

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, April 17, 2024
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILWOMAN NINA AHMAD
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN JIM HARRITY
COUNCILMAN CURTIS J. JONES, JR.
COUNCILWOMAN RUE LANDAU
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN NICOLAS O'ROURKE
COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS
COUNCILMAN MARK F. SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.

BILLS: 240179, 240180, 240181, 240182
RESOLUTION: 240193

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Good morning, everyone.

3 (Good morning.)

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 This is the public hearing and
6 public meeting of the Committee of
7 the Whole regarding Bill Nos.

8 240179, 240180, 240181, 240182 and
9 Resolution No. 240193.

10 Ms. Loughhead, will you
11 please call the roll to take
12 attendance.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember
14 Squilla.

15 (No response.)

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Gauthier.

18 (No response.)

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Jones.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Present.

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember
23 Young.

24 (No response.)

25 THE CLERK: Councilmember

1 Driscoll.
2 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Here.
3 THE CLERK: Councilmember
4 Lozada.
5 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:
6 Present.
7 THE CLERK: Councilmember
8 Bass.
9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
10 Present.
11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 Phillips.
13 (No response.)
14 THE CLERK: Councilmember
15 O'Neill.
16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Aye --
17 present.
18 THE CLERK: Councilmember
19 Gilmore Richardson.
20 (No response.)
21 THE CLERK: Councilmember
22 Thomas.
23 (No response.)
24 THE CLERK: Councilmember
25 Harrity.

1 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Here.
2 THE CLERK: Councilmember
3 Ahmad.
4 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Here.
5 THE CLERK: Councilmember
6 Landau.
7 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Here.
8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Brooks.
10 (No response.)
11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 O'Rourke.
13 (No response.)
14 THE CLERK: Council
15 President Johnson.
16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Here.
18 Thank you. A quorum of the
19 Committee is present and this
20 hearing is now called to order.
21 Ms. Loughhead, will you
22 please read the titles of the
23 resolutions.
24 THE CLERK: Bill No.
25 240179, an ordinance to adopt the

1 Operating Budget for Fiscal Year
2 2025.

3 Bill No. 240180, an
4 ordinance amending Chapter 19-1800
5 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled
6 "School Tax Authorization," to
7 provide for an increase in the tax
8 that the Board of Education of the
9 School District of Philadelphia is
10 authorized to impose on real
11 estate, and amending Chapter
12 19-1300, entitled "Real Estate
13 Taxes," to establish an equivalent
14 reduction in the tax rate for the
15 City real estate tax, and making
16 technical changes, all under
17 certain terms and conditions.

18 Bill No. 240181, an
19 ordinance to adopt a Fiscal Year
20 2025 Capital Budget.

21 Bill No. 240182, an
22 ordinance to adopt a Capital
23 Program for the six Fiscal Years
24 2025-2030 inclusive.

25 Resolution No. 240193,

1 providing for the approval by the
2 Council of the City of Philadelphia
3 of a revised Five Year Financial
4 Plan for the City of Philadelphia
5 covering Fiscal Years 2025 through
6 2029, and incorporating revisions
7 with respect to Fiscal Year 2024,
8 which is to be submitted by the
9 Mayor to the Pennsylvania
10 Intergovernmental Cooperation
11 Authority pursuant to an
12 Intergovernmental Cooperation
13 Agreement by and between the City
14 and the Authority.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Today we will continue the public
17 hearing of the Committee of the
18 Whole to consider the bills read by
19 the Clerk that constitute proposed
20 operating and capital spending
21 measures for Fiscal Year 2025, a
22 Capital Program and a Forward-
23 looking Capital Plan for Fiscal
24 Year 2025 through Fiscal Year 2030.

25 This morning we will hear

1 testimony from the City Controller
2 and the First Judicial District.
3 This afternoon we will continue
4 with testimony from the Sheriff's
5 Office and the Citizens Police
6 Oversight Committee -- Commission.

7 Ms. Loughhead, will you
8 please call the first witness to
9 testify from the Administration.

10 THE CLERK: Christy Brady,
11 City Controller.

12 (Witnesses approached
13 Witness table.)

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
15 Good morning.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Good morning. Just state your name
18 and title for the record and please
19 begin your testimony.

20 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
21 Good morning. I am Christy Brady,
22 City Controller. Good morning,
23 Council President Johnson, Majority
24 Leader Gilmore Richardson, Majority
25 Whip Thomas, Majority Deputy Whip

1 Bass, Minority Leader Brooks,
2 Minority Whip O'Rourke and other
3 esteemed Councilmembers.

4 I am City Controller
5 Christy Brady, and we want to thank
6 you for the opportunity to present
7 the Fiscal Year '25 budget of the
8 Office of the City Controller.
9 Joining me today are my First
10 Deputy Bill Rubin, Audit Deputy
11 Charles Edacheril and
12 Administrative Services Director
13 Andrea Rose. First, I would like
14 to extend my gratitude to the staff
15 of the Controller's Office who work
16 diligently each and every day.
17 Thank you for all that you do.

18 Since taking office on
19 November 30th, I have focused on
20 restructuring the City Controller's
21 Office and its divisions. One of
22 my first actions was reviving our
23 Community Affairs Division. Since
24 I ran for office during a special
25 election, I had the privilege of

1 campaigning alongside the Mayor and
2 all of you.

3 The experience allowed me
4 to form many positive relationships
5 over the months we spent together.
6 And as we traveled across the City
7 attending various events, the
8 critical role of the Community
9 Affairs Division in my
10 administration became abundantly
11 clear. Through this Division, I
12 can connect with citizens,
13 understand their priorities and
14 work to improve their lives.

15 An example of the impact of
16 this work occurred when a member of
17 our Community Affairs Team
18 delivered an elder fraud
19 presentation at a community event.
20 During the presentation, one
21 attendee shared that she was a
22 victim of check-washing, resulting
23 in a loss of almost \$10,000.
24 Through our team's persistent
25 outreach efforts, we were able to

1 assist this woman in getting her
2 money back.

3 I have attended community
4 meetings across the City, including
5 a town hall at New Beginnings
6 Church with Police Commissioner
7 Bethel, a meeting at the Boys and
8 Girls Club with you, Council
9 President, in South Philadelphia.
10 I've also spent time at the Boys
11 and Girls Club in North
12 Philadelphia with Councilmembers
13 Young and O'Rourke. And through
14 these and many other community
15 engagements, we are currently
16 working to establish financial
17 literacy programs in each of the
18 Boys and Girls Club sites as well
19 as a financial literacy program for
20 returning citizens.

21 We are also actively
22 engaged with Chairman Sabir,
23 Commissioner Deeley and
24 Commissioner Bluestein to
25 streamline and expedite the payment

1 process for our hardworking poll
2 workers and other essential
3 personnel who are vital to
4 providing a fair and transparent
5 electoral process.

6 Contrary to what some might
7 say, good things happen in
8 Philadelphia. My team and I have
9 worked on distributing food in
10 Councilmember Gauthier and
11 Councilmember Bass's Districts, and
12 I am working with Councilmember
13 Jones on the costs associated with
14 crime and incarceration.

15 I am collaborating on
16 matters such as the Kensington
17 Initiative with Councilmembers
18 Lozada and Harrity, addressing PGW
19 issues with Councilmember Driscoll,
20 L&I demolition issues with
21 Councilmember Phillips, youth and
22 education issues with Councilmember
23 Thomas and considering strategies
24 to support the City's underserved
25 and most vulnerable citizens with

1 Councilmember O'Rourke.

2 These issues are separate
3 from the annual audits and
4 examinations conducted by my
5 Auditing Division. This Division
6 is responsible for conducting
7 comprehensive audits of City
8 departments, financial statements
9 of the City and School District,
10 the single audits of the City and
11 School District and the City's Five
12 Year Plan.

13 The Audit Division has also
14 initiated a performance audit on
15 the Department of Licenses &
16 Inspections to assess the
17 effectiveness of L&I's enforcement
18 of building codes and safety
19 standards as well as to ascertain
20 whether contractors and
21 subcontractors are utilizing a
22 properly documented workforce. Our
23 Pre-Audit Division continues to
24 process vouchers and payments from
25 various City departments.

1 Meanwhile our Investigative
2 Division is addressing concerns
3 related to other quality-of-life
4 issues, such as sidewalk cafés
5 alongside Councilwoman Landau.
6 With the World Cup and many other
7 exciting events being planned in
8 the upcoming years, a vibrant
9 outdoor dining experience will
10 bring positive energy and give
11 visitors a fun experience here in
12 Philadelphia.

13 We will review the rules
14 and look for ways to streamline the
15 process without sacrificing the
16 necessary accessibility and safety
17 for each site. We are also
18 reviewing the policies and
19 procedures regarding imminently
20 dangerous properties that put our
21 citizens at risk from falling
22 debris and damage to adjoining
23 properties. We will identify paths
24 for making our city safer. And we
25 are reviewing the recently-passed

1 Skills Gaming legislation for
2 compliance.

3 In collaboration with the
4 City Treasurer's Office, our
5 Financial Policy Division was able
6 to help distribute unclaimed monies
7 to our retirees, one of whom was
8 owed more than \$20,000. The
9 Financial Policy Division also
10 recently introduced a new monthly
11 report titled, Municipal Money
12 Matters, focusing on specific
13 topics related to City finances.

14 I am proud of the progress
15 we have made in revitalizing the
16 Office of the City Controller and
17 its vital functions. Through
18 proactive community engagement,
19 strategic partnerships and diligent
20 oversight, we are committed to
21 serving the residents of our city
22 with transparency, accountability
23 and efficiency.

24 As we move forward, I look
25 forward to continued collaboration

1 with all Councilmembers and
2 stakeholders to ensure the
3 responsible fiscal management of
4 our city's resources and the well-
5 being of its citizens. Thank you
6 once again for the opportunity to
7 present our Fiscal Year '25 budget.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 Thank you very much. Good to see
10 you as well, First Deputy Bill
11 Rubin. And just want to say thus
12 far, Controller Brady, just thank
13 you for your hard work and
14 dedication in terms of being out
15 and about in the community. You
16 talked about being with me at the
17 Boys and Girls Club but also at our
18 Budget town halls, you have been
19 there as well. So we just want to
20 thank you for your love of
21 outreach.

22 I just have a couple
23 questions before I relax my time to
24 the Members. Your office is
25 responsible for reviewing the

1 budget and Five Year Plan. And so,
2 as you review and prepare to issue
3 an opinion on the City's Five Year
4 Plan, what are the key areas that
5 you will be focusing on?

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

7 Thank you for the question, Council
8 President. Some of the key areas
9 that we look for is the fund
10 balance, making sure that it's
11 well-funded. Obviously, we have
12 the ARPA funds that will be ending
13 this year, and those are the two
14 areas that I mostly focus on. But
15 we are in the middle of -- well,
16 we're just beginning to review that
17 Five Year Plan, so more to come.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

19 Thank you very much. Your
20 department is responsible for
21 examining the financial affairs of
22 Philadelphia City departments
23 focusing on internal controls to
24 ensure accurate financial
25 information in compliance with any

1 laws and regulations related to
2 revenue and expenditure activities
3 in each department.

