MR. FOCHT: Middle to the end of May, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Middle to the end of

May, all right. And you're going to keep the various centers informed and updated as to what's going on?

MR. FOCHT: Correct. I have all along.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I appreciate your testimony and thank you very much.

MR. FOCHT: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much.

Are there any further questions?

(No further questions.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you Fairmount Park, thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I do have one last question. I apologize.

The tree removal, there still seems to be a lingering commitment at some level by some of the staff to send letters to constituents after they've made a request to have a tree removed, or they believe that a tree is either diseased, dead, or dying.

I still get copies of letters that, without quoting them verbatim, basically say, We came out, we looked at your tree. Yes, your tree

is dead. We will put it on a list, but it would either quicker or easier for you to take it down yourself, but we'll still put it on the list if you want us to.

I mean, that's kind of a very lose translation of what those letters say.

MR. MIFFLIN: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, I mean, we've -- notwithstanding what some people say or think, and I will say it, including your friend Mr. Trentonberg (ph), we actually do work together on a variety of issues, and this was one of them, restoring the responsibility with funding to the Fairmount Park for street-tree maintenance and removal. And, obviously, there's more of it that can now be done because of additional funds that have been made available. Even prior to the creation of NTI.

I'm well aware that the demand will always, in the short term here, because of the backlog, outstrip available resources. On the other hand, we have more money than we've ever had available, and so I guess I have a two-part question:

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One, why do we keep sending those letters? Two, does anyone ever get a letter that actually says, Your tree is dead and we're going to remove it on "X-Y-Z" date because we actually have the money to do it? Why do we keep telling people, You can go on the list, but the easiest thing to do is to take care of it yourself?

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I appreciate the fact that you're paraphrasing from those letters.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: It's a very loose paraphrase.

MR. MIFFLIN: I know we work very closely together, Councilman with your office and with really all of the Council District and large offices. And street trees, particularly the removal of trees, is a high priority with the City Council, and I think the Administration has responded to that, as you've indicated.

And I testified again on February 27th that it would appear that we have about a two-year backlog, given our resources, of removing trees, but those that we consider to be dead and dangerous trees. So at a minimum, we could tell a resident that it could take as long as two years to remove

your tree. Sometimes that's a pretty difficult thing for a resident to hear, you know, so it's -- we try our best to, you know, break it to them softly, if you will.

The problem is -- and you're very aware of this -- it's not a static list.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. MIFFLIN: We may discover a tree, you know, next month, quite frankly, that should be done immediately, which means that a tree, you know, that is not as serious, you know, will have to wait.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I mean, there's dead and then there's dead and then there's significantly dangerous.

MR. MIFFLIN: You're absolutely right.

And we hope that towards the end of that two-year period, we're removing trees that their roots have uplifted the sidewalk and are causing, you know, significant hazardous conditions, tripping hazards. But yet our priority is not that; our priority is still the dead one.

So, look, I will investigate the specific language of these letters. We've gone

through an evolution of what we should say and --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. MIFFLIN: You know, I don't want to be ambiguous. We do -- but yet it's difficult sometimes to be specific, and sometimes the truth is inflammatory to a resident who says, I'm going to have to wait 24 months before anyone shows up, and this is a dead tree.

We put that language in there that, you know, if they -- if they wish to take action themselves -- and, again, I don't know the exact wording, but, you know, if they wish to take action by hiring a qualified contractor, we will certainly assist them in that matter.

When we do know that a tree is on a list, let's say, again, and all District Council folks send us their list, we will them, This tree is scheduled for Fiscal '03. And as an example, we try to be specific perhaps to what quarter in that fiscal year.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

MR. MIFFLIN: So when a new one comes in, it's really difficult, but I will personally look at the language going out in these letters.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And I would be glad to work with you on that. I just think that, one, whatever we say in the letters, we should acknowledge ultimately that whether it was the old law, the new law or any other law, we have the responsibility.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm. What's the term, we have "exclusive" responsibility.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

Second, as I indicated and you well know, one, I'm not an arborist, but I've had a little experience with trees over the years. I mean, some trees, yes, they are dead and may not be a particular danger; others are.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And in a somewhat similar fashion to the system that L&I tries to utilize again, I mean, there's a dangerous building, there is an imminently dangerous building, and then there's just kind of your raggedy, ugly building, but it's not going anywhere.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I think our number-

one priority certainly needs to be on trees that are a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of people, that can fall on somebody, fall on a house, fall on a car coming down the street. And I don't know if the arborists can make distinctions between and among those kinds of trees.

But I think ultimately, if someone goes out and makes a determination that this tree is not only dead, but it is a serious danger to someone, we've got to deal with that.

MR. MIFFLIN: Councilman, no question. If need be, if it's that imminent, our own Fairmount Park arborist will take action within a 24-hour period.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I just want to make sure that we're conveying accurate information to people.

MR. MIFFLIN: Sure.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And leaving them with the impression -- I wrote to these people, they now tell me that I have a dead tree in front of me. I understand it's harsh information, and sometimes we all have to deliver not-so-pleasant information, we don't always get to be in the

happy-new business.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Because sometimes it is going to take a while. And if ultimately the person decides to do something else, obviously, that's their business.

But also I don't want to leave them with the impression that their government has somehow abandoned them. They've got this monstrous thing in front of their house and that the next time the wind blows, it's going to come crashing through their living room or bedroom window.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm. Well, two works quick responses. One, our arborists are all certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and can make determinations as to the seriousness of the deterioration of that tree, and they have the liberty to modify the list and reorganize priorities. That's number one.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MR. MIFFLIN: And, number two, let me work on a draft of a letter, and I will send it for your review and see if you can wordsmith something that we can both feel more comfortable with.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

And I am absolutely finished.

MR. MIFFLIN: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You're welcome.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Rizzo.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Likewise, Mr. Mifflin, that is one of the toughest letters that I have to forward to my constituents because it is the most vague. They don't have a clue sometimes what that means. And there's some people I don't even send it to; I just rework the response because I know they're going to go nuts when they see that they've been put on the list. I'm glad we're not plumbers and telling people, you know, you're on the list. So they understand that.

But I want to go back. I took some notes and these may not be in the order that they should be presented, but after coming from the utility industry, I think also what we need to do -- and I believe the Public Utility Commission

and Fairmount Park Commission, if PECO Energy or a utility company throughout the Commonwealth prunes, trims trees on a particular electric circuit and that tree dies, that's the responsibility of the utility company; who touches it last is responsible for its removal in the event it dies. We're all aware of that, right?

MR. MIFFLIN: You're aware of it. I'd like to believe that that's the existing policy, but I think this body may benefit from asking PECO Energy Company to come down and testify as to their existing policy.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I think really they should be brought before the Fairmount Park Commission since it's the responsibility of Fairmount Park to trim the trees.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And if you're trimming trees that -- if they're removing trees that they're responsible for because they had some direct or indirect involvement in the death of that tree, that they should be brought into the Commission and, on the record, state what their responsibility is, and also have the Law Department

do some research on exactly who touches it last, who touches it last, trims it last, that's the responsible party to remove it. That was a policy at one time.

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I would hope that we're holding their feet to the fire on that.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We try to do our best.

