

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FISCAL STABILITY AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Tuesday, November 23, 2021
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

RESOLUTION: 200406

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning.

3 This hearing is called to order. I
4 recognize the presence of a quorum of
5 the Committee members and members of
6 Committee in attendance are as follows:
7 Vice-Chair Councilmember Brian O'Neill,
8 Councilmember Kendra Brooks,
9 Councilmember Mark Squilla,
10 Councilmember Helen Gym, Councilmember
11 Kathy Gilmore Richardson and
12 Councilmember David Oh. Thank you all
13 for being here.

14 This is the public hearing of
15 the Committee on Fiscal Stability and
16 Intergovernmental Cooperation. The
17 purpose of this public hearing is to
18 hear testimony on Resolution 200406. I
19 understand that state law currently
20 requires that the following announcement
21 be made at the beginning of every remote
22 public hearing as follows:

23 Due to the current public
24 health emergency, City Council
25 Committees are currently meeting

1 remotely. We're using Microsoft Teams
2 to make these remote hearings possible.
3 Instructions for how the public may view
4 and offer public testimony at public
5 hearings of Council Committees are
6 included in the public hearing notices
7 that are published in the Daily News,
8 Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer prior
9 to the hearings and can also be found on
10 PHLCouncil.com.

11 The Clerk will now please read
12 the title of the resolution before this
13 Committee today.

14 THE CLERK: Good morning.
15 Authorizing the Committee on Fiscal
16 Stability and Intergovernmental
17 Cooperation to hold quarterly hearings
18 that include monthly reporting
19 requirements to discuss the fiscal
20 position overarching social impact goals
21 of the City, including and as related to
22 the Five Year Plan and the reporting
23 requirements set forth in the Quarterly
24 City Manager's Report and as submitted
25 to the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental

1 Cooperation Authority.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

3 I want to thank everyone for being here
4 for continuing to participate in these
5 quarterly hearings. Today we're going
6 to walk through the most recent
7 Quarterly City Manager's Report to
8 discuss the ups and downs of the quarter
9 and compare how we're doing today to how
10 we thought we'd be doing when we
11 forecasted this, also, to discuss how
12 things are going with the recovery
13 spending.

14 And lastly, we'll finish up
15 with some great work by the Pew
16 Charitable Trust and the work they're
17 doing is to provide measurement or
18 economic recovery and growth in the wake
19 of COVID. It's great to see outside
20 organizations stepping up to provide
21 objective viewpoints of our City's
22 economic health. So let's get started.

23 Ms. Grbach, please call the
24 first panel of witnesses.

25 THE CLERK: We have Rob Dubow

1 and Ashley Del Bianco from the Finance
2 Department, Harvey Rice from PICA and
3 Tom Ginsberg from Pew.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
5 guess -- actually, Rob, if you would
6 like to go first. Please proceed and
7 good morning.

8 MR. DUBOW: Good morning.
9 Thank you. Thank you, Chair Domb and
10 members of the Committee. I'm Rob
11 Dubow. I'm here to testify on
12 Resolution 200406. I'm joined by Ashley
13 Del Bianco and Anh Hua from the Recovery
14 Office and Sadia Sattar and Helen
15 Loughhead from Budget, and we'll be
16 tag-teaming the presentation.

17 Sadia, if you can -- okay. So
18 on Slide 3, we give a high-level
19 overview of where we are, where we were
20 for the first quarter in terms of
21 revenues, expenses and our fund balance.
22 So revenues at \$777 million came in
23 really almost exactly where we
24 projected, just about 2 million less.
25 But \$27 million less than the same

1 quarter a year ago.

2 On the expense side, we came in
3 at 1.37 billion. That is consistent
4 with original projections, but 150
5 million more than last year first
6 quarter. And I shouldn't say those
7 numbers are scarily different, but the
8 reason is that a lot of our expenditures
9 come out upfront and we'll see that as
10 we go into more detail in
11 department-by-department.

12 What does that mean for our
13 fund balance? We're now projecting that
14 we'll end the year at about 134 million,
15 which is 47 million more than in the
16 adopted budget. However, it's still
17 only 2.6 percent of revenues, and that's
18 far below our internal goal of 6.8
19 percent and then even further below the
20 17 percent recommended by the Government
21 Finance Office Association.

22 On the next slide, we show
23 graphically how our fund balance
24 compares to our goals and the goals from
25 the GFOA. And you can see even in years

1 like 2019 when we had a fund balance
2 that was historically high by our
3 standards and even higher than our
4 target, still way, way below where the
5 GFOA says we should be.

6 In the year that just ended,
7 FY21, we ended up at 298 million which
8 is at the low end of our internal
9 target, and again well below where the
10 GFOA says we should be. We are
11 projecting that that fund balance will
12 drop in '22 to, as I said before, only
13 about 2.5 percent.

14 And why fund balance is
15 important is because you need a cushion
16 for when things go wrong, and I think
17 that was one of the big lessons of the
18 pandemic, the fact that we had a larger
19 fund balance than usual meant that we
20 didn't have to do even more painful
21 things than the painful things that we
22 did.

23 Next slide. It goes a little
24 more into our revenues. As you can see,
25 they were right around where projected,

1 and that's largely due to a combination
2 of slightly lower than anticipated tax
3 collections being partially offset by
4 better local nontax revenue fees and
5 fines. The year-end projection is about
6 5 billion. That's less than in the
7 target budget and we're going to keep
8 monitoring those revenues throughout the
9 year to see whether they have to be
10 adjusted further.

11 The next slide goes revenue
12 item-by-revenue item to look at how the
13 first quarter compared to what we
14 anticipated. You see taxes about 5
15 million lower than anticipated and made
16 up almost entirely by the locally
17 generated nontax revenue.

18 Go to the next slide. And we
19 start to look at the obligations side.
20 And they said obligations are right
21 where we thought they would be. They're
22 much higher than last year. That's
23 largely due to things like our new
24 collective bargaining agreements, higher
25 than expected cost-related fringe

1 benefits and then some of the things we
2 just added in the transfer ordinance.

3 The next slide goes into
4 overtime costs. You can see overtime
5 has gone up from last year. Last year
6 it was a bit of an anomaly because of
7 everything that was going on with COVID.
8 But while we're higher than last year,
9 we are about 5 million lower than where
10 we were two years ago in the last
11 pre-COVID year, and essentially with
12 where we were in FY19. It's unfortunate
13 to note that back in FY19 we had 600
14 more employees, and also the base pay
15 that we're working off was lower than
16 because of pay raises now since that
17 time.

18 The next slide. Let's take a
19 little deeper look at our obligations.
20 We have, as you know, concluded
21 collective bargaining with both D.C. 33
22 and D.C. 47 and received an arbitration
23 award for the Fraternal Order of Police.
24 Over our Five Year Plan, those labor
25 agreements award added about \$620

1 million in cost.

2 We put aside estimates for
3 remaining contracts with firefighters,
4 correctional officers and a couple of
5 other units. And for exempts and
6 nonreps about 288 million, assuming that
7 those agreements and awards are similar
8 to what was in 33, 47 and FOP. We did
9 better in FY21 than we anticipated and
10 came in about \$299 million, which \$220
11 million higher than we anticipated. But
12 again, we start to see that fund balance
13 go down in FY22.

14 And by the end of the FY22 to
15 26 plan that was approved by PICA, we're
16 down to about 66 million. And PICA
17 points out that that's one of the risks
18 in the plan. Our revenue forecast
19 incorporate what happened in '21, the
20 higher base, but our economists did not
21 think we should be adjusting our growth
22 assumptions. We will continue to
23 monitor that, and you'll see as we pose
24 a new Five Year Plan, we'll do a deeper
25 dive into what changes we need to make

1 there. New costs, mainly talks about
2 that.

3 With that, I'm going to flip
4 the presentation over to Sadia to talk
5 about leave usage.

6 MS. SATTAR: Good morning,
7 Chairman Domb and members of the
8 Committee. My name is Sadia Sattar and
9 I am Deputy Budget Director for the
10 Budget Office. I appreciate being here
11 to talk today about the City's leave
12 usage. As you can see as of September
13 30, 2021, our leave usage for the
14 quarter was at a median level of 23.3
15 percent. It is higher than where we
16 ended on Fiscal Year '21 in Quarter 1
17 where we were at 12 percent, but it is
18 lower than where we ended at Fiscal Year
19 '20 Quarter 1 at 23.7 percent, which was
20 of course the last pre-COVID year.

21 There still remain concerns
22 with some public safety agencies,
23 public-facing agencies, in particular
24 Streets, Sanitation Division, Police's
25 uniform staff and of course Prison staff

1 with regards to leave usage. And we
2 believe that the main drivers of leave
3 usage of course include COVID and
4 non-COVID specific factors. As far as
5 COVID-specific factors and concerns,
6 they are related to employees health and
7 of course the need to take care of their
8 kids and family members and the need to
9 quarantine and isolate as well.