4 And so, one of the hot
5 topics that we're working on in
6 City Council led by our Majority
7 Leader Katherine Gilmore Richardson
8 is the current investigation of the
9 Office of Homeless. Can you give
10 us an idea on what controls or
11 recommended systematic changes, at
12 least from your perspective thus
13 far, that you would recommend that
14 we address and we can actually
15 partner on from a City Council
16 standpoint as it relates to making
17 sure such instances doesn't take
18 place in the future? And when I
19 say instances, meaning overall
20 mismanagement of taxpayer dollars
21 in terms of the operation of that
22 particular department.

23 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
24 Thank you for the question, Council
25 President. I have been discussing

1 this issue with the Majority Leader
2 and it is very concerning. As this
3 took place prior to me coming into
4 office and since the IG had already
5 begun an investigation, we have
6 allowed them to move forward at the
7 present time with this
8 investigation. And since it is
9 ongoing, I'm not really able to get
10 into detail until the report's
11 released, but I am looking forward
12 to having an extensive conversation
13 with you, Councilmember Gilmore
14 Richardson and the Mayor on how we
15 can work together to rectify any
16 issues that are outlined in that
17 report.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 Okay. Thank you very much. You're
20 our new fiscal watchdog. And so,
21 we will be looking for your
22 guidance and your leadership
23 regarding all of our City
24 departments and how they're
25 managing our City's tax dollars.

1 Could you take in
2 consideration also in terms of
3 different initiatives there's a
4 recent report that talks about how
5 our court-appointed lawyers as well
6 as our court-appointed
7 investigators do not receive their
8 payments in a timely fashion, and
9 obviously we know everyone deserves
10 a strong legal defense. And so,
11 you have a court-appointed attorney
12 or a court-appointed investigator
13 and you may not have the means to
14 have private counsel, this will be
15 obviously a very, very important
16 and critical role for individuals
17 to have legal representation.

18 And so, are you aware of
19 the issue? And if you're not,
20 could you take in consideration
21 something to look at in terms of
22 supporting those in the legal
23 community that are using their time
24 freely, pro bono-wise, to help
25 indigent individuals who are in

1 need of legal counsel?

2 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

3 Thank you, Council President. Yes,
4 I am aware of the issue. It came
5 to me just recently. And if it is
6 Council's desire, it is something
7 that we can do an audit on.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 It's my desire. I have some
10 colleagues who are -- we have two
11 lawyers that are members of City
12 Council as well who I know for a
13 fact has an interest, but also I
14 think the body as a whole has an
15 interest in making sure that when
16 you're talking about pro bono legal
17 services for those who are poor,
18 the people who are actually
19 providing those services are
20 supported and that we're on a level
21 playing field competing with
22 individuals who have private
23 attorneys and so forth.

24 My last question is we
25 experienced a significant amount of

1 development throughout the City of
2 Philadelphia, some areas more than
3 others. Currently, you are
4 reviewing the policies and
5 procedures regarding imminently
6 dangerous properties that put our
7 citizens at risk from falling
8 debris and damage to adjoining
9 properties.

10 What have you identified as
11 recommendations for improving
12 safety and are there barriers in
13 City operations that prevent us
14 from improving safety? And I was
15 just leaving an event where I was
16 talking to some members of the
17 Building Trades and we talked about
18 the party walls, right, and how
19 when you're building these new
20 structures, the long-term
21 residents' homes are pretty much --
22 normally when there's a demo, their
23 party wall is damaged, houses are
24 shifting, but it's left on the
25 homeowner to pay to even get the

1 wall stuccoed or any type of
2 remedial work that needs to be
3 done.

4 Give me an idea of what
5 your recommendations are or what
6 you have thus far seen as barriers
7 or things that we need to do to
8 improve fighting and supporting
9 individual homeowners whose homes
10 have been impacted by developers,
11 and I call it unscrupulous
12 contractors?

13 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

14 Thank you for the question. You
15 know, just last week we had a
16 building collapse. And when you
17 read the articles in the paper
18 about how helpless people are
19 living next door to construction or
20 how thankful they are that they're
21 moving into something that there is
22 no chance of having construction
23 happening next door to them, the
24 helpless feeling I can't even
25 fathom because it's your home.

1 We are in the process of
2 identifying each and every
3 imminently dangerous property and
4 are working with L&I to give them a
5 report that can be the basis for
6 increased funding and staffing,
7 because we need to put a stop to
8 this from happening.

9 It's my understanding that
10 building codes you can only go so
11 far up, so they're going down and
12 it's affecting the underpinning,
13 and it might be an area to look
14 into in the building code to not
15 dig down and get into that
16 underpinning. I can only go that
17 far because I'm not a building
18 expert.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 And on the topic of L&I, your
21 testimony cites that your Audit
22 Division has initiated a
23 performance audit on the Department
24 of Licenses and Inspections to
25 assess the effectiveness of L&I's

1 enforcement of building codes and
2 safety standards as well as to
3 ascertain whether contractors and
4 subcontractors are utilizing a
5 properly-documented workforce,
6 which really also leads into when
7 you're addressing the issue of wage
8 theft and wage fraud. And
9 obviously, when we talk about the
10 revenue that's needed in this City,
11 that's a particular area. And so,
12 what has your audit shown us thus
13 far regarding those two practices?

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

15 Thank you for the question, Council
16 President. We need to make sure
17 that we're all playing on a level
18 playing field and we need to ensure
19 the safety of the workers. This is
20 just the beginning of our audit so
21 I can't really comment, but these
22 are the issues that I felt was most
23 important.

24 Public safety is something
25 that I've always felt strongly

1 about as well as government
2 accountability, so this is one of
3 the reasons why I wanted to look
4 into these issues and it needs to
5 improve.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 When you talk about public safety,
8 you recently did a report on an
9 initiative that's significant to
10 members of Council when it comes to
11 supporting the boots-on-the-ground
12 organizations, credible messengers,
13 the mom-and-pop which we call
14 grassroots organizations around the
15 issue of violence prevention.

16 Give us just a little
17 synopsis of the outcome of that
18 report, improvements and
19 recommendations on how we can still
20 continue to support these
21 organizations, which I believe
22 played a major role in a 35 percent
23 reduction of gun violence that we
24 see in the City of Philadelphia,
25 particularly shootings as well as

1 homicides, but obviously we want
2 organizations that we provide
3 funding to are fiscally responsible
4 but separate from the
5 organizations, right. I'm not even
6 putting all the onus on the
7 organizations. I'm going to put
8 the onus on the Administration that
9 provided the funding to the
10 organizations.

11 And so, give us your
12 synopsis on that, because most of
13 the members of this body kind of
14 worked very, very hard to get that.
15 I think we started with \$100-plus
16 million for just violence
17 prevention and then carved out a
18 key component just for the boots-
19 on-the-ground organizations.

20 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
21 Right. Thank you for the question,
22 Council President. The goal of
23 this report was to answer questions
24 that I raised on the campaign trail
25 about how the process was supposed

1 to work. When I found that the
2 funding was in one department but
3 the contract was in another, in my
4 almost 30 years of experience in
5 the Controller's Office, I found
6 that when the City contracts out
7 the oversight for a program,
8 usually they wipe their hands and
9 say, well, we contracted that
10 oversight out so you have to go to
11 that organization, and it just
12 creates a level of bureaucracy and
13 layers for me to get to the answers
14 that I need to get to.

15 We went out and reached out
16 to many of the community groups to
17 hear their stories because I wanted
18 to make sure that I understood how
19 they were getting the money from
20 the City and how they thought the
21 process worked. And when I went
22 into looking into this further and
23 found that the contract wasn't even
24 conformed and they were asking the
25 oversight agency to start giving

1 out the money, and they did so in
2 good faith, I mean because there
3 was a crisis going on, but you
4 can't start asking for an
5 organization to perform services
6 when the details of how you're
7 supposed to give the money out and
8 what they're required to state back
9 to the City in terms of how they
10 spend the money, it just caused
11 confusion and it caused delays in
12 payments.

13 So going forward, the City
14 did make some corrections. They
15 properly RFP'd the contract in the
16 department that it's funded in, and
17 the contract specified exactly how
18 that money should be spent and how
19 these organizations would be
20 reimbursed for their money. And
21 so, I did see an improvement which
22 I was very happy to see.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 Okay. Well, thank you very much.
25 I relax my time.

1 The Chair recognizes
2 Councilmember Jones.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
4 you so very much, Mr. President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 Member Jones, just for one second.
7 I just want to acknowledge the
8 presence of Councilmember Isaiah
9 Thomas, Councilmember Jay Young,
10 Councilmember O'Rourke and
11 Councilmember Lozada. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
13 you, Mr. President.

14 There is an African proverb
15 about the king, the reluctant king
16 where they chase him around with
17 the throne because they really
18 don't want the responsibility to
19 some degree, that was you early on,
20 and you decided for the benefit of
21 the City of Philadelphia to take on
22 this responsibility. And I want to
23 let you know we're glad you did.

24 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
25 Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's
2 number one. And the two things
3 that I am very interested in, I
4 read your reports, it's interesting
5 reading what your team put
6 together, some insightful stuff.
7 And I'm thankful that it's more
8 about get it moments than gotcha
9 moments. That doesn't do other
10 than get a headline in the paper
11 really serve the City of
12 Philadelphia, the Council of the
13 City of Philadelphia, when we just
14 try to expose our weaknesses as
15 opposed to correcting the process,
16 so I'm thankful for that.

17 What I'm interested in and
18 what I've shared with you during
19 the campaign, and you have not let
20 me down in forgetting it, is we
21 don't know what the cost of crime
22 is in the City of Philadelphia.
23 From the time that young person
24 carjacks a car, to the police that
25 pick them up, to the car that they

1 drive in, to the cell that they're
2 in, to the cheese sandwich that
3 they get at night, to the counselor
4 that they get when they're in lock-
5 up, the assessment that happens
6 from the social worker, to the DA,
7 to the defender, to the judge, to
8 the jury, to the stenographer, how
9 much that cost. And it's not a
10 rhetorical kind of math problem,
11 but it allows us to know that when
12 we put a dollar in prevention and
13 can avoid all of that, we actually
14 save dollars.

15 I tell people that there
16 are two types of elected officials,
17 those who want to save souls and
18 those who want to save tax dollars,
19 and neither one of them is wrong,
20 but we have to figure out and, not
21 or. And so, what we asked you and
22 your team to do is give us an
23 assessment of how much -- you're
24 not the only one. The First
25 Judicial District is coming up.

1 I've asked them to kind of
2 chronicle that.

3 And the reason, what I'd
4 like to show you is when I first
5 was appointed to the Special
6 Committee on Criminal Justice
7 Reform, we literally got a chart --
8 can you help me out, Member Thomas?

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Yes,
10 sir.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you
12 help me out? Thank you. This
13 is --

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: A
15 flowchart.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- a
17 process from the time somebody gets
18 arrested to when dispositions can
19 happen. One thing can lead to
20 another. You get ARD, you get
21 bail. There are so many different
22 things.