I'll say to you, I'll testify this morning that if we can determine a direct cause and effect between what PECO Energy Company would have most recently performed on a tree and its immediate demise, I feel fairly comfortable that PECO Energy Company would take responsibility for that tree.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And, again, not being -- I want to be very, very objective here. Some of the work that I have seen lately with the utility companies -- and I don't want to single out PECO. Exelon, PP&L -- they are getting away with more today, and I don't know whether I stated this before, it's a lack of oversight, it's a lack of supervision, but their job, those contractors are basically said, Go in there and do what you can do,

take as much out as you can, because it saves the company money because they don't have to go back on their cycle.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I believe they're getting away with a little more than they should be getting away with because, as you know, down in South Philadelphia -- was it Queen Village?

MR. MIFFLIN: Bella Vista.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Bella Vista, that was a disgrace what occurred there.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I can't imagine any Fairmount Park oversight allowing that. It's tough to go back and put the limbs back after they've been cut, but to see the pictures and to visit that personally, it's --

MR. MIFFLIN: Yes, and I did as well.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I think you'll agree that that should never have occurred.

MR. MIFFLIN: I concur that it should not have, and it was brought to their attention.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Now, I want to go back to step two. We take down the tree. Would

you, for the record, so I understand, what are we doing with the stumps now?

MR. MIFFLIN: When we take down the tree through our contractual services, which comes to about 98 percent of the street-tree removal, the contractor -- Phase 2 or Phase 3, depending upon the size of the tree -- is responsible for removing the stump. So the 4,000 trees that we're predicting that we're removing annually will include the removal of the stump.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: All right. Now I want to hear about your green plan. If you take a tree out and you remove the stump, are we ever going to see -- is there anywhere in the plan -- are we ever going to see a tree there again and the right specie?

MR. MIFFLIN: I can certainly answer the second part more easily than I can the first part of that question.

With regards to the appropriate specie, you know, our research and our information today is much greater than it was 10 or to years ago, and I think the quick answer to that is yes, we will spend a great deal of research on this field most

recently, and we think we have the right type of tree and specie of tree that will be replaced.

And, you know, here's where it gets a little complicated, not terribly. With the money that we have available to us to remove the 4,000 trees through the Managing Director's Office, there is not a requirement today to replace those trees.

So, in fact, if a tree is removed at, you know, 1234 Jump Street, we are not required to replace a tree in that particular location because with the limited funding, our approach is to remove the dead and dangerous trees. Let's eliminate the liability.

It's a five-year program. And in the back end of the five-year program is a much more aggressive tree-planting program. If we remove a tree through our Capital Budget -- and we remove a couple hundred years per year in Capital Budget -- we are required to replace each and every one of those trees. If we remove 250 trees, we replace 250 trees.

We do it at a maximum, if you will, within the same zip code. It is often not physically possible to replace a tree at the same

address that we have removed the tree, 'cause, you know, people have put in driveways, they have modified their sidewalk, and it's just not possible to do it. So we try to do it at the same location, try to do it at the next-door neighbor, we try to do it the third on the block face of that tree removal, and then lastly, we do it the same zip code.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You have a tree 123 Jump Street and the constituent calls my office and says, Look, you took out the tree, removed the stump, I want a tree

MR. MIFFLIN: Sure.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What do we do?

MR. MIFFLIN: That goes to the top of the list for tree-planting.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You said at the end, that's five years away so I don't think we want to be in a situation where in five years, we're going out there and aggressively removing trees and don't at least see some replacement other than the Capital Budget trees.

MR. MIFFLIN: Right. We do have other tree-planting initiatives with other -- I'm always

talking about partnerships, but with groups like the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and other -- they have their Tree Tenders Organizations who are planting trees. So we have reached out to other organizations to assist us in tree-planting.

I previously mentioned, I think, in response to Councilman Nutter this agreement that we originally executed with the U.S. Forest Service. Part of their agreement is to assist in, as they call it, their "Re-Leafing Programs," and so I think we're going to see street-tree plantings through the Forest Service as well.

So again, Councilman, you know, we're spending our money up front to remove trees. I have to tell you, in some locations people really, because they've had a bad experience with a tree, we have a tough time convincing them that they should replant.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I just want to nail you down here to the point where -- there are people -- let's talk about that universe that maybe wants a tree. You take one tree out in front of 123.

MR. MIFFLIN: Right.

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COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And a person wants a new tree where the old one was, exact same --

MR. MIFFLIN: They go to the top of the list for tree-planting, but that could take as long as 18 months to two years.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The final question, and I think it would be helpful if you would put this on the record. We get lots of calls that are basically requests for services that aren't what you do. We get requests for trees that are on private property.

MR. MIFFLIN: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We get a call from a constituent that says, I have a tree in my backyard, they hear about this tree-trimming. Could you, for the record, please explain what you do and what you don't do? because I believe this is being televised today so that people can understand that if a tree is on their property, but also, I would appreciate you talking about that dangerous tree that L&I involves itself with that will send a crew out to remove it and then bill the property owner.

So if you could just briefly explain the

process.

MR. MIFFLIN: The Fairmount Park Commission's authority is defined by the public right-of-way, and most of those trees are between the sidewalk and the curb. On occasion, we have trees that are planted behind the sidewalk, but still within that anywhere from 10 to, I think, as 15-foot right-of-way. That is the extent of our authority.

So unless it is within that right-of-way, we really do not have the authority to go on to private property. We get, as your office does, if you can only imagine timesing [sic] that by another 16, we get requests from elected City Council officials routinely for backyard, alleyway, side yard, abandoned property.

We will do our best to determine the owner of that property. If it is City-owned property -- sometimes the City has acquired the property through all of the mechanisms, you know, which the City has available for acquiring property. Now, with the NTI initiative, and there's a crew of arborists who are Fairmount Park Commission employees, funded through the Managing

Director's Office, we're now assigning them to remove these trees and at least remove the danger, if not the entire tree, and take appropriate action on City-owned property.

If, in fact, it's privately-owned property, we refer it to the Department of Licenses and Inspections, who have used the same contractors we do on the requirements contracts, and they will take appropriate action in removing the danger, and then do what they normally do with recovering costs for that service. I mean, their first attempt is to get the homeowner to take action as well.

And the same is true for alleyways. Alleyways are a joint responsibility of the abutting property owner.

So it's pretty clear that our responsibility right now ends now at the public right-of-way.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We've been talking about removals. If there's a street tree that's overhanging a property and has some big limbs, can we request a specific-location street tree not to be removed but at least trimmed if it's healthy?

MR. MIFFLIN: Is it in the public

right-of-way? Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So in other words, it's not one or -- you can specifically do a request --

MR. MIFFLIN: A pruning request, yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- that asks for a tree to be cut back and not removed.

MR. MIFFLIN: You can, yes.

Our estimates for '03 is that we will prune approximately 14,000 street trees. Now, before the additional money coming through the Managing Director's Office, we were doing about 6700 trees a year. So our ability to prune trees has more than doubled, so we have a much better response.

We prefer not to go and respond to one address. When we get the requests, we make the inspection, and then we attempt to do the entire block face.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'd be interested to know -- and if you don't know, you can let me know -- what's the specie of the tree that we're zooming in on here? What kind of a tree are we talking about for --

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MR. MIFFLIN: We have lots of favorites, not one particular tree. It really depends upon, you know, the location, a broad boulevard or avenue --

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Just let me know so if anyone ever asks the question, I'll be prepared to answer that.