10 Next slide, please. Here is a
11 chart representing the City's full-time
12 positions as of September 30th of this
13 year. You can see that when we adopted
14 the budget we had budgeted for about
15 31,033 positions. Where we are now is
16 about 27,000 positions, so we are about
17 4,000 positions under budget. This is a
18 decrease of 200 or .7 percent full-time
19 positions for Fiscal Year '21 year-end
20 actuals, and it's a decrease of 1052
21 full-time positions from this time last
22 year, and that includes about 826
23 positions in the General Fund.

24 Next slide. Something that we
25 also show in the QCMR is our performance

1 measures for programs. About 109
2 performance measures are reported in the
3 Quarterly City Manager's Report. For
4 the first quarter of Fiscal Year '22,
5 we've reported about 73 measures being
6 on track or it's meeting or exceeding
7 their targets. Unfortunately, we also
8 report the 33 measures will not be
9 meeting or exceeding their targets.

10 Next slide. In the QCMR, we
11 divide performance measures into key
12 functional areas. These include Public
13 Safety, Health and Human Services
14 Children and Family Services, Commerce,
15 Planning and Development, Transportation
16 and Infrastructure as well as
17 Operational Support. And the agencies
18 that kind of meet those key functional
19 areas are listed below.

20 As I mentioned, we have about
21 73 measures that are meeting or
22 exceeding their targets. Here are two
23 examples that are meeting or exceeding
24 their targets. For the Department of
25 Licenses and Inspections, the

1 demolitions perform measure is exceeding
2 its target, having already performed 108
3 demolitions year-to-date in Fiscal Year
4 '22.

5 For Homeless Services, a
6 measure that is meeting or exceeding its
7 target is households provided
8 homelessness prevention assistance. As
9 you can see, our target is 1400
10 households from OHS and the department
11 has already provided assistance to about
12 314 households in the City.

13 We also have measures that
14 unfortunately did not meet or exceed
15 their targets. However, they have seen
16 an improvement from the same time last
17 year, but have not returned to Fiscal
18 Year '20 or pre-COVID levels. A good
19 example of that is Streets. On-time
20 trash collection continues to not meet
21 its target. Similarly, with the
22 recycling rate, that has also not made
23 its Fiscal Year '22 target as of yet.

24 And another example is the Free
25 Library where we see teen program

1 attendance still not meeting pre-COVID
2 levels. So as you can see in Fiscal
3 Year '20 Quarter 1, we had about 16,304
4 teens participate in these programs.
5 And unfortunately, as of the end of the
6 first quarter of this fiscal year, under
7 3,000 have attended so far.

8 Next slide. We also wanted to
9 give you a snapshot of where we were
10 when we ended last month which is
11 October. I know that Rob just spoke to
12 you about how we ended the first
13 quarter, but we also wanted to give you
14 a snapshot of how we ended in October.
15 So as of the end of October, we have
16 completed about 33.3 percent of our
17 fiscal year. The General Fund spending
18 year-to-date has been about 33.3
19 percent. That accounts for about 8.3
20 percent of obligations are 439 million
21 in spending just from the General Fund
22 alone.

23 And here is a chart showing you
24 where that funding is coming from. So
25 in Class 100, we were projected to spend

1 \$279 million in October. We spent about
2 309, so about 30 million over.

3 Projections, in Class 200 we're about 55
4 million under projections. Class 300,
5 400, about 4 million under projection.
6 And Class 500 and other classes, about
7 almost 5 million over. But given all
8 that, we are still 23.8 million under
9 what we had projected to spend in the
10 month of October of this fiscal year.

11 Next slide, please. Here's a
12 good graph. It's showing you which
13 departments are spending about, you
14 know -- sorry, departments year-to-date
15 obligations as a percentage of their
16 total appropriations. And we like to
17 show departments of adopted budgets
18 about \$5 million or more. So you can
19 see that for departments that we are
20 around 33.3 percent over the fiscal
21 year. Commerce has spent about 80
22 percent, and I know this includes a big
23 expenditure as well in Class 200 as well
24 to the Convention Center. Then we have
25 DBHIDS, again having spent 70 percent,

1 followed by DHS and OHS, and then of
2 course, the Sinking Fund Commission.

3 Next slide, please. Our last
4 slide having to do with our year-to-date
5 spending through October includes a look
6 at Class 100 spending in City
7 departments of adopted budgets of \$5
8 million or more. Again, we've talked a
9 lot about overtime being a factor in
10 public-facing departments, Streets being
11 one of them, Streets Sanitation to be
12 exact. And Streets continue to
13 overspend in its Class 100 along with of
14 course Parks & Rec and other departments
15 such as the DA. Of course, as you're
16 all aware in the mid-year transfer we
17 did fix the structural deficit in Class
18 100 in the DA's Office, so we hope to
19 remedy that moving forward.

20 I believe that concludes this
21 portion of the Fiscal Stability hearing.
22 We can turn it over to Ashley unless you
23 have some questions.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I do have
25 some questions. Should we wait for all

1 the panelists to present and then we can
2 ask the questions maybe?

3 MR. DUBOW: Sounds good.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. So I
5 guess our next panelist is Harvey Rice
6 from PICA.

7 MR. DUBOW: Oh, sorry. We
8 actually have the recovery part of our
9 presentation.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Go
11 right ahead then, sure.

12 MS. DEL BIANCO: Yes. Good
13 morning. Thank you Chairperson Domb and
14 members of the Committee. My name is
15 Ashley Del Bianco. I am the Chief
16 Grants Officer for the City and the
17 Acting Recovery Officer, and I'd like to
18 introduce Anh Qua, who is our Deputy
19 Director for Grants Management and
20 Compliance in the Office of Recovery and
21 Grants. And together we're going to
22 present some information for the
23 recovery funding, specifically focused
24 on the American Rescue Plan and the
25 Coronavirus Local Relief funding.

1 So I will ask for the next
2 slide. So we're going to include as I
3 said American Rescue Plan funding and
4 Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, and then
5 talk a little bit about relief to
6 recovery and some of our next steps.
7 I'm going to turn it over to Anh to
8 present on the American Rescue Plan so
9 far. Next slide, please.

10 MS. HUA: Thank you, Ashley.
11 Hi, everybody. Thank you so much for
12 having us here today. And as Ashley
13 said, I'll be providing information
14 about the funding that the City has
15 received through the American Rescue
16 Plan. So far the City has received 14
17 million in funding from CDC for
18 vaccination-related activities, 42
19 million in home funds from HUD for
20 homelessness assistance, 48 million in
21 ELC funds from CDC for testing, 85 which
22 must be used for school reopening
23 activities, 58 million in emergency
24 rental assistance from the U.S.
25 Treasury, and 1.39 billion in the

1 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
2 from the U.S. Treasury. And this is one
3 of the funds that is most flexible. And
4 so far the City has received 50 percent
5 of that amount, and another 50 percent
6 will be sent to the City in about a
7 year, which is about July of next year
8 time. And besides the American Rescue
9 Plan, the City has been engaging with
10 FEMA to apply for a FEMA public
11 assistance funding, and those funding
12 are primarily for COVID and vaccine-
13 related activities.

14 Next slide, please. And
15 particularly for rental assistance,
16 nationally there are about \$1.5 billion
17 in the American Rescue Plan for
18 emergency rental assistance, which
19 Philadelphia has received 58 million in
20 funding in addition to 104 million that
21 the City has received through the U.S.
22 Treasury and the Commonwealth from the
23 Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

24 The American -- sorry. The
25 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

1 started in May 2020 to provide support
2 for tenants and landlords affected by
3 the COVID-19 pandemic. And since then,
4 the City has provided over 156 million
5 in support to over 19,000 households,
6 with households in Central North, Lower
7 Northeast, West and Southwest
8 Philadelphia representing the highest
9 area of rental assistance distribution.

10 The link on the slide here
11 PHLRentAssist.org is the entry point for
12 applicants and also provide great data
13 points of how many applicants the City
14 has received and how much funding has
15 gone through and who, and that dashboard
16 has been updated weekly.

17 Next slide, please. And of the
18 total amount that the City has received
19 for rental assistance, the City has
20 successfully distributed 83 percent of
21 the total allocation received to date,
22 and in the American Rescue Plan it
23 allows for the U.S. Treasury and the
24 Commonwealth to engage in reallocation
25 of unused funds that distributed less

1 than 65 percent of the initial
2 allocation. So through that process,
3 the City has received an additional 29.4
4 million from the Commonwealth, and that
5 29.4 million is enough for about five to
6 six weeks of rental assistance. We
7 don't know of the timing for the federal
8 reallocation process, but we are
9 actively advocating and tracking this
10 process.