23 Thank you so much, and you
24 can come this way so that the
25 President can see it as well.

1 But these are all the
2 different functions that can
3 happen. Each one of them cost.
4 Each one of them has a taxpayer's
5 exposure, but nobody has taken the
6 time to figure out how much that
7 is. The average homicide trial is
8 somewhere around six months. How
9 much does that cost.

10 And if we then do this
11 right for those who are more a
12 little left than me, right, they
13 can justify an ounce of prevention
14 is worth a pound of cure. And so,
15 thank you for taking that on. You
16 cannot have that, but we will
17 figure out how to get you a copy.
18 But that's what I was given as to
19 the possible outcomes of every time
20 a young person, older person
21 commits that crime, these are the
22 possible outcomes. So with that?

23 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

24 Well, thank you, Councilmember
25 Jones. First, I just want to say

1 something about the first part. I
2 love my job. It's what I've done
3 my whole career and I am not
4 looking for headlines. I'm not
5 preparing to run for another
6 office. I don't do my work with
7 preconceived ideas.

8 I just want to give you,
9 the Councilmembers here, Council
10 President, the Mayor, a body of
11 work with recommendations that you
12 can implement. It's my hope that
13 my recommendations will make our
14 city a better place. That's why I
15 want to have these partnerships
16 with all of you because I want you
17 to implement my recommendations.
18 That's success to me, not being in
19 the newspaper, not announcing some
20 sensationalized -- it's getting you
21 to implement my recommendations.
22 Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES:

24 Mr. Chairman, I'll wait for the
25 second round to talk about those

1 gambling machines so I'm going to
2 yield the mic.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 Thank you, Member Jones.

5 The Chair recognizes
6 Councilmember Cindy Bass.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
8 you, Mr. President.

9 Good morning.

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

11 Good morning.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: How are
13 you?

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

15 Very well.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good,
17 good. So I just wanted to say a
18 couple of things. I had a couple
19 of questions. And the first thing
20 I wanted to say is it's been a
21 pleasure and really a breath of
22 fresh air to work with you and your
23 office, and I've known Bill for a
24 very long time and always had a
25 great working relationship. But

1 it's really important that
2 political offices, government
3 offices are not weaponized against
4 people. And I've seen that in the
5 past in the Controller's Office.

6 I hate to say it, but I
7 have seen that in the past where
8 if folks are connected or if folks
9 know someone and they can sort of
10 weaponize an office that's really
11 as important as the Controller's
12 Office against someone else. And
13 so, I just really wanted to say
14 keep up the good work.

15 As I mentioned, it's been
16 really a breath of fresh air to
17 work with you and I'm looking
18 forward to seeing what your office
19 is going to be doing going forward
20 because I think you're really off
21 to a good start.

22 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: You're
25 welcome, you're welcome. That

1 being said, I do have a couple of
2 questions. And the first is I
3 noticed in the budget that there
4 was a request for an increase of
5 \$30,000 in seminars and trainings.
6 Can you talk about that a little
7 bit? What is that?

8 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

9 Thank you for the question.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Sure.

11 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: For
12 our office we offer CPE credits to
13 all of our staff. In order to
14 perform a governmental audit, we
15 need 80 hours of CPE every two
16 years and also to be -- which is
17 also consistent with your CPA
18 license.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So why
20 is that increasing then, because
21 I'm assuming that's something
22 that's been ongoing that you've
23 been providing those trainings for
24 a long time now?

25 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: We

1 used to have that in our budget
2 prior to COVID. And when COVID
3 happened, the PA State Accountancy
4 Board allowed us to have virtual
5 training and not in person and not
6 even in webinars, so we were able
7 to do what's called On-Demand
8 courses, which are somewhat more
9 boring. And now, we're bringing
10 that live training back in and
11 having that interaction with an
12 instructor where people can
13 actually ask questions and get
14 answers live.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

16 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: So
17 it typically was always in the
18 budget prior.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So
20 during COVID it turned into sort of
21 like a self-study kind of thing?

22 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
23 Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And now
25 that you --

1 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
2 you need to get a 70 percent or
3 have to take it again until you get
4 that 70 percent, yes.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.
6 Very good.

7 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
8 It's what makes us better at what
9 we do.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
11 Excellent, excellent. The other
12 question I had for you was around
13 assessments. And I know that you
14 look at the different departments
15 and assess who's doing what and how
16 it could be improved and you make
17 those recommendations. I know the
18 Council President had asked about
19 that.

20 But I wanted to drill down
21 on something that's been a pet
22 peeve of mine for a very long time
23 which is nuisance businesses and
24 specifically around the Department
25 of Licenses & Inspections, which I

1 think really has tried and put
2 forth effort in this matter, but
3 we're never able to really push the
4 needle as far as I think that we
5 really need to.

6 And so, I guess my question
7 to you is what kind of assessments
8 have you all done around L&I's
9 enforcement on nuisance businesses?
10 Have you made any recommendations
11 to them, anything that you can
12 think of off the top of your head
13 or if you want to get it to us
14 later, if you need to compile some
15 of the recommendations that you've
16 made around this specific issue?

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

18 Thank you for that question. I
19 would absolutely love to get into
20 that issue and talk about exactly
21 what we can do. It's not something
22 that we have specifically audited
23 in the past, but it is something
24 that we can absolutely look into,
25 and it's one of the reasons why I

1 wanted to look at the gaming. But
2 not just that, I think that this is
3 the opportunity having a new
4 department head, having L&I split.
5 I could definitely have that
6 conversation with Bridget, so I
7 think we can get things done.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
9 you. Because as you can see from
10 the lengthy flowchart that
11 Councilman Jones just pulled out, a
12 lot of these things are all
13 interconnected. Having the ability
14 of the Controller's Office to make
15 recommendations to departments so
16 that they're better able to handle
17 some of the things that are
18 happening out in the neighborhoods,
19 it just makes such a huge
20 difference. So I think that your
21 expertise and recommendations would
22 really go a long way to solving
23 what's been a problem for a very
24 long time in the City. So thank
25 you.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

3 Thank you. I 100 percent agree.

4 Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 You're welcome.

7 The Chair recognizes Rue

8 Landau.

9 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
10 you. Good morning.

11 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

12 Good morning.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: So
14 I'm a big fan, a big fan of the
15 Controller's Office. And as I am
16 learning more about what you can
17 do, it's exciting to know that it's
18 not just audits. It can be more
19 recommendations that help us with
20 equity and justice in the City, and
21 that to me is exciting.

22 You are a person who -- I
23 don't remember exactly how
24 Councilmember Jones described it,
25 but City Controllers are either

1 about audits and money or they're
2 saving -- you're saving money or
3 you're saving souls, but I know
4 that you want to do both. So I
5 appreciate that.

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
7 Absolutely.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I
9 also think this is a very
10 interesting time, because as I've
11 seen the transition from
12 Administrations in the past, we
13 have a Mayor Administration who's
14 just come in and said, whatever
15 happened in the past, please look
16 at it, help us fix our practices.
17 I wasn't the leader then. I am the
18 leader now, and I would like to
19 implement the good things. So I
20 think this is a very good time to
21 have both of you guys starting.

22 Do you have in your office
23 an attorney who looks at contracts?
24 Do you have any attorneys in your
25 office?

1 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: No.

2 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: There

3 is a --

4 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: But

5 we do review contracts.

6 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

7 Council President was talking

8 about, you know, I've been asking

9 many City departments as they've

10 come through about conforming

11 contracts, conforming contracts.

12 It's not just for court-appointed

13 attorneys that we're having a

14 problem. There's a problem with

15 our process.

16 It's too cumbersome. It's

17 too paper-based and we are not

18 getting the money in the hands of

19 the larger nonprofits that help

20 fund the smaller nonprofits and

21 just to the smaller nonprofits fast

22 enough. It's causing significant

23 harm. It's causing us court-

24 appointed attorneys, for example,

25 to say I'm not doing this anymore,

1 and we don't want any of that to
2 happen. This should be a simple
3 solution.

4 I believe that the
5 Administration wants to fix this.
6 They also have a whole lot of other
7 things they're trying to fix now.
8 But whatever you can do to help
9 look into the process to help
10 simplify the system, I think this
11 will go a very long way. There's a
12 process -- two problems: One,
13 conforming contracts, that takes
14 too long. And then, two, paying
15 the providers. Both things seem to
16 be slightly broken. Can't wait for
17 them to be fixed. But those
18 weren't my questions.

19 I want to first ask about
20 the sidewalk -- the outdoor dining,
21 I'm super excited about this. And
22 as we're exploring what we can do
23 with outdoor dining by streamlining
24 the application process and
25 re-exploring legislation, how can

1 your investigation assist?

2 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

3 Thank you for the question,
4 Councilmember Landau. We go into
5 what you're talking about, how the
6 permitting obviously -- was it 13
7 permits in the City for the
8 sidewalk cafés?

9 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Yes.

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
11 was floored when I heard it was 13.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
13 There's fewer that will happen now.
14 There were 13 this year. And when
15 I had my hearing, only two had
16 reapplied for a street permit.

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
18 that's one of the reasons why I
19 want to go in to see what is it.
20 Is it all the paperwork, is it the
21 contracting process, the permit
22 process. What is it that is
23 preventing people from wanting to
24 have that great outdoor dining
25 experience which I love. So it's

1 something that we need to look
2 into. And it's in the beginning
3 stages. And we can also have any
4 conversations going forward with
5 keeping you up-to-date on where
6 we're at. I want to hear the
7 problems that everyone is having
8 getting a permit and that's a
9 start.

10 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
11 you. I'm very interested in the
12 revival of your Community Affairs
13 Division. And how will this unit
14 work to help protect Philadelphia's
15 senior citizens who are some of our
16 most vulnerable residents?

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
18 We've been going around to
19 community events and giving elder
20 fraud presentations, and it has
21 been extremely helpful. I
22 mentioned earlier that a woman's
23 check was washed. It was written
24 out for \$30 and someone took it and
25 put 9,000 in front of it. And so,

1 through our persistent team's
2 effort, we ended up getting that
3 woman's money back and it was
4 because she came up to us after the
5 presentation and said this is what
6 happened, can you help me.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: We
8 want to as the head of the
9 Information and Technology
10 Committee go further and deeper
11 into some of these issues too, so
12 invite you to join us on this,
13 including the effect of AI on
14 fraudulent scams in Philadelphia.

15 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
16 It's pretty scary.

17 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I
18 have one more question. He's not
19 paying attention. The last
20 question I have is about the BIRT
21 and wage tax. As the City and
22 country continue to adjust to new
23 societal norms after the COVID
24 pandemic, work patterns and the
25 ability to attract businesses will

1 heavily impact the BIRT and wage
2 taxes and therefore the General
3 Fund. Will you commit to
4 continually evaluating these trends
5 both in Philadelphia nationwide and
6 issue more reports with
7 recommendations?