MR. MIFFLIN: We can do better. We can send you a list of recommended street trees.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I would appreciate you following up with the utility (indiscernible) level --

MR. MIFFLIN: Sure.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- to find out exactly what their responsibility in all of this is because some of the aggressive pruning that I have seen to me has contributed to the demise of some of our street trees.

MR. MIFFLIN: I will do that.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: As long as it doesn't hurt my dividend. Just kidding.

Thank you, Bill.

MR. MIFFLIN: Thank you, Councilman.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr. Mifflin, I

would like the record to be crystal-clear. At one time, we hear that trees will be removed from alleyways, and I think I just heard you say that they will not. I thought that under the NTI Program, we were going to be removing alley trees.

MR. MIFFLIN: Council President, I did say that. I am not personally familiar with the details of what NTI will do with alleyway trees, so I may have, you know, misspoken.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I thought maybe I misunderstood you, but --

MR. MIFFLIN: Well, I am stating what has been, I guess, prior to NTI.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: But I thought that under NTI, that they would be removing alley trees. Are they or are they not; does anybody know?

MR. MIFFLIN: Councilwoman, I will have to get back to you with that answer. I'm personally not familiar with their position on alleyway trees.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I would appreciate it if you could do that.

MR. MIFFLIN: Certainly.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are there any other questions from members of the committee?

(No further questions.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: MOIS is next to testify.

Councilwoman Blackwell?

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, Madam President. I have to leave the chambers for a few moments, but I wanted to say that this morning, we were due to have Judge Seamus McCafferey in to discuss the whole issue of preliminary and misdemeanor cases being moved out of divisional courts to CJC. Apparently, Mr. McCafferey cannot come today, for whatever reason, but we would like to request for the record that we defer judgment on the whole issue of the courts until we can get him in.

We have written to the President Judge, asking -- because rumor had it that a discussion would be made, that a vote had not been made from the judges on whether or not that would formally happen, even though Judge McCafferey, as administrative judge, made the decision that it had to be voted on among the judges.

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So we have contacted the President Judge and asked that no decision be made until we had the chance to discuss it.

There's an article in today's paper that talks about another $1.8 billion. So we don't know ultimately in Council how that could affect our budget, and so we think that it's worthy of discussion.

So I would like to put on the record and request again that the judge contact your office so that we can schedule a date before we pass the budget to have this discussion.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilwoman, as I spoke to you earlier this morning, I would like you to communicate me as to a date that you would like to see this public hearing scheduled. I know that our calendars are quite heavy; however, we will make every effort to accommodate both the judge and, I believe, the district attorney to testify at the same time.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you.

And I may also note that we've also been in touch with the Police Commissioner, who supports our point of view. So, certainly, we will do that,

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we'll be in touch with you and with the judge.

And Thank you very much.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

(Witnesses come forward.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

MS. NEFF: Good morning.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you for your patience.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, good morning --

MS. NEFF: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- Miss Neff and Mr. Bortnick.

Again, similar to the previous departments that testified, I know -- I think you were here all on the same day and I did not have an opportunity to ask some questions or as many as I would have liked, and I appreciate your returning.

Let me ask a couple general questions. The program that is either being implemented, or is soon to be implemented, I think it's called the "Customer Information Work Management System"?

MS. NEFF: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Can you give me a little bit of the history or genesis of that particular project? Where did it come from, how did it get started?

MS. NEFF: Certainly. For the record, my name is Diana Neff, I'm the Chief Information Officer

The Customer Information Work Management System came from a couple of issues. One, I had four departments come to me for requests to have four different work management systems.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who were they?

MS. NEFF: They were Streets, the Water Department, L&I and Public Property, Recreation -- I think those -- was it -- it was five. So those were the five departments.

The other was that the Mayor, as a part of his e-government program, was looking and asked me to take a look at a customer-centric interface, or a system that would allow the public to call in to take complaints that we would be able to feed in and more effectively take those service requests and be able to process them in a timely manner. So taking the --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry, say that again. Citizens would call in and do what?

MS. NEFF: Currently now in the City, you have to know where to go to place the call for the type of work that you need to have done, whether that's in Streets for sanitation or if it's a pothole or if it's, you know, an inspection and so forth.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: It's good to know who you want to talk to.

MS. NEFF: We'd like to have a single face of government to the public so that you would be able to call in and be able to then have that information directed to the appropriate division, department, and that we'd be able to feed that information back into our work management systems because of the efficiencies.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, how is it done now?

MS. NEFF: They can come in through a variety of ways. If they come in through the Mayor's Action Center, a piece of paper is sent, then that has to be entered into the system. They -- some places do it manually, and they cut a

manual work order. It varies, it's all over the board

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, did you say earlier that Streets, Water, L&I and Public Property came and asked for this computer information work management system?

MS. NEFF: They all came in and asked for a separate work order management system. They each had a vendor that they had as a preference.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All different vendors?

MS. NEFF: All different vendors.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And you arrived sometime last fall or last spring?

MS. NEFF: Last May.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last May, okay. And so upon your arrival, you've got all of these departments, and they have their separate ideas or requests or vendors. And what happened then?

MS. NEFF: Then I took a look at what the costs would be to maintain and support five different work management systems and looked at some of the best industry practices which said that if you truly want to reduce your cost in supporting

these systems, you should look at, are there a commonality between the needs, and if so, to look at a consistent work management system that could be used across multiple departments.

So basing it on the need for looking at citywide applications, we brought on a certified project -- or a software engineer to work with the departments to collect all of their need requirements. And what we found was that there was 85 percent commonality between the requirements on the various modules for the systems.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mm-hmm. Who was the software engineer?

MS. NEFF: Jeanette Foxworth.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And Miss Foxworth was hired to --

MS. NEFF: To work with the different departments. We've pulled together representatives from all of the different departments to do their needs requirements -- we call them "joint application definitions," but they're needs requirements, to then meet with them and diagram the as-is, what we're doing today, and then to put together the RFP, which is out on the streets right

now, which actually closes today.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, the RFP close today.

MS. NEFF: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And when you decided to go out and get a software engineer, I mean, I wouldn't know where to go look for a software engineer. I mean, what do you do, what's the process, and how do you decide who you're going to bring on, and what are they told in terms of what the job is going to be?

MS. NEFF: There are actually certain skills for that classification. There's actual certification as a software engineer. I needed somebody that was highly trained in process management that could come in and look at -- be able to audit existing systems, and then work with the different departments.

So I defined the criteria, and then I went to different placement companies that specialize in IT resources to find an individual that could meet those requirements.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: During this time period, was there contact with the -- you mentioned

four, but a little while ago, you said five departments, and maybe I missed one. I have Street, Water, L&I, and Public Property; was there a fifth?

MS. NEFF: And recreation, although it wasn't a part of the first group, but certainly --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, you were trying to figure out who your software engineer was going to be. Was there contact with the various departments, again, with regard the what their needs were or what they are looking at in terms of IT systems and getting input from them with regard to a software engineer, or was that a sole decision of yours?

MS. NEFF: That was a sole division of mine.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And how did you end up deciding which software engineer to bring on?

MS. NEFF: Reviewed resumes, talked on the telephone to some, and brought in others in for interviews.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And these all came through the -- you mentioned something earlier

about the IT companies or placement people or something?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And who recommended Miss Foxworth?

MS. NEFF: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who recommended Miss Foxworth?

MS. NEFF: As an initial person?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes.