11 It's important to note that
12 although the City has received
13 tremendous support from the American
14 Rescue Plan and the Consolidated Act,
15 there is still a continued need for
16 rental assistance. Based on the number
17 of unduplicated pending applications
18 that the City has received, we estimated
19 that households need a total of 159
20 million in additional funds to be able
21 to pay the current rent and utility
22 arrears.

23 Next slide, please. Now, I'm
24 going to turn it over to Ashley Del
25 Bianco to talk more about the

1 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

2 MS. DEL BIANCO: Thank you,
3 Anh. Next slide, please. So I'd like
4 to talk a little bit more about
5 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery
6 Funding, and this is the more specific
7 funds directed as part of the American
8 Rescue Plan directly to the City as part
9 of overall relief to state, local,
10 territorial and tribal governments.
11 You'll see that as part of the American
12 Rescue Plan, that included \$350 billion
13 worth of this type of more flexible
14 relief.

15 For local governments, as Anh
16 mentioned earlier, the funding comes in
17 two tranches. We have 50 percent that
18 we received within 65 days of the
19 enactment which fell within last year's
20 fiscal year and carries through to this
21 year's fiscal year. And we also are
22 entitled to additional funding because
23 we are both a metro city and county, so
24 you'll see that our combined figure here
25 is for a total of \$1.395 billion.

1 Next slide, please. Something
2 to really emphasize here is that while
3 the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery
4 Funds were intended to help us as state
5 and local government to assess the
6 negative consequences of the pandemic
7 and to recover, it is possible to use
8 these funds for revenue replacement.

9 And that is, in fact, what the City of
10 Philadelphia is doing with our funding.

11 It is not enough funding
12 despite how helpful it is. It is not
13 enough to get us back to where we were
14 prepandemic. When you look at the
15 figures here, you'll see that our
16 projected fiscal year budget gap over
17 the Five Year Plan is \$1.5 billion,
18 whereas we're receiving \$1.4 billion
19 from CLFRF funding. So it's not enough
20 to fully fund our gap, but we are using
21 these funds for revenue replacement.

22 This funding really will help
23 us to avoid more painful budget cuts and
24 decisions by covering our costs. As we
25 all know, this has been a very difficult

1 and painful year of budget decisions
2 over the past couple years and will
3 continue to be. But as you'll see on
4 the next slide please, we wanted to take
5 a look here at how we compare as a city
6 to other cities. And our colleagues at
7 Pew Research Centers were able to
8 provide for us a picture of that. They
9 were able to show us that in this fiscal
10 year our budget shortfall compared to
11 other cities.

12 Philadelphia is actually only
13 exceeded by Detroit in the amount of
14 budget shortfall that we projected for
15 2021 calendar year. And this is based
16 on their analysis of Fiscal Year 2020
17 expenditures. So the chart there
18 represents Pew's research, and you'll
19 see the significant gap that we have.
20 And why is it that Philadelphia is
21 faring worse than most other cities. In
22 large part, as you know there's the
23 heavy reliance on income taxes or our
24 wage tax in relation to property taxes,
25 and we have been exceptionally affected

1 by the fact that our nonresidents during
2 the pandemic were not contributing fully
3 their portion of the wage tax because
4 they were not residents in the City at
5 that time. And lastly, we had limited
6 reserves. They certainly helped us, as
7 Rob pointed out, to have some reserves.
8 But as Rob was discussing earlier, our
9 fund balance is not particularly high.
10 And so, we were more impacted by these
11 shortfalls in revenue.

12 Next slide, please. With that
13 said, the American Rescue Plan and its
14 funding which is very crucial will help
15 us to comparatively do well in relation
16 to our Five Year Plan goals. With the
17 funding of the American Rescue Plan
18 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Relief Funding,
19 we're able to avoid layoffs. We will
20 not necessarily be looking at tax
21 increases. We've been able to really
22 focus on providing the services that are
23 most public-facing and critical to our
24 residents, including a lot of youth and
25 library services.

1 We're able to and continue with
2 new investments for 911 co-responder and
3 mobile crisis units as well as violence
4 intervention. Returning funding to the
5 Cultural Fund, allocating for the
6 Citizen Police Oversight Commission and
7 covering debt service enabling us to
8 pave additional roadways. Without the
9 funding, you can see on the other side
10 of the screen some of the highlights
11 here would have been that we had a \$450
12 million gap projected in FY22, and all
13 of these things would have probably
14 resulted if we did not have the American
15 Rescue Plan in significant layoffs
16 and/or significant tax increases, and we
17 would have had a lot of difficulty being
18 able to provide those critical services
19 described.

20 Next slide, please. So CLFRF
21 and the Five Year Plan, what does it
22 mean for us. We're treating this
23 funding from the American Rescue Plan as
24 flexible revenues. These funds will be
25 going directly to the General Fund and

1 it will mostly fill the gap that was
2 created by the pandemic. We are not
3 using it to target specific programmatic
4 spending. It will be used to support
5 overall operations, COVID costs,
6 investments in continuing education,
7 health and anti-violence priorities, and
8 it will keep the plan balanced. So
9 we're using it to the maximum
10 flexibility allowed rather than
11 identifying specific programs.

12 Next slide, please. I also
13 wanted to highlight for you some of the
14 other key funding sources to track in
15 Pennsylvania. As noted, the American
16 Rescue Plan provided local and state
17 funds. And so, the state funding from
18 CLFRF is noted here at \$7.3 billion. We
19 are anticipating from what we hear that
20 that could be used to balance the
21 Commonwealth's budget in the similar
22 vein as to what we're doing in terms of
23 using it for revenue replacement.

24 There is additionally a
25 Pennsylvania Capital Projects Fund that

1 will be enabling additional critical
2 capital projects in a whole range of
3 areas outlined here, including
4 education, health and other remote
5 service options. We also can be looking
6 at \$350 million across the state for
7 Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund.
8 This is different than rental
9 assistance. This is directly for
10 homeowners and will assist with mortgage
11 delinquencies and defaults. And it can
12 be used for mortgage payments,
13 homeowner's insurance, utility payments
14 and other specified purposes as part of
15 the plan, so there's flexibility there
16 as well. That again is administered by
17 the state.

18 And lastly, a significant
19 effort to support small businesses. The
20 state is receiving \$207 million for the
21 State Small Business Credit Initiative,
22 which as the title suggests, it will be
23 extending credit to small businesses
24 similar to the relief programs that were
25 stood up during the pandemic itself.

1 Next slide, please. So we
2 wanted to take one last moment to talk a
3 little bit about lessons learned and
4 next steps related to coronavirus relief
5 and recovery. So one of the things that
6 you will have noted throughout this is
7 the theme of critical and timely support
8 from the federal and state and local
9 funding sources. This has allowed the
10 City to stand up very quickly some
11 effective relief programs. These
12 included small business supports, rental
13 assistance as described and direct
14 public health and public safety programs
15 responding to the pandemic for
16 vulnerable residents.

17 More can be done, however, to
18 streamline and maximize access to these
19 existing programs. As Anh had
20 described, Philadelphia is noted as one
21 of the most effective distributors of
22 our rental assistance, and that is
23 definitely something to learn from and
24 that we continue to look at as a way to
25 effectively reach out to both residents

1 and landlords to continue to improve
2 that program, but it also can have
3 benefits to help us in terms of the
4 program design and the tools that were
5 used to communicate and track
6 applications for other programs that
7 we're doing.

8 The ARP provides the City with
9 enough funding to support those core
10 services and it will allow us to avoid
11 painful cuts. It will also make direct
12 funding available to individuals and
13 businesses, and that's important to note
14 as well. So beyond the Coronavirus
15 Local Fiscal Relief Funding, Anh had
16 described funding that was coming in
17 directly for particular services, and
18 those will be directed to individuals
19 and businesses. We have used some
20 innovative methods to help families and
21 businesses maximize those resources.
22 But again, that's an area that we can
23 continue to learn and improve.

24 And finally, we know that
25 accessing all of these resources is

1 really critical for Philadelphia to
2 emerge from the pandemic. We want to be
3 thinking about how we move from relief
4 into recovery and expanding our vision
5 for what that looks like and not
6 returning to business as usual. So in
7 some of our participatory budgeting
8 processes and other processes, those are
9 the opportunities for us to do so.

10 In our Office of Recovery and
11 Grants, we continue to provide direct
12 management of our federal and state
13 funding, and we also will be continuing
14 to work with our colleagues in Finance
15 across City departments to make best use
16 of those resources. That concludes our
17 testimony. Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
19 Is there anyone else from the
20 Administration?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
23 think, Mr. Rice, you were up next.

24 MR. RICE: Thank you. Good
25 morning, Chairperson Domb and members of

1 the City Council Fiscal Stability and
2 Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee.
3 My name is Harvey Rice. I'm the
4 Executive Director of the Pennsylvania
5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority,
6 the state oversight agency for the City
7 of Philadelphia.