8 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
9 was very excited that Council
10 President reconvened the Tax Reform
11 Commission, and I'm looking forward
12 to their recommendations to see
13 where they go with the tax reforms
14 to bring businesses in and bring
15 good-paying jobs into the City to
16 help with poverty and homelessness.
17 I think that's a key.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
19 Excellent. Thank you.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 Thank you.

22 Chair recognizes
23 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
25 you, Council President.

1 Good morning. Good to see
2 you --

3 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

4 Good morning.

5 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: -- in
6 your professional official
7 capacity. We saw each other on the
8 campaign trail for a long time, so
9 glad we both made it.

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

11 Yes, me too.

12 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Your
13 department, your office is an
14 extremely important office for
15 keeping an eye on, as my colleague
16 said, both on the empathetic space
17 as well as the accountability space
18 of our use of tax dollars. I had a
19 question around audits on the sweet
20 and beverage tax.

21 As we heard -- I can't
22 remember yesterday, it's all mashed
23 up in my head, that they didn't
24 seem to give us an idea of where
25 all that money is going to go. Is

1 it going to continue work in the
2 PreK space, is it going to continue
3 work on rec centers and Community
4 Schools. I didn't get a sense of
5 that.

6 I don't know if you've done
7 an audit on that. Where are we on
8 keeping an eye on where the money
9 from the beverage tax is going?

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

11 Thank you for the question. We
12 audit all the revenues that come
13 into the City, sweet and beverage
14 tax is one of them. And because
15 that money goes into the General
16 Fund which it is allowed -- I did
17 look into it because I would have
18 liked it in a special revenue fund,
19 but the way it was legally set up,
20 it's allowed to go into the General
21 Fund -- that's why it's not as
22 specific.

23 You can obviously when
24 money goes into the General Fund,
25 you can use it however you like.

1 But it is accounted for in their
2 general ledger separately so --

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So you
4 can track it.

5 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

6 Yes, so you can track it. And my
7 first Municipal Money Matters
8 newsletter did note what was
9 brought in and what the City is
10 saying that they're spending the
11 money on, and there is a lot left
12 over. So hopefully, it will go and
13 improve the Parks & Rec and PreK.

14 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
15 you'll sort of keep track of that?

16 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

17 Yes.

18 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Okay.

19 The second question is on what is
20 your role in the opioid settlement
21 money? We have not got a lot of
22 clarity on that either.

23 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: The
24 opioid -- when the City receives
25 the money and they start to spend

1 the money, that's when we look into
2 it. We look into what the City
3 spends the money on. So if it's
4 supposed to be spent in a certain
5 way, we would look at are you
6 spending it the way you were
7 intending to spend it, is it
8 proper.

9 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So the
10 settlement came with some
11 directions as to --

12 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
13 Yes.

14 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: -- how
15 this money was going to be spent.
16 So you will be checking against
17 those requirements?

18 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
19 Yes.

20 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So you
21 don't really have any information
22 on that as of yet?

23 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: No.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: --
25 because the money has been

1 disbursed and the City's used some
2 of it so I don't know where it
3 went. It seems the answer we get
4 is it's with community groups. And
5 I know Scattergood got some money,
6 but we don't know how much. If
7 there's new settlements coming, is
8 this a source of dollars that we
9 can put to use in addressing this
10 crisis particularly in Kensington?
11 I would love to know more about it
12 and maybe get a report from your
13 office on what is happening with
14 the opioid settlement funds.

15 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

16 Yes. Well, we can look and give
17 the Chair a report for you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: That
19 would be wonderful. And then
20 another area is you've been doing
21 some work on the Pension Fund and I
22 would love to know if you're
23 exploring the possibility of the
24 City investing in more local
25 resources like -- I don't know. I

1 know the portfolio is a mix of
2 things, and the alternative asset
3 space could be where we could do
4 some investment in Philadelphia,
5 particularly in the affordable
6 housing and workforce housing area,
7 so I don't know what your purview
8 has been in that space.

9 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

10 Thank you for that question. I've
11 been to all of the meetings. My
12 staff has been to all of the
13 meetings that they've been having
14 on how to spend our pension funds
15 and we are looking at what they've
16 been presenting.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So I'm
18 really interested in where they're
19 investing, where are they investing
20 the dollars. I would love --
21 because they invest in here, the
22 money circulates much faster for
23 us. We have direct and indirect
24 benefits from investing locally.
25 So I would love to know if your

1 office is able to see where all the
2 resources are going.

3 I'll hold my questions for
4 the next round, Council President.
5 Thank you so much.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Thank you.

8 Councilmember Mike
9 Driscoll.

10 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Thank
11 you, Mr. President.

12 I agree with Councilmember
13 Bass that you're off to a great
14 start and we're excited for your
15 administration here. And I also
16 look forward to our work with the
17 Gas Commission, protecting the
18 ratepayers and kind of diving into
19 those issues, so I look forward to
20 that.

21 Just wanted to know if you
22 could talk about the financial
23 literacy in the schools. I
24 introduced a bill when I was in the
25 House of Representatives back in

1 2015 to require it, and then I'm
2 happy that it passed in December of
3 2023. Governor Shapiro signed it
4 in the law. But if you could speak
5 to that?

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

7 Thank you for the question,
8 Councilman. Yeah, he beat me to
9 it. No, it's actually -- when I
10 was an audit deputy, there was a
11 program where staff members,
12 auditors went into the grade
13 schools and taught financial
14 literacy. It was a I think 12-week
15 program, I'm not positive. And we
16 can teach young people how to be
17 financially literate, and that
18 will -- to me it's such an
19 advantage. I mean, knowing how to
20 have a savings account.

21 I guess back in the day
22 when I was in public school I
23 learned how to write a check, but
24 who writes checks anymore. Now, I
25 guess you have to learn to Venmo.

1 But it's about saving, it's about
2 the value of a dollar. If I could
3 talk about compounding interest,
4 it's exciting. Watching out for --
5 well, yeah, especially in 20 years,
6 30 years when you see that bank
7 account and not having credit card
8 debt, all of that together. The
9 value of a dollar, I just really
10 believe that teaching that to our
11 youth gives them a good foundation
12 for later on, you know, just like
13 our pension.

14 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Yeah.
15 No, I agree 100 percent with
16 everything you said. I just want
17 to make sure it gets done.

18 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: Oh,
19 yes.

20 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: So
21 we're looking forward to your
22 oversight.

23 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
24 Yes.

25 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: And

1 then just lastly, can you talk
2 about the expedited process for the
3 election payroll?

4 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

5 Thank you for that question. I am
6 very excited to tell you that I
7 have convened with Finance,
8 Treasurer and City Commissioners.
9 We have outlined a process to
10 streamline the process of getting
11 those paychecks out to the
12 individuals that are performing
13 this vital service. I mean, the
14 days of months before you get paid
15 are over.

16 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Good.
17 Thank you for that.

18 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

19 Yes.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

21 Thank you.

22 Councilmember O'Rourke.

23 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank
24 you, Council President.

25 And hello and welcome.

1 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

2 Good morning.

3 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: And
4 congratulations.

5 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
6 congratulations to you too.

7 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank
8 you very kindly. Maybe not much
9 like me. I'm still figuring out
10 this job and getting settled in.
11 So I don't want to belabor you with
12 things that preceded you, but I did
13 want to bring up something that I
14 thought was pretty interesting that
15 your predecessor discovered.

16 Philadelphians were
17 spending a lot of unchecked tax
18 money on police who were too
19 injured to work. The Inky wrote
20 about it in October of '22. We've
21 heard about officers with second
22 jobs while they collected the
23 disability benefit and then others
24 have filed multiple claims for
25 questionable injuries in general.

1 So we know there's no limit for how
2 long officers can remain on Heart &
3 Lung or on the number of claims
4 that they can submit during their
5 careers, which was what a lot of
6 this detailed.

7 Inky said that the Philly
8 absences were "vastly higher than
9 other major cities." What is the
10 Controller's Office doing or what
11 will you plan on doing as you're
12 getting settled in to make sure
13 that employees, specifically police
14 officers in this instance, are not
15 taking advantage of taxpayer
16 dollars in this manner?

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

18 Thank you for that question,
19 Councilman O'Rourke. That review
20 was performed by an outside agency
21 so it's hard for me to address
22 that. But from what I've seen and
23 reported afterwards that the number
24 of Heart & Lung you're talking
25 about, cases did go down as a

1 result of that review and it is
2 something that our office does do
3 is look to make sure that -- we
4 have an Investigative Unit that
5 people can report to, and that
6 number is on our website. If they
7 see someone, any City worker doing
8 any wrongdoing, you can call that
9 number and we have our
10 investigators go out and look to
11 see if that sort of thing is
12 happening. So it is something that
13 is ongoing.

14 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank
15 you. That is encouraging to hear.
16 I should probably state for the
17 record that this was not only
18 previous to your administration,
19 but it was a previous police
20 administration and a previous
21 police union administration as
22 well, so I know all of this is kind
23 of maybe in the rear-view a bit,
24 but I do think it's important at
25 least to mention it even now as

1 you're coming in, and to make sure
2 that it is ongoing because this is
3 part of -- especially as we have a
4 new Mayor Administration, there's a
5 new approach in how we deal with
6 these sorts of things.

7 Breeding more trust between
8 community and the department, these
9 are the sorts of fibers I think
10 that make up that tapestry so it's
11 really important. Would you have
12 any thoughts or know-how on whether
13 this is happening in other
14 departments at all, anything that
15 has come up for you in the few
16 months that you've been here?

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

18 Nothing right now that I'm aware
19 of. I mean, we do have some
20 investigations going on, but
21 nothing that I could report on.
22 But it is something that we would
23 always keep an eye out for, and we
24 do have that hotline number to call
25 if you do see wrongdoing. We will

1 look into it.

2 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Madam
3 Controller, appreciate you.
4 Excited about your role and your
5 leadership in this particular
6 department. Thank you very much.

7 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
8 appreciate your question. Thank
9 you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 Thank you.

12 The Chair recognizes
13 Councilmember O'Neill.

14 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank
15 you, Mr. President.

16 Good morning.

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
18 Good morning.

19 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I
20 don't know if I've ever had three
21 people live in my District so I
22 have to be really careful now. I
23 believe that's the same gentleman
24 that I knocked on his door this
25 summer. So I just have a couple of

1 things. One is observations. One
2 is a suggestion and one is if you
3 could walk me through it.

4 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
5 Okay.

6 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So the
7 first is both the Council
8 President, Councilman Jones, others
9 have said what a breath of fresh
10 air. You're out in the community,
11 you're around, you're not sending
12 press releases out every time you
13 go and bringing a photographer with
14 you and all that kind of thing.

15 The reason I believe, and
16 you've explained it yourself, is
17 that I don't know certainly since
18 I've been in office which has been
19 a while, there's ever been a
20 Controller who actually worked in
21 the Controller's Office, didn't
22 just work there but worked their
23 way up all the way to right under
24 the top. It's amazing what that
25 can do.

1 Immediately I think of how
2 few Councilmembers had the
3 background not just of early in
4 their career working a little while
5 for some Councilmember at a low
6 level but working their way up from
7 the beginning all the way up to the
8 top, Chief of Staff or something of
9 the equivalent.