MS. NEFF: Janice Davis had worked with Miss Foxworth in another organization, so when she was aware that I was looking for a software engineer, she passed her resume to me, and then Staff Masters was the company that I processed Miss Foxworth through.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So you're talking about Miss Davis, the Finance Director?

MS. NEFF: Correct. Miss Davis sits on the IT Governing Board, along with Miss Wilkerson and now Mrs. Richman Estelle Richman, as an advisory group to me for IT and use of IT in the organization.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right, last question on this particular area. I mean, is Miss Foxworth just an individual, or does she have a company, or is she --

MS. NEFF: She is a consultant, and she has consulted with the State of Connecticut, the State of Texas. That's her profession. She's a certified software engineer. She has worked for, I believe, Anderson and one other consulting firm in her background -- not currently.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't necessarily know that we want to talk about Anderson at the moment.

MS. NEFF: But she's an independent consultant.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Would I find her in the budget detail?

MS. NEFF: It would be under --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there a company or just a name?

MS. NEFF: She's with a company.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's the name of the company?

MS. NEFF: She's with Staff Masters

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Staff Masters?

MS. NEFF: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Staff masters U.S.A.

MS. NEFF: Correct. So it's a contract.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So she's under contract to us?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's the size of her contract?

MS. NEFF: They do IT placement. I don't have the exact figures here; I would have to get back to you, Councilman Nutter.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Maybe Mr. Dubow knows.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's it called, "Staff Masters"?

MS. NEFF: Staff Masters

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: They're a placement firm, you're saying, right?

MS. NEFF: Yes. I believe they're under -- (addressing colleague) what's their line item, 251?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 251. I don't see

it.

In '02, it looks like $30,000, Page 723?

MS. NEFF: In '02 or '03?

(Addressing colleague.) Do you have '02 with you? We have '03.

At the time that the '02 budget was put together, I wasn't here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MS. NEFF: And this position wasn't. So the total for the vendor is $200,000, but that's --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where would I find that?

MS. NEFF: Under "Estimated for FY '02" in the '03 Budget Estimated Obligations.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'll tell you what I'm looking at and then maybe you can point me in a different direction.

MS. NEFF: All right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm on Page 723 of the Budget Detail Book for MOIS, and there is a minor object code 251, Staff Masters, $30,000.

MS. NEFF: That was in 2001. Our estimated -- the original, there was no dollars in there. Our estimated for the final year-end

projection is $200,000.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, what are you reading from that I don't have? Is that from the little green book?

MS. NEFF: This is the 2003, but I don't have the actual book.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MS. NEFF: The 2003 Operating Budget. We'll get you a copy in the detail.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right, all right. Thank you. We can move from that and you'll come back to that one.

So you have your software engineer on and then what happens?

MS. NEFF: Then we pull together representatives from all of the departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mm-hmm.

MS. NEFF: We go through a series of requirements-gathering. We then we spend probably four months doing that, verifying the as-is, looking at the to-be models to then put together the RFP. The RFP is issued out on the street. The close is today. We then have formed --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What was the level

of involvement by the various -- so five departments say, We want our own bank. Five departments come and say, We have our own operation that we want

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You say, Well, from a management standpoint, we need, I'm assuming, consistency, flexibility, and a system that cannot not only address your issues, but has the capability, upgradability -- I know you guys have a lot of different words but -- applications that can support other operations, and if we can do it with one system, that's the way it should be done.

Is that basically what gets communicated?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. How do their needs or issues that are specific to their departments, how do we make sure that they're being addressed?

MS. NEFF: We have actually formed -- (addressing colleague) how many working committees, Oliver? Maybe I can have you come up.

(Witness comes forward.)

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MS. NEFF: This is Oliver Thornton, who's the Business Center CIO for Municipal Services, which includes all of the departments, except Recreation, that are involved in this process.

Do you have them?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, good morning, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Good morning

MR. THORNTON: Yes, We have seven working committees that were formed to review the RFPs and evaluate the responses when they do come in after today.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I guess I was concerned more with the earlier part of the process, and one of the reasons I ask the question is that in any level of coordination between and among departments, the issue always arises as to who ultimately makes the decision about what system is used? is it compatible with the departments' issues and needs? or are we trying to fit, in some instances, a couple round pegs into some square holes and just basically tell people, This is what you're getting, make do with it as, you will, but

we've got to make these decisions, and that's the end of the discussion?

I mean, is there a true level of partnership and coordination here?

MR. THORNTON: We didn't take the top-down approach. What we did was involved people in the committees down to the user level, because, as you know, the people that do the work most times know what they need.

And so, we had committees from the user level sit together, talk about what the requirements were at their desktops, and then we worked up from there and came up with the joint requirements and evaluated the requirements from one department across the other.

So the committees -- in the room were representatives from all of the departments at the same time so that we could talk about requirements.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And will these systems only be used by those departments, or will other people have access to them?

MS. NEFF: No, they'll definitely be available to the other departments as well, so if their requirements or needs for -- whether it's

customer collection of information or it's processing work orders or it's looking at a 3-1-1 call center, those will all be available as a citywide application to any department that can make use of that system.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And will City Council offices, for instance, be able to access any of these systems?

MS. NEFF: Yes. One of the beauties of this customer-information component is that it comes with what we call "a workbench of tools" that will allow you to see a constituent that may have requests in five different departments that you could pull up and see, you know, at this address or in this neighborhood, this is the type of work that's being done.

It will also give us the ability to have much more in the sway of cost-accounting capabilities so that we can find out what our costs are for paving X-amount of -- feet of streets and so forth.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, let me ask this question. And I know at the last hearing -- and I was here for a little bit, 'cause you did

answer a couple of questions that I asked in the first go-around; I think I had planned to come back for a second and wasn't able to be here for the second round.

While you don't directly maintain support services, computer-support services for us, and I know the reason for that, what level of contact has there been? Now as you build a larger system that will serve more departments and that Council will have access to, what contact or involvement has there been between MOIS and City Council about these particular systems and how they may either help -- and we'll leave it at that for the moment -- help our employees do their jobs?

MS. NEFF: To date, there has not been any.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I mean if the RFP closes today and you've pretty much kind of designed the system, it doesn't sound like there will be.

MS. NEFF: As we begin the strategic-planning process, we'll have an opportunity to come and meet with the Council offices to address the different applications and the needs from yours.

One of the beauties of this system is the flexibility and the ability to get information without having to have a programmer write a program to extract information. So there will be tools, they will be able to access it from the Web to get information. We'll also have internal training opportunities that would include Council staff on how to use a system like this.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right, so our contact and involvement in this is to come at a future point in time, but for the moment, there has been no contact about the design or implementation of this particular system with our offices.

MS. NEFF: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. With regard to the other five departments, each of them has, I guess, assigned a person that's responsible for IT or computer system work from the departments?

MS. NEFF: Multiple people. It's more than one person.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And they've signed off on this from the different departments?

MS. NEFF: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And they're pleased

with the product or --

MS. NEFF: Well, we haven't seen the results yet.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MS. NEFF: But they're committed to the process and working through that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. I may have, I think, in response to a question actually that I had asked back on the 19th, the sheet that you were reading from that had some budget numbers in it, I do now have my hands on it, and I think when you were talking about some of the different costs and the vendors, what I see now is this Staff Masters. It says, "current target budget amount $30,000. Projected year-end $200,000."