8 Thank you for allowing me to
9 testify and to speak about PICA's report
10 on the Quarterly City Manager's Report
11 for the first quarter of Fiscal Year
12 2022, which is July, August and
13 September. Before I start my testimony,
14 I would like to first thank you, all the
15 City Councilmembers, for supporting the
16 pending legislation in Harrisburg to
17 extend PICA beyond the scheduled
18 expiration date.

19 As you know along with City
20 Council, PICA has been an integral part
21 of the City's fiscal recovery and
22 continued stability since the early
23 1990s when PICA was adopted. Extending
24 PICA would continue this partnership to
25 ensure Philadelphia's fiscal stability

1 going forward. As requested, I did not
2 prepare a PowerPoint presentation today.
3 Instead I will highlight important
4 proponents of the QCMR.

5 As you know, the City recently
6 received an FOP arbitration award and
7 negotiated labor contracts with AFSCME
8 District Council 33 and District Council
9 47. As such, the City's Five Year Plan
10 which was approved in July by the PICA
11 Board and was needed to be revised to
12 include the cost of these labor
13 contracts. That cost was approximately
14 \$618 million.

15 The City submitted the revised
16 plan to PICA on October 29, 2021. After
17 reviewing an evaluation, the PICA Board
18 unanimously approved the revised plan
19 last week. Accordingly, the QCMR was
20 submitted on November 15th of last week,
21 and this reflects the revised plan
22 projections going forward.

23 Here are some of the highlights
24 I would like to point out: The '21
25 year-end fund balances now estimated at

1 \$219 million, almost 220 million higher
2 than previously projected, which was
3 \$78.7 million. This was primarily due
4 to higher revenues of 140 million and
5 lower obligations of \$201 million in
6 Fiscal Year 2021. The projected fund
7 balance for Fiscal Year '22 is now 133.9
8 million.

9 However, while it's higher than
10 in the original plan, it only represents
11 2.5 percent of the total obligations,
12 far below the City's own target of 6 to
13 8 percent, and also far below the GFOA's
14 recommended 17 percent. If you looked
15 at the 6 to 8 percent, by the City's
16 target we should have \$366 million in
17 the fund balance. And if you adhere to
18 the GFOA's recommendation, that will be
19 almost \$900 million in the fund balance,
20 so we are significantly low. And if you
21 look at the new revised plan, while the
22 fund balance has increased through four
23 of the years, the last year is
24 precariously low at \$66 million.

25 So another highlight: The QCMR

1 projects a recession and reopening
2 reserve for FY22 of \$42.5 million and a
3 labor reserve for future labor costs
4 because there's some unions that --
5 smaller unions that haven't negotiated
6 yet, and also the firefighters has been
7 arbitrated but is being voted on now, so
8 there's \$27.7 million in FY22 and also
9 reserves throughout the revised plan.

10 The ARPA fund usage was
11 decreased in the revised plan for FY22
12 from 575 million to 250 million. This
13 difference is projected to be used in
14 the latter years of the revised plan.
15 Overtime costs, as you know PICA has
16 been very concerned about the increasing
17 overtime costs. They've been increasing
18 every year since 2011 since PICA's been
19 monitoring it. It projects at 185.4
20 million, about the same level as Fiscal
21 Year 2021. However, this represents a
22 decrease of about 22 million from Fiscal
23 Year '20, which was the last year prior
24 to the pandemic.

25 And to emphasize that and to

1 give you a good picture, when we
2 presented last week to the Board, the
3 four months' overtime costs for July,
4 August, September and October for FY22,
5 we compared it not only to FY21 because
6 that was a nominal year, but to FY2020
7 and there was a \$10 million decrease in
8 four months from FY20 to FY22 for
9 overtime costs.

10 And I know we're talking about
11 the QCMR, but I just wanted to give you
12 a highlight of the revised plan. This
13 revised plan has a contribution to the
14 BSR in Fiscal Year '25, and the original
15 plan there was no contribution to any of
16 the years to the BSR. While we like to
17 see it increased more years of deposits
18 in the BSR, we're happy to see that in
19 the revised plan one of the fiscal years
20 there's a contribution to the BSR.

21 Thank you for allowing me to testify.

22 And I'm here and I'll be happy and
23 available to answer any questions that
24 you may have.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

1 Mr. Rice. We'll come back to you with
2 some questions.

3 MR. RICE: Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I guess next
5 is Tom Ginsberg from Pew.

6 MR. GINSBERG: Hi. Thank you
7 very much. I'm going to share my screen
8 and make sure you can all see it. Is
9 that all clear, everybody? Can you see
10 my screen?

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes, we can
12 see it.

13 MR. GINSBERG: Great.
14 Wonderful. So thank you very much for
15 this opportunity, Councilman Domb and
16 City Councilmembers. I am Tom Ginsberg
17 of the Pew Charitable Trust Philadelphia
18 Research and Policy Initiative. We
19 conduct nonpartisan independent research
20 and engage with officials on key issues
21 facing Philadelphia.

22 Last month we launched our
23 interactive dashboard on businesses and
24 jobs in Philadelphia. The free
25 dashboard makes it possible for

1 policymakers, business representatives
2 and anybody else to monitor the
3 financial health of establishments as it
4 changes every quarter or month based on
5 constantly changing credit bureau and
6 government data on tens of thousands of
7 businesses.

8 Apart from the taxes they pay,
9 are Philadelphia business establishments
10 staying ahead of their bills, how are
11 certain corridors and sectors faring
12 such as restaurants, hospitality, and
13 city-wide how fast our jobs and
14 establishments being restored. The
15 answers in this data can provide some
16 insight for legislative and regulatory
17 initiatives and programs, such as
18 pandemic relief.

19 By our count, federal, state
20 and local governments distributed at
21 least \$3 billion in COVID relief loans
22 and grants to Philadelphia firms last
23 year. The dashboard can give a window
24 on those funds impact in the past and
25 the needs going forward. I'm going to

1 give you a few snapshots here, although
2 the tool is far more comprehensive than
3 I can show you here.

4 The dashboard has -- next
5 slide -- nine charts that are updated
6 monthly or quarterly, such as
7 delinquency on paying bills, bankruptcy
8 filings, consumer spending and small
9 businesses. It also has two reference
10 charts showing prepandemic conditions.
11 They include city-wide percentages of
12 businesses owned by Black, Hispanic,
13 Asian and White owners. Again, these
14 two reference charts are from before the
15 pandemic, the latest solid data that was
16 available.

17 Unfortunately, current
18 comprehensive current demographic data
19 on business owners is pretty much
20 nonexistent. We are looking at
21 potential ways of generating this data,
22 although it's still theoretical. I'm
23 going to go through showing you the
24 charts, quickly breeze through them to
25 give you a sense of how comprehensive

1 this is. Those are the prepandemic
2 charts at the bottom. And then I will
3 drill down a little more into what some
4 of them say.

5 When you go to the dashboard,
6 the first chart you'll see comes from
7 Experian Credit Bureau. I'm showing
8 them here without any filters so it's
9 showing all businesses as of the latest
10 period we've had as of today, which is
11 September 2021. Overall these show that
12 business health is improving, but
13 modestly so. The first chart you'll see
14 delinquency on bills. This tracks the
15 share of establishments paying their
16 bills 31 days or more late. About 6
17 percent in the last period, Q3, were
18 moderately or severely delinquent.
19 That's a little better than earlier this
20 year, but it's still worse than last
21 year, the earlier line when it was
22 somewhat flat which coincided with a lot
23 of those government fusions I mentioned
24 earlier.

25 Delinquency is an early signal

1 on business health heading up or down.
2 Financial stability, this is experienced
3 composite measure of future default.
4 This is a forward-looking indicator.
5 The lower the line, the worse here. The
6 higher, the better. It moves very
7 incrementally, this line. This is the
8 average score, but you can see it has
9 been sloping upward slightly, and that's
10 positive.

11 Credit on -- I'm sorry,
12 balancing credit accounts, this is the
13 median amount owed to creditors or
14 lenders. This is a sign of business
15 growth or risk or both. Notice the
16 slope was still heading upward as of
17 September, the last period shown, even
18 with the PPP loans being forgiven. That
19 was the biggest amount of loans coming
20 in. This is potentially a good sign,
21 that upwards slope, especially when
22 delinquency in the other chart is
23 heading down.

24 You can use these filters to
25 slice by industry too. Here I'm going

1 to switch and show hospitality. Leisure
2 and hospitality which includes
3 restaurants, hotels, entertainment,
4 recreation venues and the like,
5 typically these sectors, health is more
6 volatile than the other sectors. But
7 you can see here how much worse it's
8 been on delinquency on the left chart,
9 although there's a glimmer of hope in
10 the September dip there right at the
11 end.