10 I think of Bill Greenlee, I
11 think of Darrell Clarke, I think of
12 Katherine Gilmore Richardson and
13 while she wasn't here long, Sharon
14 Vaughn who just walked in here and
15 they hit the ground running. It's
16 a real advantage, but also there's
17 a different perspective. There's
18 time they've spent thinking what
19 would I do if I were here and how
20 impactful do I want to be and in
21 what area.

22 So it's really evident that
23 you have an advantage and we're the
24 beneficiaries, not just Council but
25 the City, of actually having

1 somebody who knows the Controller's
2 Office inside out and isn't running
3 for another office or trying to
4 figure out if they even want to
5 know what goes on in the office
6 itself. But I appreciate the fact
7 that you're actually taking
8 advantage of that getting out doing
9 things that are outside the box,
10 but there's not even a box to be
11 outside of in terms of your
12 predecessors.

13 The second thing is, and
14 this is just a recommendation or an
15 observation. You are out there in
16 a way that is unprecedented. We've
17 covered that, whether it's
18 community affairs, whether it's
19 your own presence, whether it's
20 sending staff. But I would suggest
21 to you that as you're doing the
22 outreach, that you focus on the
23 Weeklys. Our constituents for the
24 most part can't afford the
25 Inquirer, they can't afford the

1 Daily News. They never read it.

2 We have to read it. We have to be
3 on top of it.

4 If you walk around Center
5 City, everybody knows who you are
6 and what you do because they read
7 it in the Inquirer. The Inquirer
8 covers it well. Getting -- and
9 when you go to a senior meeting,
10 it's important that the people
11 there in person get to see you or
12 your representative, but somebody
13 covering that in a weekly, for me
14 the Inquirer in my District and all
15 three of you live there, is in the
16 Northeast Times. It used to be
17 about four or five of those papers,
18 but for a long time it's been the
19 Northeast Times. Particularly
20 seniors, longtime homeowners,
21 longtime residents, that's how they
22 get their news.

23 They don't get it from the
24 Inquirer. They read it cover to
25 cover. They read the little events

1 that are there. Everything that's
2 in there they're looking at. I
3 want you to get full advantage of
4 what you're doing and hit the
5 average person that is in that
6 group, the weekly readers. So if
7 you can make sure that you focus on
8 that, I think it'll be by leaps and
9 bounds how you're reaching out, how
10 that community effort is there.

11 The last thing is just the
12 paragraph where you talk about the
13 Skills Gaming legislation and
14 collaborating with the Treasurer's
15 Office, getting unclaimed monies to
16 our retirees, the \$20,000 one of
17 them got. Could you walk me and us
18 through that because I know the
19 legislation? I don't know about
20 the process and the unclaimed
21 monies and that kind of thing.

22 Usually when I hear of
23 unclaimed monies, it's the state
24 sending out something from the
25 sheet or whatever it is, division.

1 So if you or someone could just
2 walk us through that because that
3 to me is -- you talked about the
4 little person getting a break here,
5 that's a prime example and I just
6 want to know more how it --

7 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

8 Thank you for the question. First,
9 I want to say that I love being a
10 part of the community. I mean,
11 I've coached. I've participated
12 myself in the local sports and
13 women's over 30 soccer league in
14 Parkwood. It's fun and I enjoy
15 giving back. I mean, I played
16 softball and soccer in college. I
17 want to give back what I know in my
18 head to people to teach what's
19 going on in that world as well as
20 financial literacy.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Yeah.

22 You got a good taste in high
23 schools for your kids too, boys.

24 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

25 Yeah.

1 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: You
2 can't do better than that.

3 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: No,
4 thank you. In terms of the
5 unclaimed monies, there's so much
6 time that it's in with the City and
7 we have unclaimed monies for
8 employees and we have unclaimed
9 monies for non-employees and
10 businesses. And we had initially
11 worked with the Finance Department
12 and the Treasurer on our employees,
13 and they go above and beyond, the
14 Treasurer, more than what is even
15 in the standard accounting
16 procedures that they're supposed to
17 follow, which I was very happy to
18 see.

19 We had a list of -- and I
20 can share that with you of who
21 didn't receive checks. If we can't
22 find those people, it goes then to
23 the state and then you have to go
24 through that state exchanging
25 process. So in the beginning we

1 have it, and I was very happy to
2 have been a part of the process
3 with the Treasurer to help find
4 those City employees to get them
5 their money. It's their hard-
6 earned money back.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

8 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
9 sometimes it's just because of a
10 change of address. Time goes by
11 after COVID, you know. But the
12 backlog is --

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.
14 If we can be of any help, our
15 offices, whether it's District or
16 At-large, we might have a source
17 somewhere that can maybe benefit
18 the process.

19 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
20 Absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank
22 you. Appreciate it. Good
23 (inaudible) would start too. Thank
24 you.

25 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank

1 you, Councilman, and thank you for
2 the kind remarks.

3 Chair recognizes
4 Councilmember Lozada.

5 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Hi.
6 Thank you, Council President.

7 I have more of a I guess
8 comment, question, right. First, I
9 want to say thank you for all of
10 the work that you've done with my
11 office and responding to all of our
12 questions and all of your
13 recommendations as well as your
14 presence in the community and
15 informing community residents about
16 what it is your department does and
17 what's your purpose and what's your
18 role. Thank you so much for that
19 because that's not something that
20 they were accustomed to. And
21 people have noticed and have
22 mentioned how grateful they are for
23 that.

24 My question was the same as
25 my colleague about the opioid

1 settlement money. We know that
2 money was disbursed. Round 1 was
3 already done. Round 2 is in the
4 process. I know Councilmember
5 Squilla has asked multiple times
6 about who's receiving this money,
7 how is the money being spent and
8 how does the process that we have
9 at the municipal level compare to
10 the process that the state level
11 has.

12 We've been informed by
13 Senator Tina Tartaglione multiple
14 times that this money is being
15 disbursed and that the process, the
16 requirements, in order to qualify
17 for this funding is not the same.
18 And so, my concern is that there
19 are smaller groups on the ground
20 that while they're doing great
21 work, are receiving money but don't
22 meet the criteria, and we've been
23 informed that those groups will be
24 asked to repay that money. And we
25 know, right, we know on the ground

1 that while their work is important,
2 they are not capable, they don't
3 have the capacity to be able to pay
4 the funds back.

5 And so, to me it's
6 important to figure out sooner
7 rather than later, right, how does
8 the two processes compare and how
9 do we set processes in place not
10 just for opioid settlement money
11 but across the board, how do we
12 proactively work to ensure that
13 when contracts and funding is being
14 allocated to departments or groups
15 outside that are doing the
16 necessary work, that they are
17 delivering on the work that they
18 commit to, right, and that they are
19 following the requirements
20 necessary?

21 I have found since I
22 arrived 17 months ago that we don't
23 do a good job at oversight. And
24 then when we come to ask questions,
25 it's too late. So how do we become

1 a government that is proactive and
2 that is ensuring that the correct
3 folks are receiving the money that
4 the work is actually being done and
5 that we're fiscally responsible?

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

7 Thank you for that question. I
8 thought we made a great team at
9 Take Back Your Neighborhood and
10 what you've done in your community
11 with the food trucks, you came
12 through for them, and I thought
13 that was well received when that
14 was announced.

15 With the money that's
16 coming in, it's something that we
17 can look at. I mean, this is what
18 we do with the single audit of the
19 City and the school districts, all
20 the federal money that comes in.
21 There are rules that are associated
22 with this money. And we go in, we
23 look at eligibility, period of
24 availability.

25 There's rules that come

1 with that. And when the City
2 receives this money, the
3 Administration is supposed to
4 follow those guidelines and when
5 they don't is when the process
6 breaks down. Similar to what
7 happened with the CEG grants. They
8 did not follow the way a contract
9 should work. You don't fund it in
10 one department and have a contract
11 in another, how are the funds
12 supposed to get to those
13 organizations quickly. And the
14 oversight, they were supposed to
15 give some of these groups that
16 didn't have that capacity the
17 ability to do that paperwork with
18 taxpayer money to keep supporting
19 the programs that they're doing.
20 So it is something that we can look
21 at and I do want to look at. So
22 I'm glad that the Councilmembers
23 are bringing this up with me and we
24 can get together and talk and see
25 where we can go with it.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
2 you.

3 Thank you, Council
4 President. That was my only
5 question.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Chair
7 recognizes Councilmember Young.
8 And after Councilmember Young, I'll
9 give a few remarks before we go
10 into the second round.

11 Councilmember Young.

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
13 you so much, Councilmember Thomas.

14 Controller Brady, I just
15 want to echo the sentiments of my
16 colleagues in saying that you are
17 probably the most front-facing
18 Controller that I have ever seen.

19 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
20 really appreciate that.

21 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: In
22 looking here at your budget
23 details, you are asking for almost
24 a little bit more than double the
25 amount in prior years for

1 communication support. Can you
2 tell us some of the things that
3 you'll be doing with this
4 communication support and how it
5 helps your office achieve its
6 front-facing goals?

7 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: We
8 got rid of -- okay. Thank you for
9 the question, Councilman Young. We
10 got rid of a position and we are
11 now contracting out that work.
12 That's where it came from.

13 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
14 you. And also, it looks like there
15 are some monies allocated for some
16 audit reviews in some organizations
17 in the past who were funded, but it
18 says it's to be determined. If you
19 can, when those entities are
20 determined if you can just supply
21 those to the Chair, that would be
22 helpful so we can see which
23 organizations, which entities are
24 being funded by the Controller's
25 Office for auditing services. I

1 would appreciate that.

2 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

3 Sure. Yeah, I mean there's certain
4 functions that we have that are
5 part of the financial statement
6 audit, like we have to do quality
7 control reviews and things like
8 that. And we RFP it and go through
9 the process. So we follow the
10 contracting rules, but we can give
11 you a list when we do that.

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
13 you so much.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Chair now recognizes Councilmember
17 Thomas.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
19 morning, Council President. Good
20 morning, colleagues.

21 A couple things. So first,
22 I want to start by echoing the
23 sentiments of my colleagues
24 Councilmember Young, O'Neill, Bass
25 and Driscoll and others who talked

1 about the great job you've done. A
2 lot of folks probably don't know
3 that we used to be colleagues so I
4 remember when you became the first
5 woman to ever become the Deputy
6 Controller in the City of
7 Philadelphia.

8 I know firsthand that the
9 seat that you have was never your
10 desire based on the meetings that
11 we were in and the work that we've
12 done together, and of course
13 working for Bill, the entire team
14 at the Controller's Office. Thank
15 you all for being here today and
16 thank you for the great work that
17 you do.

18 Before I get into
19 questions, I didn't get the
20 opportunity to do some of the
21 things that other Councilmembers
22 got a chance to do when some of
23 their staff left them, so I'm going
24 to take a moment to let you know,
25 Controller Brady, that I am upset

1 that you poked one of my staff
2 members, right. I want to put that
3 on the record.