And I think this is possibly all related to the transfer ordinance hearing held back on February 19th? You've got a mid-year transfer ordinance that --

MS. NEFF: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Your department apparently has a variance of close to a half a million dollars in expenses in the current year's budget?

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MS. NEFF: Yes, covered from Class 100.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. How did that happen?

MS. NEFF: We had positions to fill, the business Center's CIO's positions, and it took longer to fill than we had anticipated, so we had savings in open positions. And we were then able to use those saving to bring in consultants and contract help where we needed them in areas where we didn't have individuals in place.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No, I understand. But, again, at least from this particular sheet, this is your Class 200 expenditures. I'm not necessarily seeing savings. You have a negative variance of $469,000 that you are over budget.

MS. NEFF: Again, on the Class 200.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MS. NEFF: Right, that we are covering from savings in Class 100.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, who wasn't on it at the beginning of the fiscal year, when you had savings?

MS. NEFF: I had none of the four CIOs.

Who else was not...

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Prior to becomING a cluster CIO, Mr. Thornton was over at the Managing Director's Office, right?

MR. THORNTON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right.

When you were here last year, you talked about the four cluster CIOs. I have them as Mr. Thornton, who I already know, who is in the government; David Lewis. F and ENT, what is that? The Financial and Enterprise Services; Howard Baker Public Safety; and Darryl Hamlin, S.S., and I guess that stands for "social services"?

MS. NEFF: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And the new people to the government are Mr. Baker and Mr. Lewis; is that correct?

MS. NEFF: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, the others were -- as I said, I know Mr. Thornton, who was here, and I didn't know Mr. Hamlin before.

Now, you listed, when I asked back at that time, you indicated that -- is it Mr. Baker that came from New York and Mr. Lewis that came from Massachusetts?

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MS. NEFF: No, Mr. Baker actually came from Massachusetts, and prior to that, New York.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MS. NEFF: Mr. Lewis came out of North Carolina.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I was confused by that because I had had information that, actually, Mr. Baker had come from New York, but my notes indicated State of Massachusetts, so that was somewhat confusing.

There was a report in a New York newspaper with regard to some issues in New York in the previous position that Mr. Baker was in. Can you give me a little better explanation as to what that experience was and what happened up there?

MS. NEFF: I am not familiar with that. Mr. Baker is here.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I didn't know him, I didn't recognize him.

(Witness comes forward.)

MR. BAKER: Good morning. Howard Baker, Public Safety CIO.

Which article are you referring to, Councilman?

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: This is from a New York newspaper, I guess, a couple months ago. Who is Inspector James Rim (ph)?

MR. BAKER: Inspector James Rim was the commanding officer of the MISD section of the New York City Police Department. He's now retired.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And who is a Mr. Ari Wax?

MR. BAKER: Mr. Ari Wax was my successor.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you were between Mr. Rim and Mr. --

MR. BAKER: No, sir. Mr. Rim was my subordinate. When I went to the State of Massachusetts, Mr. Ari Wax took over my position as deputy police commissioner.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. What was the -- from the news report, I don't know whether this had to do with changes in management at the top, and I know, obviously, there's been a change in administration in New York, but at least this newspaper account seems to have a couple of the people in the New York computer operation moving in different places in different times. Some may have

been ousted for political issues, although in some situations, there seemed to be some performance issues.

Why don't you just for yourself explain what happened up in New York and what was the nature of your leaving?

MR. BAKER: What happened in New York was, a new police commissioner came in, and all deputy commissioners are subject to reappointment whenever a new commissioner comes in. And the new commissioner did not reappoint some of us and reappointed others. You can appreciate that they want to work with their own team.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I understand that. I guess what I'm trying to deal with is -- and I can certainly give you a copy of this. Were there any performance issues related to yourself in that particular unit in New York?

MR. BAKER: No, sir, there were not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right.

As I said, I can certainly give you a copy of this, but there were issues raised at the hearing the other week with regard to the team that's been put together, and whenever there's

information like this, I think it needs to be checked. Obviously, we want to make sure that we've got the best-level, high-quality folks, and if something is out there and not necessarily in our own press but from a previous location, we need to make sure of what have we have.

So now you work with police people, all of Public Safety? What do you have: Police, Fire, anyone else?

MR. BAKER: Police, Fire, Corrections Department, Courts, District Attorney, and Inspector General.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And so you're coordinating all of their technology issues?

MR. BAKER: I'm coordinating all of the issues amongst those department, that's correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, that must be a lot of fun.

MR. BAKER: Certainly is. There's never a dull moment.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. We've been, I guess, left with the understanding, at least as the relates to the 800 megahertz system and maybe some other issues, that there has been a fair amount of

coordination between Police and Fire in terms of communications; is it the same situation with regard to other technology

MR. BAKER: There's been a lot of coordination on the megahertz because of the necessity to make sure that their (indiscernible) are correct. However, you have to appreciate that that's a Public Property project and doesn't fall directly under my purview.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And is that still the case?

MR. BAKER: That's still the case, yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Should that be the case?

MR. BAKER: I don't think so, no.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why?

MR. BAKER: This is the first organization I've ever worked in where telecommunications was separate from the data services end of the businesses. And one supports the other, and if they're in two different commands, as these are, it's difficult coordinating and getting priorities exactly in alignment.

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So I think they should be under the same agency.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, how is that going to get resolved?

MR. BAKER: Well, sir, I would think that would be a matter of the Mayor's Office getting it resolved.

MS. NEFF: One of the things that we're looking at as a part of the IT strategic plan is the organizational structure, and that would be one element that will be reviewed as a part of that plan.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do you mean "the organization structure"?

MS. NEFF: We're looking at how IT personnel are deployed across the City, the control of IT resources, planning, and budgets.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Now, when you were last here, you made reference to, and we didn't go too much in depth. There was a discussion about an executive order that you had written and submitted to the Mayor.

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's its status of

that? And I'm also left with the impression that -- did you want basically all of the IT people from the different departments and agencies to report to yourself?

MS. NEFF: The executive order is in the Mayor's Office at this time. The initial proposal that I was brought on as the City's CIO was the centralization of IT dollars and personnel, not physical centralization, but the control and the planning of IT dollars and resources.

And it's one of the things that we'll be doing as a part of the strategic plan with a committee comprised of -- I think 23 representatives from the departments will be looking at, how do you move towards that type of a structure?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Say that again for me. You either lost me somewhere or -- you said that you wanted control over them at some level, but not physical control. What -- I mean, what is -- is it like a virtual control or...

MS. NEFF: There are needs for IT personnel to be associated with the departments and the deployment of the business analysis and

understanding the business in which they support.

There are other technologies, such as desktop support, network support, that can more effectively and efficiently be done through a centralized. Those are the different elements that we need to look at and come up with a plan on how we would go from where we are today to a desired state.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who would those people technically work for?

MS. NEFF: They would report up under the various business-center CIOs, and they would have a dotted line responsibility to their departments, depending on the function.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But they would not work in those departments anymore?

MS. NEFF: Their paper headcount would not be in that department.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So they would report to their cluster CIO and ultimately to you?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: With regard to this particular initiative, how much will that cost?

MS. NEFF: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's the cost associated with the reorganization plan?

MS. NEFF: One of the things that we'll be doing as a part of the strategic plan is to take a look at all of those and what the reorganization structures and funding would be to cause that to happen.