12 Contrast that to the
13 professional -- there's the dip -- the
14 professional scientific and technical
15 sector, its share has essentially been
16 flat. You see on the left there and
17 staying low. While its credit balances
18 have been high and hovering high over
19 the City average, we can also filter
20 down to specific zip codes.

21 The dashboard gives you a map,
22 as you see there on the right to
23 visualize the differences by zip code.
24 This is looking at the delinquency on
25 bills. In September, Center City East

1 share of bills, I'm showing Center City
2 East here, the share of businesses that
3 were late on their bills were a tad bit
4 spiking up, started to come back down to
5 the city-wide average. This may have
6 been related to business activity
7 picking up this past summer after that
8 rough first 18 months.

9 Looking at another area,
10 compare that to West Philadelphia,
11 19139, where delinquent share has been
12 volatile, back up and down and now it's
13 heading back up. And compared to an
14 area like Olney where the delinquent
15 share was up, and now it's coming down
16 significantly and that's a positive
17 sign.

18 On jobs, the dashboard shows
19 the percentage lost or gained since
20 2019, most cases since the same month in
21 2019 by sector. Total employment in
22 September was still about 8.2 percent
23 there, below September 2019, two years
24 earlier. That's a level where it's sort
25 of stuck now. You see that line is sort

1 of flat. In fact, we just got October
2 data yesterday. It's not posted yet on
3 the site, but it remains and also still
4 about 8 percent below for October.

5 Filtering down in industry
6 sectors on jobs, some sectors are coming
7 back better than others. For example,
8 hotels and eateries are still far down.
9 That's the gray line there at the
10 bottom. But notice there is a little
11 hopeful uptick in September. And again,
12 in yesterday's October data, that uptick
13 continued.

14 That was a whirlwind through
15 the tool. It literally has hundreds of
16 permutations for you to explore, many of
17 them new every month, to help you, your
18 staff and any interested stakeholders to
19 understand this data. We're happy to
20 provide more detail briefings and we
21 will be setting them up. And I thank
22 you very much for your time and look
23 forward to your questions.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
25 That's a great tool. I want to thank

1 you and Pew for that tool. That's
2 really very impressive.

3 I would like to recognize at
4 this time the Councilmembers who have
5 joined. Councilmember Isaiah Thomas,
6 Councilmember Cindy Bass and
7 Councilmember Jamie Gauthier. Thank you
8 for being here.

9 So I have several questions. I
10 believe Councilmember Gym and
11 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson have
12 questions. But let me start off by
13 asking our Finance Director Rob Dubow,
14 the big question for me is of the \$1.5
15 billion that we will be short over the
16 next five years, can you tell me three
17 or four of the biggest reasons why? For
18 example, wage taxes, how much in wage
19 taxes consist of that 1.5 billion and
20 any other taxes that you could share
21 with us?

22 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And just to
23 go back to that slide, so that 1.5
24 billion was where we were before we
25 received the American Rescue Plan money,

1 so we're not facing that kind of gap
2 now. But looking back at what caused
3 it, yeah, the big thing was a drop in
4 revenues. And wage tax was a big part
5 of that, including the hit to the
6 nonresident wage tax since if you're a
7 nonresident and you're required to work
8 from home, you don't have to pay it. I
9 think that's probably the biggest single
10 driver of the decrease. But all of our
11 taxes were projected to be lower than
12 where they were before the pandemic.

13 But the wage tax was our single biggest
14 hit because it's our single biggest tax.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: But if we're
16 looking at this and let's just say for a
17 moment, thank God we're receiving the
18 1.5 billion, but if we are not going to
19 receive the 1.5 billion, God forbid if
20 another pandemic happens, I'm trying to
21 figure out if the 1.5 billion was wage
22 tax gap, 500 million, 700 million. So
23 I'm trying to figure out what do we need
24 to address going forward?

25 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. So we can

1 get you the dollar contribution, but
2 that wage tax hit was the biggest
3 portion of it. And if you went to that
4 chart in Ashley's presentation that
5 shows what happened to us compared to
6 other places, the reason that our hit
7 was so much bigger was because we're
8 relying on sensitive taxes like the wage
9 tax.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And you know,
11 Rob, I love that chart. I was so happy
12 to see it in the presentation today.
13 This is the chart that showed we were
14 short 14.7, I believe. And compared to
15 Baltimore, they were short 5 percent.
16 So really the heart of this is how do we
17 make sure we're not second worse in the
18 country. How do we make sure we're
19 towards the lower numbers. And it
20 sounds to me like what I'm gleaning from
21 this is that it's wage taxes and maybe
22 possibly business taxes. And also, I
23 think a big part of it is the types of
24 jobs we have created in the City.
25 Because when you look at jobs that pay

1 \$35,000 to \$100,000, many of them are in
2 the suburbs and those jobs continued
3 throughout this pandemic. While we have
4 over 60 percent of the jobs we created
5 in the last 10 years pay less than
6 35,000, those were the jobs that were
7 affected by hospitality and other
8 problems in that economy. So if we can
9 figure out how to create higher-paying
10 jobs in the long-term, we'll have a much
11 more stable city. And I think that's
12 what other cities have done when you
13 look at that Pew report of the shortages
14 of the budget.

15 So that's what I'm trying to
16 figure out. Of that 1.5 billion, is it
17 700 million, is it \$1 billion? How much
18 is wage taxes and what are the other
19 taxes that make up that differential?

20 MR. DUBOW: Yes. And it was a
21 combination of taxes falling off and new
22 expenditures, because there's a whole
23 range of new expenditures that we have
24 to incur for the pandemic to help fight
25 the pandemic, so a combination of both

1 things and we can get you that breakout.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And we make
3 sure of the new expenses we incurred,
4 we've tried to obtain every possible
5 dollar through that Recovery Act of
6 those expenses?

7 MR. DUBOW: Yes, we have. In
8 Ashley's office, the office is dedicated
9 just to that and they work with everyone
10 throughout the government, and there's a
11 really high focus on making sure that
12 everything that can be reimbursed will
13 be reimbursed.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So basic
15 question, I was noticing you highlighted
16 on the QCMR, I think it was the Streets
17 Department that had a pretty low
18 percentage of performance. I think it
19 was like 56 percent. And I also noticed
20 that on the budgeting area it seems like
21 Streets went over budget. I'm just
22 wondering what we can do to help and
23 support our Streets Department to
24 improve in that area, because that's
25 like a basic service that people of the

1 City expect.

2 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. I think
3 Council did something to help in the
4 transfer ordinance where we provided
5 additional staffing for Streets. I
6 think what's happened because of the
7 increase in tonnage and the increase in
8 leave usage that Sadia talked about,
9 we've had some challenges collecting all
10 the trash. And without that, overtime
11 goes up, costs go up.

12 I think with that money that we
13 added with the transfer ordinance,
14 they'll be better able to collect trash,
15 you'll see performance go up and
16 overtime go down.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Who's in
18 charge in that department looking at
19 every possible new technology to make us
20 more sufficient to help the Streets
21 Department do their job?

22 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. I think it's
23 a few people depending on where you're
24 looking. So, for example, we're looking
25 at moving to LED lights, so people --

1 Rich Montanez is the person who is
2 looking at that. On the Sanitation
3 side, it will be the heads of Sanitation
4 looking at the best possible ways to
5 deliver that service. And I know their
6 administrative section led by Chris
7 Newman is also looking at ways to
8 improve efficiency and to deliver their
9 services at the lowest cost possible.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Another
11 question I had is on the performance
12 measures. I noticed that 73 measures
13 were on track which is good, and 33
14 measures I guess need to improve. Who
15 works with those departments to help
16 them improve and achieve their goals?

17 MR. DUBOW: Sadia, it looks
18 like you're popping up to answer that.

19 MS. SATTAR: Yes. I'll be
20 happy to take that question,
21 Councilmember. So we track measures on
22 a quarterly basis as well as during the
23 budget process. And my unit in the
24 Budget Office and working with our
25 Budget Director Marisa Waxman, we work

1 with departments directly to see how
2 their measures are on a quarterly basis,
3 should they have any revisions.

4 We know those, we actually just
5 sent Harvey and Gus and PICA a document
6 that shows how targets have changed for
7 certain departments. You know that we
8 adopted the budget, created the proposed
9 budget in March of this year. Things
10 have changed since then, so we actually
11 keep PICA apprised of any changes in
12 target levels as well. But departments
13 come to us should they have any changes,
14 they propose changes in their measures
15 so that they are accurately representing
16 how each program in the City is
17 performing, and we then make sure that
18 we stay on top of that and we help track
19 them.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I appreciate
21 that, but my question maybe is more
22 driven by operational people that can
23 make it more efficient. In other words,
24 if we have a department that is not
25 performing well, it may not be their

1 fault. It may be that they have the
2 wrong tools to do their job and who can
3 come in and help them with the tools to
4 become more efficient. That's my
5 question. Do we have that person in
6 government --

7 MR. DUBOW: So I think it
8 really will vary by where the department
9 is because I think that responsibility
10 often will rest with their Cabinet
11 member. I know in the Managing
12 Director's Office, the Cabinet member or
13 the Deputy Managing Director is
14 responsible for that area and will give
15 the kind of advice and technical
16 expertise needed to help with
17 performance.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I have
19 a few more questions, but I'm going to
20 allow my colleagues to ask some
21 questions. I think the first one was
22 Councilmember Helen Gym that had a
23 question, so I would like to recognize
24 her.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so

1 much, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate
2 these hearings as always.