4 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
5 asked for permission.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: But I
7 do want to formally say
8 congratulations to Jackie Golden
9 who not only worked for me but ran
10 my campaign, started with me as an
11 intern, the only job she ever had
12 before Controller Brady decided to
13 take her from us. But I do want to
14 say congratulations to Jackie. We
15 definitely miss you.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: We
18 definitely miss you. And,
19 Controller Brady, the entire team,
20 you're lucky to have her.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Member Thomas, I was confused. I'm
23 like, wait, well, ain't that
24 Isaiah's staff member over there.
25 I was trying to figure it out

1 though. Congratulations.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Yep,
3 but thank you.

4 So to the people's
5 business, Controller Brady, I'm
6 concerned about our schools. Now,
7 one of the issues that we have is
8 that because the schools get
9 funding from so many different
10 places, it makes it very difficult
11 to audit the schools. You have
12 that situation there and you also
13 have the situation with the Parking
14 Authority.

15 Now, a lot of
16 Councilmembers talked about the
17 fact that previous controllers
18 might have had a different agenda
19 as it relates to certain things.
20 And I think that the public has the
21 perception that we can audit these
22 institutions in ways that we don't
23 necessarily have the ability to do.

24 So based on what I know
25 about working in the Controller's

1 Office, it's difficult for us to
2 audit entities who get funding for
3 multiple areas, right, PPA funding
4 from City and state, the School
5 District funding from City and
6 state. So what is the plan for
7 your administration to be able to
8 audit some of these institutions to
9 put us in a position to be able to
10 recognize how effective or not they
11 are in their spending as well as
12 looking at any possible
13 mismanagement or any inefficiencies
14 in government? How do you plan to
15 address those dilemmas?

16 Because right now the
17 public is under the perception that
18 you could audit the PPA. They're
19 under the perception that you could
20 audit the School District of
21 Philadelphia. And we both know how
22 difficult that is for bureaucracies
23 like that. So what is the vision
24 of your administration to address
25 those issues and how do we put

1 ourselves in a position to ensure
2 that not only is there no
3 mismanagement of taxpayer dollars
4 but to assure that these sectors of
5 government are working as efficient
6 as they can?

7 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

8 Thank you for the question. First,
9 I want to say that the Controller's
10 Office produces some good
11 employees. You're one of them.
12 And obviously, so does yours
13 because I got one too. So thank
14 you so much.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
16 you.

17 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

18 Thank you for that question. That
19 is about partnerships with the
20 Auditor General and the state.
21 Whether or not with the PPA, we
22 have the ability to audit the
23 onstreet parking and that's where
24 it ends. But the other areas of
25 PPA would then be under the state.

1 And so, that's where that
2 partnership comes in as well as
3 with the School District. We do
4 look at the federal funds that come
5 in, but that's about are they
6 following the grant regulations,
7 are they being effective with that
8 money. Then that's a different
9 story. And that's where some of
10 the roadblocks have come in, in the
11 past, especially when the state
12 took over and it was the SRC. Now,
13 that it is the School Board, I
14 believe that we'll have the
15 opportunity to do more in the
16 School District.

17 I had when I first started
18 with the School District, almost 30
19 years ago, the opportunity while we
20 were doing the audit of the
21 financial statements, we would look
22 at the student activity funds, we
23 would look at -- if something came
24 across that I was reviewing,
25 expenditures, there was an area

1 where I saw something that I
2 thought was unusual, it was like a
3 travel reimbursement for some
4 maintenance workers and it was
5 exactly 10 miles, 20 miles, 30 even
6 amount of miles, and I thought
7 that's strange because it's exactly
8 10 miles between this school and
9 this school and this school and
10 this school.

11 So I took an intern and
12 said Map Quest the distance between
13 these schools and add 10 percent
14 just to see if you took a wrong
15 turn. And as it turned out, these
16 people were almost doubling their
17 salary in mileage reimbursement, so
18 things can happen from our
19 financial statement audits but also
20 having a partnership with Malcolm
21 Kenyatta who's running for Auditor
22 General, this is where we can open
23 doors and really get in and look at
24 some of that state money that's
25 coming in and being spent that I

1 wouldn't really be able to look at.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Let me
3 just close out with this. And if
4 you could just answer this, I'll be
5 done for the day. Number one, give
6 us an example of an audit that's
7 been done where you worked with the
8 Auditor General's Office to produce
9 an audit of one of these
10 departments that we're talking
11 about. Number two, your Money
12 Matters piece that you produced
13 talked about the steady reduction
14 of the wage and the BIRT tax, talk
15 to us a little bit about why you
16 recommend that we continue that
17 steady reduction and the impact
18 that you'll have on the economy.
19 If you could just answer those two
20 questions for me, I am done for the
21 day.

22 Thank you, Council
23 President.

24 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
25 Okay. So our office, we did do an

1 audit of the PPA's onstreet
2 parking, but it wasn't as much in
3 partnership. It was following up
4 on some of the findings with the
5 onstreet parking part that the
6 previous Auditor General Eugene
7 DePasquale issued. But that's what
8 I want to do, is have those
9 partnerships.

10 But that's what I am about,
11 is having those relationships and
12 partnering with the state agencies
13 that might have more of an
14 authority of oversight because I
15 understand the City's accounting
16 system. I understand the School
17 District's accounting system. Our
18 auditors are in -- we have an
19 office at the School District that
20 we have staffed right now. So I
21 believe that we can do more in
22 terms of making sure that those
23 dollars spent are effective.

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: And
25 your report of wage and BIRT?

1 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: Oh,
2 thank you. What was your question
3 about that? I'm sorry.

4 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
5 sorry, Council President.

6 I just wanted you to talk a
7 little bit about your report, the
8 Money Matters piece that talked
9 about steady reduction in wage and
10 BIRT tax. What made you do the
11 report, how did you come up with
12 those findings and why do you think
13 that's what's best for the City?

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
15 Thank you for that question. I
16 believe it's very important to see
17 a reduction in the BIRT and wage
18 taxes. I think it brings
19 businesses in and it shows that as
20 we are reducing those taxes, the
21 revenues are still increasing. So
22 there is still money coming into
23 the City as these percentages are
24 going down. And I am really
25 looking forward to the Tax Reform

1 Commission's findings to see where
2 they go and to see how you can
3 bring businesses and good-paying
4 jobs into the City. I think it's
5 very important.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Thank you, Member Thomas.

8 Chair also recognizes the
9 presence of Councilmember Mark
10 Squilla.

11 We are in our second round.
12 The Chair recognize Councilmember
13 Curtis Jones.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
15 you, Mr. President.

16 Very quickly I mentioned in
17 the first round the gambling
18 machines and wanted to know if at
19 some point you would know how many
20 machines are there?

21 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
22 Okay.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: What are
24 their estimated revenues? I get
25 conflicting numbers. Yours I

1 trust, but I get conflicting
2 numbers as some people estimate
3 there might be 50,000 bandit
4 machines in the City of
5 Philadelphia.

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

7 Wow.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
9 their average revenue is a guess.
10 But judging on the amount of money
11 being spent at the state level to
12 squash this, to intervene in this,
13 we have to be talking about a
14 sizable amount of revenue that
15 we're not getting as a City.

16 Governor Shapiro and a
17 couple of the Senators are looking
18 at a 42 percent rate of taxation
19 and would love to figure out what
20 would that mean to the citizens of
21 Philadelphia, government of
22 Philadelphia, programs of
23 Philadelphia. You don't have to
24 answer now, but it is something
25 that we would be keenly interested

1 in knowing so that we know what
2 ballpark we're in.

3 Early on these gambling
4 entities offered trinkets, hey,
5 don't tax us, don't bother us,
6 here, we'll give you X, Y and Z.
7 And in my intuition, I said if
8 you're willing to offer this, it
9 must be worth that.

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: I
11 like your intuition.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: And so,
13 we need to figure that out so that
14 we as a government can anticipate
15 what those revenues will be and
16 what they can be used for. So
17 thank you.

18 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
19 Exactly. That's exactly why I want
20 to look into it. It's untapped
21 money and I believe that it's money
22 that the City should be receiving.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 And --

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: I --

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Go ahead, Member Jones.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES:

4 (Gestured to continue).

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 And also beyond it being untapped
7 money, it's also unfair that the
8 surrounding gaming industries
9 rather it's Parx, Live, the other
10 one, Fox, that's down in Squilla's
11 District, they all pay 54 percent
12 on their slots which are skilled
13 games, basically the same thing,
14 but yet you have an industry that's
15 pretty much extracting revenues out
16 of our City without taxation.

17 And so, I do thank the
18 Member for his leadership around
19 this particular issue, but this is
20 a source that pretty much should be
21 tapped into based upon what the
22 requirement is for other
23 surrounding gaming industries in
24 the City of Philadelphia. And so,
25 we look forward to seeing that

1 report.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
3 you, Mr. President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
5 You're welcome.

6 The Chair now recognizes
7 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
9 you, Council President.

10 Controller, I commend you
11 on your outreach to the community.
12 You are in all these spaces. And
13 so, I just wanted to follow up on
14 Councilmember Young's question
15 around the communications
16 outsourcing. I just wondered what
17 that RFP process was. I'm really
18 interested in sort of minority
19 companies that were considered in
20 that process, that's one.

21 And two, I was looking at
22 the information we were provided on
23 staff demographics per department.
24 I don't see yours. I don't know if
25 I'm not being able to find it. I'd

1 love to know that demographic
2 breakdown in your office.

3 And lastly, I would love to
4 see if you have any pipeline for
5 bringing up people who could then
6 look for jobs in this space. And
7 since you do a lot of community
8 outreach, I wondered if there's a
9 pipeline that you're maybe talking
10 to people who are considering
11 accounting or going for their CPA,
12 if you have such effort in your
13 office?

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
15 Thank you for the question. For
16 our communications contract, that
17 contract was conformed prior to me
18 coming into office. We just
19 continued it. But I'm sure the
20 proper RFP process was followed.
21 You do have to get a certain amount
22 of bids, and I think there's a
23 quick sheet on the contracting
24 process that Procurement puts out
25 that might be helpful. For our

1 demographics, I can provide that to
2 the Chair.

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: That
4 would be great.

5 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
6 our outreach, was that specifically
7 for our department?

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yeah.
9 I was just thinking --

10 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: We
11 do a great job, or at least prior
12 to COVID because I was one of the
13 people in our office when I was an
14 auditor that went out to colleges
15 to recruit, and we partnered with
16 OHR at the time. OHR was pretty
17 much representing the rest of the
18 City and then it was us looking for
19 most of the time accounting majors
20 because most of the office are
21 auditors, and we're required to
22 have an accounting degree.

23 So obviously we want to
24 look at local schools because we
25 want the people to live in the

1 City, but we also went out to
2 HBCUs. The further out we went,
3 the less people were interested,
4 but I do want to say that Temple
5 University does a great job
6 preparing their business students.
7 We probably get the majority of our
8 auditors, when we go out to
9 recruit, from Temple. So I do have
10 a special place for -- the Fox
11 School of Business is outstanding
12 in the City. So --

13 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Great.
14 Thank you.

15 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: And
16 I did not go there. I went to
17 Textile.