The strategic plan itself is a half-a-million-dollar project.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And is that being performed by yourself or by a consultant?

MS. NEFF: It's a combination of consultant, myself, the senior IT staff that you see here, and the departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who's the consultant?

MS. NEFF: We're in the selection process right now. We're holding orals this week.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You have a lot of consultants, true?

MS. NEFF: True, right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Can you provide us, through the Chair, a list of all of the consultants that you have, their name or their

company name, and the amount of their contract and the length of their contract?

MS. NEFF: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you said the strategic plan is $500,000. Does that include the consultant costs or is that just the actual work product?

MS. NEFF: No, that is the consultant cost.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The consultant cost is $500,000?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And the strategic plan is being done by both the consultant and public employees?

MS. NEFF: Correct. We have what we call an "IT Strategic Plan Committee" comprised of commissioners and deputy commissioners from 23, I believe, of our departments, as well as the cluster CIOs, the e-gov. director and the GIS director and myself and Dr. Bortnick from central IT.

So there will be a committee of approximately 28 or 29 that will be the chief architects of this strategy. That will then be

taken up to the IT governing board, which is comprised of the CFO, the Chief of Staff, the MDO, and myself.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Back at the Capital Budget hearing on February 13th, there was a request with regard to the customer information work management system, and I think at the time, I was probably only talking about L&I.

Your response was, "Equipment will be provided before the roll-out of each module. For example, the work management module, which includes the work order system for L&I, will begin in January '03, equipment will be ordered in December '02 to be available in January '03. Also, L&I will be implementing the Licenses and Inspections module that they purchased from Hanson Corporation this spring and summer prior to the start of CIWMS. This application will be interfaced with CIWMS at the appropriate time."

So you're saying that L&I is going to get some level of computerization this spring and summer, and then kind of a brand-spanking-new CIWMS comes later, and then they interface the two systems?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

MR. THORNTON: Yes.

MS. NEFF: L&I does have some equipment, but if there is additional equipment needed as a part of the permitting system, then that would be procured as a part of that project.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, how will any of this computerization help them as whatever their role may be? 'cause we know everybody has a role in NTI. How will any of these systems help them to deal with the NTI Program?

MR. THORNTON: Well, this is a continuation of the work that's been done over the last couple of years in getting L&I to the point of automation. Computers were bought for the departments, so most of the units in L&I now are computerized to so some level.

The application for dangerous buildings, where the inspectors go out and maintain the imminently dangerous and dangerous buildings list, is being automated, has been converted from an old system to an Oracle database. That should now be ported out from the Central Office out to the District Offices so that they can better coordinate

what's going on with the dangerous buildings.

So that information will then be accessible to the NTI people.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Tell me a little bit about the same systems or the customer information work management system for Streets and Water, Public Property. What are they getting out of this and what will these systems do for those departments? What is the expectation here?

MR. THORNTON: Well, the initial phase is that, you know, we've always worked them separate, and there's been no coordination between the departments, and you might get -- for instance, in L&, I we had a call center where we knew that we were getting about 200 calls a month that were going out of our department, and we would issue a control number to that call.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What department is this? I'm sorry.

MR. THORNTON: L&I, when I was at L&I.

But at the end of the month, we'd know that we had sent that call to another department, but because there was no system coordination, we had no idea what the result of that call was.

And with this system, it ties all of those things together, so that when we actually -- if -- calls come in, as you know, from all different kinds of touch points. Any department that touches the customer will be able to go into the system and be able to see that they did call at a certain time, and there will be just a much better coordination between departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. THORNTON: And then work won't be duplicated that we're not -- a call won't go in to the contractual services or the clean-and-seal department from the citizen and then come from Council or come from some other means. We'll know that that work was already done and there's been a work order issued, and we'll better coordinate those things.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What about Streets and Water? And are there existing only RFPs with regard to any of the various departments, or are there other RFPs out for systems for any other department?

MR. THORNTON: Well, in terms of the work order, this is the system.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MR. THORNTON: This is just the first phase of getting the communication component connected between the departments.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. THORNTON: So that there's no redundancy in the work that goes out.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. What, if any, other systems or services are these departments getting from MOIS?

MR. THORNTON: Overall support systems.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Support systems. Anything else?

MR. THORNTON: Well, this is the first project, this is the first coordinated project.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are there any other projects on the drawing board?

MR. THORNTON: Each department has other projects that they're working on that may not be related to work orders.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MR. THORNTON: So in their own individual departments, they're all working on different things.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that, but my question is: Is MOIS either providing a service, working on an RFP, or putting together any other system-related projects or proposals for other departments?

MR. THORNTON: Not at this time.

MS. NEFF: No. Well, you know, there are four clusters. Within this cluster, this is the prime project that is going on.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MS. NEFF: There are a list of -- there are other projects going on in these. In Public Safety, we've got the Police Information Integrated Network Pin, a project that we -- again, I have had responses to our RFP, are in the selection process --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is this the Internal Affairs issue or is this the --

MS. NEFF: Incident tracking.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Incident tracking.

MS. NEFF: Right. The Internal Affairs system is being implemented at this time. Once that's been completed, we will have gone through the selection process for the Incident Information

System.

There's also -- the police has the CAD, the integrated CAD system project.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What will be the new Incident Information System for the Police Department?

MS. NEFF: What will be the new -- again --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there going to be a new system?

MS. NEFF: Yes. We went out with an RFP. The responses are back. Howard is heading the group is reviewing that now.

MR. BAKER: Councilman, currently, the Police Department has several disparate systems that they keep information on.

The one that we're looking at replacing with this one is the INCT system, and that's where they keep out of their data for call-taking -- excuse me, for report-taking. And what we're going to do with this new system is, we're going to integrate it so that it interfaces with their disparate systems so that you have one repository of information.

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So you have one, if you will, one gooey interface for the user to use to request information from many systems.

It will also interface with the new Police Fire CAD system, so that the information coming from the enhanced 911 system can roll down into the new system, and the operators then will just simply have to fill in the facts of a particular call so that you would have a completed case call on the system without any paper.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How does this affect whatever the officers are doing out on the street? And I think they're filling out, what do you call them, 48s?

MR. BAKER: 48s, yes, sir. This will automate the 48s onto a wireless platform.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How does it do that?

MR. BAKER: Either on a PDA or a small handheld computer. As we're just now evaluating the --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That the officer is going to have?

MR. BAKER: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So, I mean, not to

give any advertisement to anyone, you're saying that the police officers are going to be carrying, like Palms?

MR. BAKER: Yes

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: A Palm-Pilot device

MR. BAKER: Similar to that, yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And that's what they're going to take their information down on?

MR. BAKER: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Don't they have a bit of that -- what do they call it, graffiti or some kind of --

(Unintelligible, parties talking over each other.)

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Isn't that how you're going to take the information down?

MR. BAKER: No. The palm pilot has also a keyboard.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So instead of writing out the report on the little book that they often carry in their back pocket, you're saying that they're going to carry a Palm, put the information in there, and then transmit wirelessly?

MR. BAKER: Yes, sir.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What happens?

MR. BAKER: Well --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Whatever the incident was?

MR. BAKER: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, how many of these are you going to buy?

MR. BAKER: 1,010. That's what the RFP calls for.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, is that like a test phase, or are they going to share them?

MR. BAKER: They're going to share them, just like they do their radios, yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What happens if you take down a report and the Palm gets lost?