3 So I just wanted to clarify one
4 thing because it did get brought up with
5 Rob. The key issue around the wage and
6 income tax is not so much the amount of
7 money that somebody earns but actually
8 where they reside; is that correct?

9 MR. DUBOW: I think there are
10 two issues, one of which you're correct
11 is that for people who live outside the
12 City but work in the City, if they are
13 not -- if they're directed to work
14 outside of the City, they don't have to
15 pay the wage tax and we've estimated
16 that that will be about a 15 percent hit
17 to the wage tax, so that's a big part of
18 what's happening. There's some also
19 just decline in jobs, and that decline
20 in jobs also translates into wage tax.
21 So I think it's both of those things.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So one of
23 the key things is that as you noted for
24 residents of the City who have jobs
25 elsewhere, they do not have to pay the

1 wage tax, is that correct, if they work
2 outside of the City?

3 MR. DUBOW: No. Anybody who
4 lives in the City has to pay the wage
5 tax. If you live outside the City, you
6 have to pay the wage tax unless you're
7 not able to work in the City.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So I think
9 the clarity though that we're trying to
10 emphasize is that if people live in
11 Philadelphia, the wage tax issue can be
12 addressed. And one of the questions is
13 about the importance of livability,
14 growing the residential base and making
15 it clear that residents no matter where
16 they may work, pay the wage tax. And
17 those jobs, even though they may be high
18 paying, if those residents don't live in
19 the City, it doesn't actually matter if
20 they are not working inside the City or
21 those jobs in this particular case are
22 able to be done at home, then they don't
23 pay the wage tax.

24 So it's not necessarily the
25 salary level of the job. The importance

1 is either the business and the business
2 workers have to be physically in
3 Philadelphia or they must reside in
4 Philadelphia.

5 MR. DUBOW: Yes. And just to
6 clarify one thing, if they are directed
7 to work at home. If they work at home
8 by choice, they still have to pay the
9 wage tax.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Right.
11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. DUBOW: Sure.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: One, I
14 wanted to thank the Administration for
15 highlighting the Eviction Diversion Rent
16 Assistance Program. You know, that has
17 been I think one of the City's most
18 successful and certainly nationally
19 lauded efforts in the pandemic. And I
20 think what was rightly noted was that in
21 the time of crisis we actually invested
22 in our internal capacity. We
23 strengthened up the technological
24 aspects to make the PHLRentAssist.org
25 portal and the website more accessible,

1 quicker and more streamlined with other
2 entities so that we could move the money
3 faster.

4 I think we were able to
5 distribute the latest rent assist
6 dashboard, I know you are using other
7 numbers, shows up having distributed
8 over \$220 million to almost 36,000
9 households. Most of them, landlords
10 since May of 2020, so I think that is
11 significant. I think the 156 million in
12 rent assist disbursement that you
13 mentioned is just ERA 2 funds; is that
14 accurate?

15 MR. DUBOW: I'll let Ashley
16 respond.

17 MS. DEL BIANCO: Thank you,
18 Councilwoman. It is a combination of
19 ERA state and federal funds, yes. But
20 you're correct, that basically that
21 particular phase is inclusive of those
22 ARP numbers, yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. So
24 one of the areas that we -- and I
25 appreciate that we're tracking this

1 money because I think it's incredibly
2 important to families and to the health
3 of our City, but we appreciate the
4 support in tracking and advocating for
5 the federal reallocation that fund these
6 funds from jurisdictions that have
7 distributed less than 65 percent of the
8 initial allocations.

9 This was a big push. This is
10 sort of what didn't happen in that early
11 phase and it got reallocated by the
12 state to the Department of Prisons or
13 Department of Corrections rather, I'm
14 sorry. And so, now we have a chance to
15 ensure that municipalities and
16 jurisdictions that have overwhelming
17 need are able to access them a certain
18 time after.

19 It's our understanding that the
20 vast majority of jurisdictions have not
21 distributed 65 percent or more of the
22 allocation. Do you know if that's true
23 or not statewide?

24 MS. DEL BIANCO: At a state
25 level that's a good question that I

1 don't have a full answer for. I can see
2 if I can get more information on it.
3 What I will say is that not very many
4 jurisdictions received direct local
5 funding from the state. So Philadelphia
6 was one among only a few counties that
7 received a direct local allocation, and
8 the majority of cases the state itself
9 was overseeing the distribution into
10 jurisdictions. So I don't have a -- I
11 don't know whether it's a majority or
12 not and what the factors are, but I can
13 get some additional information on that
14 for you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Do you have
16 any sense of the possible range of funds
17 that could be received based on how much
18 has been unspent and how much we may
19 have received initially?

20 MS. DEL BIANCO: You mean for
21 the reallocation of state funds? Yes,
22 our understanding is that we have
23 received our full reallocation at this
24 point. The state did prioritize going
25 through that process for those entities

1 that, A, were successful in distributing
2 at least 65 percent and, B, that were
3 receiving direct local distributions.

4 It is not our understanding that beyond
5 the \$29 million we have received from
6 the reallocation process that we would
7 receive additional state reallocations.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. All
9 right. Thank you. One of my questions
10 is about the Pennsylvania Capital
11 Projects Fund and about the 279 million
12 in there. As you know, there's been a
13 lot of talk about aging school buildings
14 and the fact that in September of this
15 year I think when SLA Beeber had to
16 close down because there were no
17 functioning bathrooms in the entire
18 school, it was the 12th school in two
19 years to actually close. There's a
20 heavy and huge need to remediate and
21 modernize our schools.

22 Can you share any information
23 about whether the Pennsylvania Capital
24 Projects Fund could help address any of
25 this or any additional information as to

1 how and when that money is being
2 disbursed and where we are in the
3 allocation process regardless of whether
4 it involves schools?

5 MS. DEL BIANCO: Sure. My
6 understanding is that school and
7 education capital projects are eligible.
8 My understanding would be though that
9 basically these funds have the same
10 criteria as capital project funding
11 typically does. They have not expanded
12 the criteria. So the short answer is if
13 the type of projects that you're
14 thinking of or describing fall within
15 the existing grant eligibility process
16 which I believe they do -- but I'm not
17 certain not having read the Capital
18 Projects Fund eligibility closely
19 recently -- I know school facilities in
20 general are eligible.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
22 you don't have the sense of how that
23 money is being disbursed or the --

24 MS. DEL BIANCO: No --

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: --

1 application process and is it done by
2 city governments, by private entities,
3 how are we applying?

4 MS. DEL BIANCO: Well, it
5 basically is a state process. And so, I
6 think us communicating and advocating
7 what the priorities would be, would be
8 an essential part of that. We have not
9 received any formal guidance about an
10 application process at this point for
11 capital funding.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
13 is that because the state hasn't issued
14 it or is it because we need to figure
15 out what that looks like?

16 MS. DEL BIANCO: We always try
17 to keep an eye on things. To my
18 knowledge, the state has not issued
19 guidance on that. But again, I can
20 double check for that.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank
22 you. And then for Pew, I wanted to
23 thank you for your report as well. One
24 of the biggest concerns obviously is
25 what's happening with small businesses

1 in the City of Philadelphia. The number
2 of jobs that small businesses, I think
3 as you noted in Q1 down 17 percent seems
4 to decline the most when you're looking
5 at job loss by employer size.

6 I'm curious whether this
7 matches trends in other cities
8 nationally? Is it better or worse?
9 It's not great either way. It's just
10 kind of getting an understanding of
11 what's happening and how we can best
12 support small businesses here in
13 Philadelphia because I don't think we're
14 doing nearly enough.

15 MR. GINSBERG: Yeah, hi. The
16 dashboard itself does compare to other
17 places or other cities, so looking just
18 at Philadelphia. So as far as the
19 dashboard goes, we're just looking at
20 the City, other data and we can see
21 other data on an ongoing basis.
22 Certainly, jobs declined everywhere
23 nationwide. There would be differences
24 from when one city, from one metro area
25 to another. The national data comes out

1 about a month or two before the local
2 data, and we have seen in the national
3 numbers also an uptick nationally.

4 How that differs from one city
5 to another I have not looked at. But we
6 can see it looks in the latest numbers
7 that just came out yesterday that we are
8 following some of that trend here too.