18 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Okay.
19 Last question was about I see you
20 have an additional 200,000 in Class
21 100. Can you just speak to this
22 for new hires? I know you're
23 short-staffed. Yeah, I see that
24 you are 20 percent short.

25 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY: We

1 are short-staffed. We are looking
2 for more auditors. So when I say
3 that our office is short-staffed,
4 it's because we're looking for
5 auditors. We did ask for an
6 increase because we did bring back
7 the Community Affairs Division. We
8 revitalized that so that's where
9 that came from.

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
11 you.

12 Thank you, Council
13 President.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Thank you.

16 Chair recognizes Councilman
17 Mark Squilla.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 Thank you, Mr. President.

20 Thank you, Controller Brady
21 and Bill, for being here. I think
22 it was under when you were there or
23 maybe it was before you were there,
24 it was one of the written reports
25 about the Sheriff's Office that had

1 fees for sheriff sales and charges
2 that go through that end up coming
3 back to the City, usually the
4 general operating fund. But I
5 think it was something that said
6 that they were retaining those
7 costs during COVID and all when
8 there was no sheriff sales. Do we
9 still know if they corrected that
10 operation when they were putting it
11 into a separate account and not
12 returning that money back to the
13 City?

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
15 Thank you for that question. It is
16 my understanding that they still
17 hold on to their fees.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So
19 they still hold on to the fees and
20 they don't return them to the City
21 for the --

22 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
23 Correct.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: But
25 isn't it for the Charter to be able

1 to re-appropriate the money for the
2 Sheriff's Office to --

3 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

4 That is my understanding.

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

6 All right. I know that was brought
7 to the attention and then at some
8 point I had thought they had
9 complied. So I was misunderstood.
10 All right. So they haven't
11 complied to date. All right.
12 Thank you. That was my only
13 question.

14 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

15 You're welcome.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

17 Thank you.

18 Next, we have Councilmember
19 Rue Landau.

20 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

21 Excellent. Thank you for that
22 question, Councilmember Squilla.
23 Appreciate that one.

24 One comment, one question.

25 As we will work together to make

1 the contract conforming and payment
2 process even more efficient, I
3 wanted to let you know that the
4 City is obligated to pay the court-
5 appointed attorneys within 60 days
6 of receiving the voucher from the
7 court. And I know the First
8 Judicial District is next and I
9 wanted to ask them a little bit
10 about this. But just wanted you to
11 know that there's a mandate there
12 that the City often does not comply
13 with.

14 And the second thing, just
15 a question, what is public
16 knowledge and what is confidential
17 in your office? Do we know every
18 investigation you're doing? Can we
19 know the details of the
20 investigation? Can we just have a
21 list of the audits that you're
22 doing? I don't know the answer to
23 this.

24 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:
25 While it's ongoing, we don't

1 release the information but we do
2 issue the report when we're
3 complete. I have no problem
4 telling you what we're looking at.
5 I mean, I'm pretty transparent with
6 that. L&I, I mean we do the
7 financial statement audits, we do
8 the single audits with all the
9 grant money that comes in. We
10 review the Five Year Plan,
11 imminently dangerous properties,
12 gaming. I mean, I pretty much laid
13 it out what we're looking at.

14 But until the
15 investigation's complete, I mean if
16 I started to say, well, I think
17 this is happening and it turns out
18 it's not, it wouldn't be the right
19 thing to do.

20 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I'm
21 just curious if there's an issue
22 that comes to us and we start to
23 get information about it, it would
24 be very helpful that we can
25 collaborate on these issues. But

1 if we don't know you're working on
2 it or thinking about it, it would
3 be really helpful to, I don't know,
4 get a quarterly list or something.

5 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

6 Well, I mean we can meet and we'll
7 discuss like what we're working on.
8 And if there's something that you
9 want me to look at, I'm more than
10 happy to meet and discuss what we
11 can do.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

13 Excellent. Thank you so much.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

15 As we wrap up this round, I see
16 Councilmember Jones.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES:

18 Mr. President, I'm early for FJD.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 Okay. Thank you. So for all the
21 rookies, you see he's already
22 queued up for the next round.
23 Y'all start hollering at me. No,
24 it's tricks to the trade here.

25 I just want to firstly

1 thank you for your presentation.

2 We look forward to continuously
3 working with you, and keep up the
4 good work in the meanwhile. Thank
5 you very much.

6 CITY CONTROLLER BRADY:

7 Thank you.

8 Would the Clerk please call
9 the next person for testimony.

10 THE CLERK: Judge Nina
11 Wright Padilla, President Judge,
12 Court of Common Pleas and Chair of
13 the Administrative Governing Board.
14 (Witnesses approached
15 Witness table.)

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

17 Good morning, Your Honor.

18 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

19 PADILLA: Good morning.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

21 How are you today?

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

23 PADILLA: I'm doing wonderful.

24 How are you?

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 I'm doing fantastic, peachy.

2 MR. McSORLEY: Good

3 morning, Council President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 Good morning. How are you today?

6 MR. McSORLEY: I'm fine,

7 sir. How are you?

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 That's good. I'm doing pretty

10 good. Can't complain. Beautiful

11 day outside.

12 Just state your name and

13 title for the record, Your Honor,

14 and please begin your testimony.

15 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

16 PADILLA: Very good. My name is

17 Judge Nina Wright Padilla,

18 Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas.

19 I am the President Judge of the

20 First Judicial District of

21 Pennsylvania. And I want to thank

22 you for having me here today and

23 allowing me to speak on behalf of

24 the First Judicial District.

25 I want to also -- I have a

1 statement that I'm going to read,
2 but I want to just take a minute
3 and thank you for all the work that
4 you do in the City of Philadelphia.
5 In preparation for this proceeding,
6 I did watch some of the old videos
7 of the Council hearings, and
8 there's something different about
9 watching the video versus being
10 here in person and seeing you and
11 hearing you, and it's impressive.

12 I'm impressed by your
13 poignant questioning. You
14 obviously care very much about your
15 constituency and the people that
16 you represent in particular and you
17 care about the City. That comes
18 through loud and clear. I've been
19 sitting here watching you and I'm
20 very impressed with that. Also,
21 the specific questions you ask are
22 probing and important. And I
23 really mean that. I'm not just
24 saying it. So I'm happy that I got
25 to hear that.

1 I was recently elected
2 President Judge of the Court of
3 Common Pleas, and I'm very, very
4 proud of that. My colleagues,
5 they're 93 of them, and my
6 colleagues elected me President
7 Judge. There's no prouder moment
8 for me than to represent my
9 colleagues and the First Judicial
10 District.

11 I have a couple other
12 points I wanted to make. The team
13 here that I'll introduce has helped
14 me in my preparations, and I'll
15 introduce each of them. But this
16 team of professionals and
17 administrators in the court are
18 essential to the functioning of the
19 Court of Common Pleas. And I'm so
20 happy to have their advice and
21 counsel.

22 I don't think the court
23 could function properly without
24 these administrators. I've been on
25 the Philadelphia Court of Common

1 Pleas for 20 years now, believe it
2 or not. I can't even believe it,
3 to be honest. And I understand the
4 court from a different facet. The
5 administrators have different
6 information that I just didn't
7 really work with over the past 20
8 years. So that's why they're so
9 important.

10 I've met with some members
11 of Council but not all of you. I
12 think it's important that different
13 branches of government work
14 together, especially the court, and
15 I'm hoping that you'll take my
16 meeting when I call you and meet
17 with me so that we can at least be
18 familiar with one another and work
19 together.

20 Over the years there have
21 been disasters and different things
22 that have happened, and I think
23 it's helpful if we could have a
24 working relationship. So I hope to
25 do that on an ongoing basis. And I

1 also want to mention my election
2 for President Judge was October
3 31st. I took office November 12th
4 and there's just been a lot of
5 shuffling around. So I've done the
6 best I could in preparation for
7 this very important occasion, but I
8 know already I won't be able to
9 respond to all of your questions.
10 So I will be referring some of you
11 to my team here.

12 All right. So my
13 statement: Good morning, Council
14 President Johnson and members of
15 the Philadelphia City Council. As
16 I stated, I'm President Judge Nina
17 Wright Padilla representing the
18 First Judicial District of
19 Pennsylvania for the Fiscal Year of
20 2025, which includes the Family
21 Division, which is composed of both
22 domestic relations and juvenile
23 court, the Trial Division which is
24 composed of civil and criminal
25 courts, the Orphans' Division and

1 the Municipal Court composed of
2 criminal, civil and traffic
3 division.

4 I'm here today with
5 District Court Administrator
6 Richard McSorley, Esquire; Deputy
7 Court Administrator of Financial
8 Services Chris Waters right back
9 here as well as Michael Bouchard.
10 Michael Bouchard is the Chief
11 Deputy District Court
12 Administrator; and Creadell Webb on
13 my left. Creadell Webb is the
14 Chief Diversity, Equity and
15 Inclusion Officer. And Curtis
16 Jones, III is in the back. He's
17 the Public Relations Specialist for
18 the FJD. And I see Eric Assini,
19 who's the legal counsel for the
20 court; and my new law clerk Pearl
21 Ruschak, who's been incredibly
22 helpful. I expect big things from
23 her.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 You can stop after Curtis Jones,

1 III --

2 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

3 PADILLA: Oh, stop there.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 Whatever you need, budget's done,
6 it's okay.

7 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

8 PADILLA: Yeah. Curtis Jones, III
9 has a special place in my heart.
10 His wife is Puerto Rican and my
11 mother was Puerto Rican so -- and I
12 know him from Family Court from
13 back in the day. To preserve time,
14 I would like to waive my full
15 statement that I submitted to
16 Philadelphia City Council. And
17 this year just to summarize, our
18 ask was for both the General Fund
19 and grants revenue as well, and we
20 also ask for money for information,
21 technology and structural
22 enhancements. And that funding
23 would be used to ensure that the
24 FJD is protected from future cyber
25 threats.

1 It is crucial for justice
2 that the FJD stays ahead of
3 security and technological
4 advancements, especially
5 considering prior threats to our
6 cyber security. And our second ask
7 was for finances for our court
8 interpreters so that they stay
9 compliant with our Pennsylvania
10 Supreme Court and that we stay
11 compliant as well. Philadelphia is
12 diverse as you all know, and
13 interpreters are essential to
14 preserving justice. Thank you so
15 much for your time and attention.
16 And I look forward to working with
17 City Council as the need arises.
18 Thank you, Council President.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 Thank you very much, and great
21 having the opportunity to talk to
22 you about your tenure as well as
23 the work that Richard McSorley was
24 doing.

25 You became Deputy Court

1 Administrator around the time we
2 had the pandemic, correct? You
3 kind of led us through that period?

4 MR. McSORLEY: I came in
5 right near the end of it, so I'm on
6 my third year now.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 Third year now, awesome. Well, I
9 know the work that you have done
10 over there as well. Just a couple
11 questions. I'm going to start off
12 with just give me an update -- I
13 know, Richard, you and I discussed
14 this before in the past regarding
15 the Center for Urban and Racial
16 Equity Report, which was the CURE
17 Report. Just give us a progress
18 update. I see you also have the
19 Diversity Equity Inclusion Officer,
20 which was one of the things that
21 was the outcome of that particular
22 report.