MR. BAKER: If the Palm gets lost, well, you have to go back and take the report. We always have a record of the report in the dispatch center.

MS. NEFF: Because it's sent wirelessly, the data is transmitted at the time of the incident.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand, but suppose it's lost before you transmit it?

MR. BAKER: Well, that's an eventuality

that we'd have to also face if someone lost their book. They would have to go back to the scene and take the report again.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. How much do these things cost?

MR. BAKER: The prices are all over. Generally speaking, the case hardened device is right around $1200.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: $1200, 1,000 of them, 1100, mm... 1.5, 1.2, 3, 4 --

MR. BAKER: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. The police have been trained on these?

MR. BAKER: Sir, we're just now evaluating these. We haven't actually implemented them yet.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But the decision has been made that we're doing this?

MR. BAKER: No, sir, it has not.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. What's the conversation on the police side of this discussion?

MR. BAKER: Well, there's opinions all over the board on this, depending on who you talk to.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The primary purpose --

MR. BAKER: Obviously, it's a new technology for the Police Department.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. The primary purpose is what?

MR. BAKER: Is to eliminate the use of the paper, to speed up the taking of the reports, and to assimilate the complete crime information data automatically rather than involving data reentry from the written reports. It's to have instant information online as you're taking it in realtime.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I'm sure that's going to be interesting.

MS. NEFF: We will be doing this in a pilot. We will take a district and test the proof of concept.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MS. NEFF: And have a backup scenario if this doesn't work, so we're not going to just roll the whole thing out and hope it works.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MS. NEFF: There's a very logical

methodology that we'll use for the process.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: One last system-related question: Are you working on a billing project with the Water Department?

MS. NEFF: Yes, we are. That's a part of the CIWMS; it's a billing and collections system.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. We went to monthly billing a little while ago, along with the installation of the AMR. Is there a problem now in the billing section? Is there some kind of a problem that we're trying to solve in billing?

MS. NEFF: Right. The CBIS system was written back in -- in 1978, it began, and we are in the process of replacing those modules so that we have a current system that allows you to do -- for the customer service rep to see the same bill as the customer would see online, to allow for people to be able to pay for water bills online. So that we're moving the technology into a new phase.

And we will also be putting in tools that will enhance the Water Revenue Bureau's ability to collect more bills. We're projecting that through the new tools, that we should see an

increase of as much as $4 million in uncollected revenues.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Tell me about some of the discussions with Water as it relates to implementation of this system.

MS. NEFF: In what regard?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is it a smooth transition, is there a difference of opinion? How is this moving along?

MS. NEFF: There definitely have been differences of opinion.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why is that?

MS. NEFF: The Water Department had a project that had been going on over the course of the years that was a reapplication of the old customer billing information system. I came in and the project was over-budget and over time, and I was reviewing all systems that were in that condition and making an evaluation.

I spoke to their prime customer. The customer was dissatisfied with the lack of progress towards a billing and collection system and --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who's the prime customer?

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MS. NEFF: The Water Revenue Bureau.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

MS. NEFF: And we were able to include this component as part of the CIWMS system, and we'd have a modern system.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So it's moving along? You said it's a part of this larger RFP that closes today?

MS. NEFF: Correct.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, the Last question in the area.

On February 12th, I received, and I'm assuming a whole lot of other people received, an e-mail about access to the Internet. The first version of this I received -- I think you actually could not print it out. The same thing came out the next day, on February 13th, and says:

"Dear Internet User: MOIS is changing the way we access the Internet. To prepare for this, please read and follow the instructions below."

And in big letters, it says, "You must complete these procedures before February 14th," which the next day, "or you'll no longer be able to

access Websites on the Internet."

And then it goes on to tell you that only authorized users can access the Internet. Now, naturally, I signed on because I do need to access the Internet from time to time.

But it also requires a certain number of procedures and passwords and access codes that are direct and pertinent to the individual.

On the same series of days, the 13th and the 14th, there were stories in the newspaper with regard to Comcast, and that Comcast had begun tracking the Web-browsing activities of its one million high-speed Internet subscribers without notifying them. That lasted for a day because they reversed themselves the next day because of customer complaints.

The issue here is, what's the level of tracking that goes on with regard to our accessing the Internet, given the level of information you have to put in the system to be able to get on the Internet? And that somewhat similar to what Comcast was doing?

MS. NEFF: (Addressing colleague.) Do you want to take that?

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DR. BORTNICK: Dr. Bortnick here.

The use of an I.D. -- the use of an I.D. is to identify those people who have basically gone through the process of working with Public Property to recover the charge that Public Property does for the Internet services that are provided by the City. That's basically what that is. It's a log-on I.D. and a password. That's what that is.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, were costs not being recovered before? I actually have no idea what you just said.

DR. BORTNICK: Okay, let me go back and say, the Public Property Department, together with the Finance Department in the previous administration, established an annual fee.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

DR. BORTNICK: The identification of individuals who had paid the fee from those who had not paid the fee would be the function of an I.D. and a password. That's what the I.D. and the password does.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

DR. BORTNICK: It helps distinguish those people who would have paid the fee for

accessing the Internet and have been approved to do that from anyone who might be accessing the Internet without having paid that fee.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So this is a fee issue.

DR. BORTNICK: That particular thing is a pay issue.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But it also notifies the system who's accessing the Internet, correct? And does it track where you're going or what you're doing?

DR. BORTNICK: This is not where the tracking is taking place that you're concerned about. This is just, Are you an authorized accessor or not?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, where's the tracking going?

DR. BORTNICK: At the level of about the firewall. The firewall is a piece of equipment and appliance that protects the City of Philadelphia from viruses coming in.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Mm-hmm.

DR. BORTNICK: That firewall keeps track of information related in a table, in a log, and

has been in place for a number of place; it was built by IBM basically as a way of holding information about where do we get attacks from viruses and this sort of thing, and automatically gives you notification. For example, most recently, with the most recent virus, you may have seen information coming out of the mail system that says "The attachment that you received had a virus." And --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that. I'm not talking about viruses. You know, I don't have any, I'm not spreading any.

DR. BORTNICK: Right.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What I'm talking about is --

DR. BORTNICK: Is there logging on a firewall?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yeah.

DR. BORTNICK: Yes, there is logging on the City's firewall.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is it similar to the stories that were printed back in February with regard to what Comcast was doing with its customers, which was tracking their Web-browsing

activities?

MS. NEFF: The City has the capability, but we do not track. There is an e-mail policy that has an Internet component to that that says, you know, you're using City equipment, this is for City employees.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last I checked, I was.

MS. NEFF: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Last I checked, I was.

MS. NEFF: From the operations versus the legislative branch. And that, you know, that e-mail and so forth are not private, that, you know, we do track, but we do not have somebody sitting there looking and tracking.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You track what?

MS. NEFF: The system logs in a very cryptic file, where people go out to the Internet. When you have your history and you pull that down, you'll see that you can see where your tracking had been. After discussion with President Verna's office --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, let's not

leave that place. So you're saying that somewhere, someone has a listing of all of the various places that any of us may have gone to on the Internet who are doing research or trying to look something up, or wherever people may be going. I'm not even talking about, you know, kind of inappropriate or prurient places, and I don't know whether people are or not.

But, I mean, for legitimate research purposes, you're saying that MOIS tracks access and use of the Internet and where people go on the Internet to get whatever information they need to do their jobs.