9 We're seeing some of that uptick here in
10 certain sectors. Some sectors like
11 hospitality generally are low and the
12 recreation venues, those remain
13 significantly below their prepandemic
14 levels. Some of the others have never
15 really dipped much low, and a few of
16 them are actually above where they were
17 prepandemic. One of them is
18 professional scientific like I
19 highlighted, I think the information
20 sector also stayed pretty solid. I can
21 give you more breakdown if you need it.
22 I can give it to you later from what we
23 see in our data.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah. We
25 may follow up with you, and I assume

1 some of it, we will take a look at the
2 dashboard a little more closely about
3 the breakdown of small business job loss
4 or growth by sector I think will be
5 really helpful and hopefully inform some
6 of our work as we look at the next
7 budget in terms of addressing that area
8 in particular.

9 MR. GINSBERG: We'll reach out
10 to your office too. We'll set something
11 up.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And I just
13 wanted to clarify. Going back to the
14 reallocation of rent assist money if I
15 could just for clarification, I think
16 that you had mentioned state
17 reallocation, but I was asking about
18 Federal Treasury reallocation.

19 MS. DEL BIANCO: (Muted).

20 MR. DUBOW: You're muted,
21 Ashley.

22 MS. DEL BIANCO: Sorry. The
23 Federal Treasury reallocation process is
24 just getting under way. My
25 understanding is that Federal Treasury

1 is going to do this in two tranches.
2 First, they will look at reallocation of
3 federal funding to the states from
4 states that have not fully spent down
5 their funding, so that's Process 1.

6 Process 2 is then distributing
7 to jurisdictions who have been
8 successful from those other
9 jurisdictions that have not. The only
10 thing we've been asked to do thus far is
11 to certify the spending that we have
12 made on the federal rental assistance
13 which we have done, and we then also
14 need to issue a formal request for
15 additional funding. And that is due on
16 the 30th, and we're preparing that now.

17 So there is no other process
18 that we are aware of or beyond giving us
19 instructions as to kind of those general
20 guidelines about how they will handle
21 reallocation, we do not have additional
22 information from the federal government
23 on that from U.S. Treasury.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And that's
25 the 30th of November?

1 MS. DEL BIANCO: Yes.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Do we know
3 how much money is potentially -- do we
4 have a sense of the possible range of
5 money that could be available?

6 MS. DEL BIANCO: We do not.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. But
8 it's just re-underscoring again that
9 there looks to be a potential for two
10 phases of a federal reallocation that
11 would extend the rent assistance to the
12 City of Philadelphia. I assume based on
13 all the information that we've got that
14 we're among the most successful cities
15 in the nation. We're not even just
16 talking about Pennsylvania. But in
17 terms of national distribution success,
18 that we would be pretty much at the top
19 of the list.

20 MS. DEL BIANCO: I agree with
21 that assessment, yes.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And that's a
23 strong candidate for additional rent
24 assist money coming through the federal
25 government?

1 MS. DEL BIANCO: Yes.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: All right.

3 Thank you. Those are all my questions.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

5 Councilmember Gym. Thanks very much.

6 Great questions.

7 I have a few more questions I
8 just wanted to ask. First, I wanted to
9 recognize our Commerce Director Mike
10 Rashid for being here. Thank you,
11 Director Rashid.

12 And I guess maybe, Rob, you can
13 answer this one, on the fund balance --
14 or, Harvey, I think both of you
15 mentioned that our fund balance, if I
16 got it right, estimated 220 million more
17 than we thought?

18 MR. DUBOW: Correct.

19 MR. RICE: Yes.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And we'll end
21 with about 290; is that what I heard?

22 MR. DUBOW: Our preliminary
23 actual for FY21 was 298.5.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And what were
25 the main two or three drivers of what

1 caused that to be much higher?

2 MR. RICE: The --

3 MR. DUBOW: So -- it looks like
4 Harvey -- go ahead, Harvey.

5 MR. RICE: Well, revenues came
6 in higher than projected and the
7 expenses, obligations were lower than
8 projected, and those were the two major
9 driving factors where we had a higher
10 fund balance than projected in the Five
11 Year Plan that we saw in the revised
12 Five Year Plan. I don't know if Rob
13 wants to speak further to that.

14 MR. DUBOW: No, that's good.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And
16 just in the breakdown, how much of that
17 was revenue versus expenses that were
18 lower?

19 MR. RICE: Um, I have it here.

20 MR. DUBOW: So --

21 MR. RICE: It's 140 million in
22 revenue and approximately 200 million
23 lower in obligations.

24 MR. DUBOW: I think some of the
25 big drivers, I think that's what you're

1 looking for. So wage tax was higher.
2 The sales tax was higher. The BIRT was
3 higher, so those three together were
4 about 100 million. And what's
5 interesting was there were a lot of
6 things that broke our way by little and
7 because they're so big, they add up to a
8 lot. And then our benefits came in
9 lower, health benefits. Even our
10 salaries came in -- our salaries at 1
11 percent lower. But because our salaries
12 are 1.8 billion, that's \$18 million.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me come
14 back to something Harvey -- I want to
15 make sure I understand what you're
16 saying. You said 140 million more in
17 revenue and 200 million less in
18 obligations?

19 MR. RICE: Right.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Would that be
21 a difference of 340 million?

22 MR. RICE: There was some
23 adjustments.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. All
25 right. Let me know about that, what the

1 final numbers were on that. I want to
2 go back to wage taxes for a --

3 MR. DUBOW: I think part of
4 what offsets that is moving some of the
5 federal money from --

6 MR. RICE: Federal money.

7 MR. DUBOW: -- 2022.

8 MR. RICE: Yeah, that was part
9 of that, moving the federal money.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. But
11 really in the performance of the City
12 would it be accurate for me to say that
13 140 million more in revenue and 200
14 million less in spending, is that --

15 MR. RICE: Yes, I think that's
16 a very fair assessment.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
18 think that's good, not bad.

19 MR. RICE: Yeah, that's what we
20 like to see.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yeah. Let me
22 go back to wage tax for a minute. I
23 think, Rob, did you say the projection
24 or refunds was going to be about 125
25 million and it's about 110 roughly.

1 MR. DUBOW: We came in just a
2 little under 100, so that's part of the
3 difference. Refunds were also really
4 high in the high 90s. We're a little
5 lower than we projected.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: What fiscal
7 year would that be for if you're
8 counting that?

9 MR. DUBOW: '21.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: '21. And
11 when does that -- actually when does
12 that end? When can people not continue
13 to apply for a refund, by what date?

14 MR. DUBOW: They can continue
15 to apply for a refund -- and if I get
16 this wrong, Frank should jump in --
17 three years.

18 MR. RICE: Three years.

19 MR. DUBOW: We think we've seen
20 the bulk of it, but there is a chance
21 that you'll see some continuing hit, and
22 you see it used -- the big time for
23 people to start looking for wage tax
24 refunds is around when their federal
25 taxes are due, so you see the spike in

1 the spring. And we can see that this
2 year, that there was a really big hit
3 for a couple months around then and then
4 it drops off and hasn't moved much at
5 all.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: What are you
7 projecting for next year on refunds for
8 wage tax?

9 MR. DUBOW: I think it's 70
10 million.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And then the
12 other question is how will inflation
13 possibly affect our operational costs,
14 especially in Class 200?

15 MR. DUBOW: So I think that
16 will create some strain for our costs as
17 everything goes up. We should probably
18 see some strain. There may be some
19 offset to that in terms of on the
20 revenue side. For example, if wages go
21 up, sort of inflation, that there might
22 be some impact on the wage tax.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I've seen
24 reports that inflation could be 8 to 10
25 percent this year and 8 to 10 percent

1 next year.

2 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, and we would
3 see that in the sales tax too.

4 MR. RICE: Right.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. The
6 other question I have is this is just an
7 example of the operational performance
8 measures. We were talking about the
9 Free Library and we talked about the
10 Teen program attendance in the chart.
11 And the Teen program attendance for
12 Fiscal Year '22 is like way down.

13 Is there someone on that team
14 that could say, you know what, let's
15 notify all of the Philadelphia high
16 schools, 9th to 12th graders about the
17 Teen program and make sure they're aware
18 of it.

19 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, I think that
20 was part of it. And I think also part
21 of it, you know, letting people know
22 that libraries are back and that they're
23 open and that the hours are predictable,
24 so there's definitely an outreach to be
25 done to make sure all of that is known.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And the last
2 question I have -- well, maybe not the
3 last, but one of the last -- is I'm
4 trying to get your opinions on this, I
5 hear from people all over the City
6 there's a shortage of employment, okay.
7 There's not enough people to work in a
8 lot of these jobs. And I'm just
9 wondering where did these people go?
10 Why don't we have enough people? What's
11 going on?