MS. NEFF: We have the software capability to do that. We do not have staff that track that.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But that information does exist somewhere.

MS. NEFF: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what happens every time I log into the system and put in the appropriate access codes for this new thing that came in in February?

MS. NEFF: After meeting with Council

President Verna's office, we have a generic password for Council, and we do not track Council. We are in the process of ordering equipment to set you up as a separate server that turns off that capability in the software so that there will be no tracking.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. When you decided to roll this out on the 14th, I mean, other than it being Valentine's Day, what was the significance of sending us an e-mail a day or so basically your Internet access is being shut off if you don't sign up for this, which, naturally, causes everyone to sign up? I mean, what was the impetus for doing it that particular day, and why was there no discussion about this ahead of time?

DR. BORTNICK: As you know, we worked in conjunction with your consultant Lonnie Stanley, and we had been working within all of the departments of the City for sometime, and in conjunction with him also.

I believe it's really unfortunate that it came to you as such a surprise, and for that reason, I apologize. There should not have been -- there should have been a much more hand-holding

process in this, and while we had begun earlier, that did not come to fruition.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't want to cut you off, Mr. Bortnick, but we don't have to hold hands. We can just hold a conversation.

DR. BORTNICK: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would just like to encourage -- I mean, look --

DR. BORTNICK: Sure.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: On the one hand, we get a variety of kind of little -- I forget what they call 'em. They're not broadcasts, but we get these MOIS alerts from time to time. Some of them have the most meaningless information at the moment -- maybe meaningless to me, maybe pertinent to some other department, but some of them have the most meaningless information in the world in them, which, from time to time, I think causes people at a certain level to almost ignore them.

I just happened to click this one on, it popped up and tells me that unless I sign up for some new system, I have no Internet access. So, quite frankly, I didn't even take the time to call you guys to ask the question; I just did the

sign-up.

Subsequently -- and, as I said, around or about the same time, this other tracking story come out, so it sounds like the City is buying into the same thing that, at least for about 24 hours, Comcast thought was a brilliant idea. They then backed off, and every day, unless you check the little box, which I refuse to do, you've got to sign with everything short of, you know, what boat did your parent come over on? And I don't necessarily think it's appropriate.

Now, I understand that in different kind of workplace, the employer has a right to certain information, even with Internet access, and I'm sure there's tons of case law about that.

The reality is, is that we're not the average or normal workplace. I don't work for you, so you don't have a right to certain information or access to certain information that I may either send or receive or engage in or do research with. I mean, this is not IBM and we have some, you know, master organization chart and everyone reports up a particular chain. There is a real distinction between what happens on the Administration's side

and what happens on the Council side.

Now, obviously, you know, we all work for the same people, which is the public, and we're not going to have, you know, a different sanitation system for the executive branch as opposed to for the legislative branch, but in these kinds of matters, I take them very, very seriously, they are tremendously sensitive, and to the extent that you have serious information that you need to communicate to us, I think that it is better communicated either directly or in writing, or ask the President to have a meeting if it's something that affects all of us, but not by, you know, some happenstance e-mail that goes out.

I mean, you know, suppose I don't turn my machine on for a day or so? We're in budget hearings every day. I actually don't turn the box on every day, and if I had blown through the 14th, I guess I wouldn't have Internet access. I just happened to see it.

So some of things that come out of the office are actually very important to what we do, and to the extent there could be that level of contact and communication and explanation, I mean,

we wouldn't, for the moment, have to go through this particular exercise.

I'm grateful and appreciate the fact that you're working on a new system. When do you anticipate us having it?

DR. BORTNICK: We have the requisition for the proxy server, which is the device that does the I.D. and password separate for Council. And within the procurement cycle, I will be able to get back to you to tell you how long it will take for that particular piece of equipment to be received.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What did you say, within the what cycle?

DR. BORTNICK: Within the procurement cycle, I'll be able to tell you, you know, how soon that will be able to be implemented. It's a very quick process once the proxy server is received.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, when do you think it will be here?

DR. BORTNICK: I would imagine it would be here in the month of April.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And then you said installation is relatively quick?

DR. BORTNICK: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right.

Lastly, does the system have the capability yet for access from the outside? Again, in many other different kinds of workplaces, you can actually access your -- the -- I don't know whether ours is called the Intranet, but you can actually access your email system from outside the system. Do we have that ability yet?

MS. NEFF: Are you talking about City employees?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes. If I was at home, have access to a computer, what is my ability to access -- what is it, CC mail now, Lotus Notes? What is my ability to access Lotus Notes from home?

MS. NEFF: If you have an Internet provider at home, you can dial through the Web to get access to your e-mail. If you need access to applications that you've been approved to work on, then there's a different type of connection that we set up that is more secure for the employees to come in through, what they call a "virtual private network."

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, if someone could maybe share that with us and explain

it to us. I mean, every now and then, I mean, you know, you might leave something at the office that came in as of 5. You either don't have it or you just make a quick run down to City Hall and turn the system on, but every now and then, for efficiency's sake, if there was the ability to access the Internet from the outside, that would certainly be helpful.

MS. NEFF: We'll be happy to do so.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what about employees who are in non-traditional worksites that are outside the system; what is their ability to access any of the City's computer system?

For instance, I have three staff members, two in one location, one in another location, that are off-site from City Hall. These are public employees, they're on the City payroll, at locations that are not a part of, you know, the triplex, or they're not down at the area building or one of those places; they're out in office space in the district that I represent, but they work for the government.

What is their ability to access any of the various systems that we have at this point in

time?

DR. BORTNICK: We have off-site locations that access the Internet, including recreation centers. Depending on what the requirements are at that location, whether it's mail or systems of various types, we could take a look at it and we'll be able to tell you how it works.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Or they just need to know if they have an address and they want to know who the property is. I mean, the whole --

DR. BORTNICK: Oh, that's on the Internet

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- you know, ownership and taxes and water bills and all of that kind of stuff.

DR. BORTNICK: Well, for the part that has to do with assessments, on our Website now is the information from the Board of Revision of Taxes. So that's available now.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

DR. BORTNICK: In relation to the water bills coming through a virtual private network, that secure network connection, that starts with an

Internet access and then comes over to us securely, this can be done.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, again, I'm sure I'm not the only person that has these kinds of issues, and I was not aware that with the service provider, you could access our own Lotus Notes, or formerly CC mail system. All of that information I think is just very helpful to have, and even I could be trained on how to use it.

MS. NEFF: With CC mail, you weren't able to do that, so it is just new with your conversion in moving to Lotus Notes, and we will work with the Kimmel group to get you the appropriate training to make sure that they are sharing with you and the other Council offices capabilities that are available.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I appreciate it. Thank you very much

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Are there any other questions?

(No further questions.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very much. We appreciate you coming in.

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The committee will stand in recess until 1:30. It is my understanding that we're going to have approximately 34 witnesses to testify, so I would like to start promptly at 1:30, if that's possible.

Thank you.

(Proceedings end at 12:48 p.m.)

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(Public hearings on Operating Budget appear under separate cover on second transcript dated 3/18/02.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing proceedings of the Council of the City of Philadelphia's meeting of the Committee of the Whole of Monday, March 18, 2002, are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me, and that this is a true and correct transcript of same.

RE: Ordinance No. 020001

_____,

Josephine Cardillo

Registered Professional Reporter
and Notary Public

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