12 MR. RICE: Councilmember, I ask
13 that question to my staff and to our
14 economists every day almost. I can't
15 understand it. Why the unemployment is
16 so low, but there are businesses that
17 anywhere you go, they're looking for
18 help, anywhere you go, any type of
19 business, whether it's retail,
20 restaurant, entertainment.

21 MR. DUBOW: It's a national
22 phenomenon.

23 MR. RICE: Right --

24 MR. RASHID: If I can say a
25 couple of words. As you know, I'm one

1 of the Co-chairs of Ready. Set. Philly!,
2 which is a City government and business
3 coalition that has come together to try
4 to get people back to work. We've done
5 surveys and studies. And as Rob was
6 saying, this is all part of what's
7 called the Great Resignation nationwide.

8 But we studied people here in
9 Philly, and the number one reason that
10 we got from our surveys was people felt
11 what they call safety and security was
12 the number one reason. And when we
13 delved into that reason, the number one
14 factor in safety and security was the
15 pandemic and safety coming to work for
16 those people, especially in the
17 hospitality industry who have to face
18 out to people every day, but also from
19 working parents who have to send their
20 children to child care and the concerns
21 with sending their children to child
22 care which seems to be bearing out right
23 now, and then also there's the overall
24 concern about physical security, whether
25 it's gun violence, crime, whatever, that

1 is continuing not only in the downtown
2 areas but even more so in the
3 neighborhood area. And so, people are
4 just saying I don't want to get out, I
5 don't want to go out. And if I can, I'm
6 just going to quit my job, so people are
7 withdrawing themselves from the
8 workforce.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do we expect
10 that to change in the next six months or
11 we're not sure?

12 MR. RASHID: There are articles
13 that have been written, and I read one
14 as recently as this week, which says
15 they expect things to change. They
16 expect things to get better hopefully as
17 the pandemic wanes and adjustments are
18 made for child care, but I don't think
19 we expect it to happen very soon.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And while we
21 have you, Director Rashid, do you have
22 any idea -- I heard that in November
23 that 36 percent of the offices were
24 open. Do you have any idea what number
25 we're going to be at in January or

1 February when the offices open in the
2 City?

3 MR. RASHID: No. We talked to
4 employers in the City and they are being
5 very cautious, Councilmember, in terms
6 of pushing people to come back. They're
7 letting people and supervisors make
8 choices. Choice seems to be something
9 that's very important. You don't want
10 to make people do something they don't
11 want to do. So to be honest with you,
12 we have not heard any predictions.
13 What's overriding the whole thing is the
14 pandemic.

15 And I think a couple of weeks
16 ago we would have said things are
17 getting better with the pandemic, the
18 numbers were going down. But now in the
19 last couple of weeks the numbers have
20 come up, so we'll just have to see.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. That's
22 probably key to helping our budget also
23 getting all these people back into these
24 jobs. So we need these wage taxes and
25 other taxes paid. All right. Well,

1 thank you.

2 Any other questions from my
3 colleagues?

4 MR. RASHID: Councilmember, if
5 I can just --

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
7 Councilmember --

8 MR. RASHID: I'm sorry.
9 Councilmember, if I can just say one
10 thing, there is a bright star on the
11 horizon which is sort of immune to the
12 pandemic, and that's our biomed and tech
13 industry here in Philadelphia. As you
14 probably know, almost \$1.4 billion is
15 being invested into that industry in
16 2021.

17 We have new starts in tech than
18 any other City, including Boston. And
19 the good thing about that industry with
20 respect to the pandemic, when you work
21 in a lab, you really can't work remotely
22 in a lab. You have to come into the lab
23 and do what you have to do, and the labs
24 are being built in West Philadelphia.
25 West Philadelphia is positioned to be

1 the number one gene and cell therapy
2 center not only in the United States,
3 but in the whole world.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'm fully
5 aware. We have a great person named Jim
6 Wilson running that program, so that's
7 great news. Thank you for sharing.
8 That's great news. Thank you.

9 MR. RASHID: Yes, sir.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is my
11 Councilmember Kathy Gilmore Richardson,
12 I know she's having technical issues,
13 I'm not sure she's able to ask
14 questions, but she's going to send it in
15 for the record.

16 Any other questions from my
17 colleagues?

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
19 Mr. Chairman, this is Councilwoman Bass.
20 I just wanted to make a statement.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Sure.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I wanted to
23 just say that number one, I thought that
24 the hearing has been really, really
25 informative from my viewpoint.

1 And I wanted to just circle
2 back to Mr. Rashid and his comments.
3 And I wanted to, number one, thank him
4 for breaking down in terms of where have
5 all the employees gone. You know, just
6 the conversation and the analysis that
7 was done, I think for many of us or at
8 least for me it really did put together
9 some of the things we have been
10 suspecting, some of the things we have
11 been thinking and just that there was a
12 thoughtful analysis of this. It really
13 comes together and makes sense.

14 So I just really wanted to give
15 kudos to that and also to the work that
16 we do here in Council around making sure
17 our employees are safe and employment
18 conditions matter. There's a lot more
19 that we have to do, but we also have to
20 do more so that people feel comfortable
21 coming outside onto the streets of
22 Philadelphia and that they will return
23 to pre-COVID normalcy.

24 And I know that's going to take
25 some time, but getting there is very,

1 very important. It's important not just
2 economically, but it's important to the
3 psyche for our mental conditions. And
4 so, I just really wanted to thank
5 Mr. Rashid for his analysis and really
6 thank all of the speakers. I think it's
7 been a wealth of information.

8 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Councilmember Bass. Appreciate it.
11 Thank you very much.

12 I want to thank each witness
13 for being here today --

14 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Mr. Chair.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: This is
17 Councilman Squilla. Can I ask a
18 question?

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Sure.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I talked
21 to the (inaudible) and even the Streets
22 Department. Why are we having such a
23 hard time filling those positions since
24 there are current lists that are
25 available (inaudible)?

1 MR. DUBOW: I think we are in
2 the process. We're adding --

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: You are in
4 the process --

5 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, we're adding
6 new positions. So I don't think
7 that's --

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Wait,
9 you're adding new positions or you're
10 filling the ones that aren't filled?

11 MR. DUBOW: We're adding new
12 positions. We added funding in the
13 transfer ordinance to add new positions
14 to the Streets Department.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yeah, but
16 the problem seems to be that we're not
17 filling the ones that are empty. So if
18 we can't fill the ones that are empty,
19 adding money for the new positions, how
20 is that helping?

21 MR. DUBOW: I think actually
22 the problem there is more absenteeism.
23 I don't think it's as much of a large
24 vacancy rate. It's been more people are
25 out.

1 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: We reached
2 out to (inaudible) --

3 MR. DUBOW: I'm having a hard
4 time hearing you.

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I'm sorry.
6 It seemed like the Library had said that
7 they can't get people to fill their
8 positions and, therefore, that's why the
9 libraries aren't open full-time. If
10 that's not accurate, then maybe we can
11 go back and ask them again.

12 MR. DUBOW: Oh, I thought you
13 were asking about Streets. Sorry. The
14 libraries --

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Libraries
16 and Streets.

17 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, I think the
18 Library has had problems filling
19 positions, but I know that they're
20 working with HR on that, but I do think
21 that's been an issue there.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And there
23 is a large list. So that's what makes
24 me -- it just seems like we're really
25 moving slow on filling those spots, and

1 I agree we can increase our sanitation
2 workers. Those guys, they've been
3 working through the pandemic and working
4 diligently and we need more, especially
5 since we're now working with the Street
6 cleaning program. Is that still moving
7 forward as projected?

8 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, I think so.
9 I haven't asked about it. I haven't
10 heard that it's not. I think that's a
11 better way to put it because I have not
12 heard about that lately.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All right.
14 If we can get that information to the
15 Chair, it will be appreciated. Thank
16 you.

17 MR. DUBOW: Okay.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
19 Councilmember Squilla. Good questions.

20 Any other questions from my
21 colleagues?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
24 Seeing none, I want to thank every
25 witness for being here today. Great

1 testimony. Great information. We
2 appreciate your testimony today and look
3 forward to working with you in the
4 future.

5 I also want to thank everybody
6 who is tuned in today. I think it was a
7 very good hearing. You all brought
8 great information to the City today,
9 which is great. And lastly and very
10 importantly, I want to wish you and all
11 your families a very safe and Happy
12 Thanksgiving holiday. And this
13 concludes the hearing on Resolution
14 200406. The hearing is now adjourned.
15 Thank you all. Take care.

16 MS. DEL BIANCO: Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

18 (Committee on Fiscal Stability
19 and Intergovernmental Cooperation
20 concluded at 10:53 a.m.)
21
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25

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are contained
fully and accurately in the stenographic notes
taken by me in the foregoing matter, and that
this is a correct transcript of the same.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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