23 Just give us an update on
24 where we're at in terms of the
25 progress that has been made from

1 that report around diversity,
2 equity and inclusion and making
3 sure that the First Judicial
4 District's environment is one
5 that's conducive for all
6 individuals working there.

7 MR. MCSORLEY: Thank you
8 for the question, Council
9 President. The CURE report was the
10 catalyst for a lot of the changes
11 we made, but the CURE report is now
12 over 10 years old. So it's not a
13 viable plan for us to use anymore.
14 But we did take that and did move
15 forward. And as you pointed out,
16 one of the first things we did was
17 to learn about DEI, and that led us
18 to appointing a DEI Chief.

19 As far as I know, we're the
20 only court in the county in the
21 Commonwealth that has a DEI office
22 and DEI mission. That said, the
23 DEI Chief has made great strides in
24 what we have done in the FJD in
25 that area. As we mentioned last

1 year, we were beginning to make
2 changes, things like removing
3 tests, creating hiring panels that
4 were more neutral, making sure that
5 our questions were vetted by HR and
6 the DEI Chief, before we had those
7 kind of interviews with people
8 coming through, doing more to look
9 at what the makeup is at the FJD,
10 having creation of things like the
11 Suggestion Ox, which was an
12 anonymous web-based program we had
13 for the FJD so that members of the
14 FJD could anonymously voice their
15 opinions.

16 At the same time, Chief
17 Webb has worked with the City of
18 Philadelphia's DEI office, the
19 National Association of Courts and
20 the Mid-Atlantic courts, the
21 Pennsylvania courts, he's on
22 several panels now and to my
23 delight is now being recognized as
24 one of the leaders in court for his
25 DEI work and is actually going to

1 be sitting on I think a national
2 panel coming up soon. If you would
3 like more detail about the programs
4 we have done, if you don't mind
5 I'll have Chief Webb --

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 I was just getting ready to ask
8 could he come actually and give us
9 an update. And, Richard McSorley,
10 just for the record the report I
11 have is from 2019. I know you said
12 the CURE report is 10 years old.
13 The official report was 2019.

14 MR. MCSORLEY: 2019?

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Yes. Mr. Webb, go ahead, sir, and
17 begin your testimony. State your
18 name and title for the record.

19 MR. WEBB: Thank you,
20 Council President. Good afternoon,
21 everyone. My name is Creadell
22 Webb. I'm the Chief Diversity
23 Equity and Inclusion Officer for
24 the First Judicial District of
25 Pennsylvania, otherwise known as

1 the Philadelphia Courts.

2 Your question was since the
3 CURE report what strides have been
4 made. I think one of the insights
5 that came from that report was a
6 number of the culture and our
7 hiring practices. So one of the
8 first things that I did was decided
9 to focus on the hiring. I've done
10 presentations on inclusive hiring,
11 and we've also changed the hiring
12 policies.

13 Not only did we change the
14 hiring policy, but I sat on a
15 number of hiring panels to ensure
16 that people were following the best
17 practices. So in addition to my
18 job title, by profession I'm also
19 an attorney. I'm a certified Human
20 Resources professional and I also
21 have diversity, equity and
22 inclusion certifications. So I am
23 setting the stage from a national
24 standpoint and the stage from a
25 local standpoint on diversity,

1 equity and inclusion.

2 I'd like to train our
3 leaders first, because one of the
4 things that happens when you train
5 frontline staff on a variety of
6 diversity, equity and inclusion
7 issues is they're going to ask you
8 have the leaders received this
9 training. And so, my goal is
10 always to train the leaders and
11 then have sort of a topdown
12 approach.

13 And we have a variety of
14 trainings that happen all year.
15 When you start with the FJD, we
16 have an orientation training where
17 we talk about bias, unconscious
18 bias, conscious bias,
19 micro-aggressions. We talk about
20 inclusive language. I've also
21 worked a variety of jobs here at
22 the court, so I've been a law clerk
23 for a judge. I've managed a civil
24 filing center in 2006 so I know
25 what it's like to work with the

1 public self-represented litigants
2 as well as attorneys.

3 And now, in this role I'm
4 working with court administration.
5 I also realize you have to couple
6 DEI best practices with court
7 behavior and organizational
8 behavior. So one of the things
9 that the court administrator
10 mentioned, my involvement with the
11 state and with the national
12 associations is because I realize
13 you have to have influence on those
14 groups as well. So when you have
15 courts above this court, you have
16 to also make sure that you're
17 showing up at those places and
18 training those leaders. So not
19 only do you receive training from
20 me at the local court, but when you
21 have leaders going out to these
22 conferences, I'm one of the
23 headliners at the conference doing
24 the training. And so, that also
25 stretches my level of influence.

1 Thank you.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Thank you.

4 The Chair recognizes the
5 presence of Councilwoman Kathy
6 Gilmore Richardson.

7 Another question: In the
8 past I've had an opportunity to
9 work to reduce and eliminate the
10 criminal justice fees associated
11 with the placement of juveniles.
12 They go away and they're placed and
13 then the parents receive the bill.
14 So I worked with my former
15 colleague Councilwoman Helen Gym to
16 eliminate those fees being charged.

17 Have y'all ever done an
18 overview of just the various fees
19 that significantly impact Black and
20 Brown families that are associated
21 with individuals going through our
22 criminal justice system,
23 particularly those coming through
24 the First Judicial District?

25 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

1 PADILLA: You mean like -- excuse
2 me. Thank you for the question,
3 Council President Johnson. I think
4 you mean probation fees. Is that
5 what you're referring to?

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Any fees associated with family
8 members that are actually going
9 through the actual criminal justice
10 system.

11 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT
12 PADILLA: Yeah, I agree. It can be
13 hard for a family who's already
14 suffering to pay those probation
15 fees, especially for an extended
16 period of time. I think that there
17 could be some discretion involved
18 on some of those fees. So I think
19 it would be possibly up to the
20 trial judge for that.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Okay. Then last but not least, and
23 I'm sure you'll probably hear this
24 as we talk about as we address gun
25 violence here in the City of

1 Philadelphia, a lot of times we're
2 looking to not working in silos,
3 right. We do work with probation.
4 We do work with parole, my guy
5 Benny Price over there as well with
6 the juvenile enforcement team. But
7 how do you ensure that we are
8 working collaboratively together?
9 I know Councilman Jones leads the
10 Criminal Justice Advisory Board,
11 just making sure we're all working
12 in synergy.

13 Because I know FJD, y'all
14 mandated -- your jurisdiction is
15 state, and I don't think most
16 people know, right, although you're
17 under the City as well, right. But
18 obviously, when we talk about a
19 safer city, we all need to be
20 working in coordination together
21 and talking to one another. And a
22 lot of times a young person may --
23 not a young person, a person may
24 get arrested and then they're back
25 out on the streets, and then we'll

1 call the DA's Office, he'll say,
2 well, it's the judges, right, and
3 just making sure that we're all
4 talking to one another and there's
5 synergy so we can all be on the
6 same page and make sure we have a
7 safer city. Any initiatives, any
8 thought processes to make sure that
9 we're all working together?

10 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

11 PADILLA: There's one thing I'd
12 like to say about that. And our
13 court administrator will probably
14 have something else to say. But I
15 had the pleasure of sitting on the
16 Criminal Justice Advisory Board as
17 President Judge, which is new for
18 me. I just wasn't familiar with
19 it. And I did learn about some
20 initiatives that they are taking
21 which is awesome.

22 One of them I learned about
23 at the last meeting, which is about
24 three weeks ago, had to do with the
25 local police who are engaging in a

1 diversionary program, which is
2 really awesome. And what it does
3 is when someone is under suspicion
4 for being arrested while they're
5 waiting for the arresting officer
6 to arrive, police on the scene will
7 divert them into another possible
8 program so they don't end up with a
9 record. I think something like
10 that is a wonderful thing.

11 And they go through this
12 diversionary program and if they
13 complete it successfully, they
14 don't have a record. Programs like
15 that I think could be helpful. I
16 don't know if Mr. McSorley has
17 other ideas about that.

18 MR. MCSORLEY: Council
19 President, I totally agree that the
20 communication has to be constant
21 and it has to be fluid. And as the
22 President Judge mentioned, we have
23 CJAB where all the members of the
24 justice community and outside the
25 community come together. I,

1 myself, was on the Safety Committee
2 of Councilman Jones' some years
3 ago. We do have the various
4 initiatives and MacArthur
5 initiatives. We keep the
6 conversations going with all of our
7 justice partners.

8 I met with the new Public
9 Safety Director Adam Geer just last
10 week, and we had this exact same
11 conversation, that I frankly said
12 in the past I thought there was
13 more open communication between all
14 of us and maybe not so much now.
15 And I told him point blank that the
16 courts are prepared to be involved
17 in any conversation. That said, as
18 I always have to point out to my
19 President Judge, my job here as
20 court administrator is to be in
21 between the judicial leaders of the
22 court and the rest of the world,
23 because unfortunately judges can't
24 really get involved in opinions and
25 advocacy and tainting their

1 neutrality basically, and that's
2 what the court administration is
3 for and that's what my team is for.
4 So there is no table that we'll be
5 asked to come to that we would say,
6 no, I'm sorry, we're not going to
7 be there.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
9 Well, thank you very much.

10 The Chair recognizes
11 Councilman Jones.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
13 you, Mr. President. Thank you for
14 your steadfast commitment to the
15 judicial process over time. I've
16 known you to be a great, insightful
17 advocate for the process being
18 fair. Let me thank you guys for
19 that wonderful seven-page chart
20 that I displayed with the
21 Controller's Office I actually got
22 from you guys when we first started
23 on the Criminal Justice Reform
24 Committee, and I had no idea how
25 elaborate it could be and intricate

1 it could be. So thank you for
2 that.

3 My question, as I was
4 listening yesterday about the
5 Kensington Initiative, I happen to
6 know that FJD was one of the
7 forerunners for community courts
8 here in Center City, which was
9 alternative sentencing. I also
10 know that each one is different.
11 They have to be designed almost
12 from the ground up in order to be
13 effective. I'd like to hear your
14 insights as to if we do something
15 like that in Kensington, how would
16 you kind of model it?

17 MR. MCSORLEY: I have been
18 involved in the community court as
19 you know. We modeled that over the
20 Red Hook model from New York. We
21 all went up there and took a look
22 at it. The community court concept
23 is not new to the FJD. We used to
24 have a lot of our police districts,
25 we had courtrooms out there that we

1 had the municipal court hearings
2 at, so having a courtroom out in
3 the community is something we've
4 done before and we would be willing
5 to do again.

6 As I mentioned, talking to
7 the Public Safety Director and the
8 discussions around Kensington, the
9 court hasn't been at that table a
10 lot. But if that was a discussion
11 that the City wanted to broker, if
12 there's an advantage to it, we
13 would have no objection to having a
14 court out in a local area or
15 involved in the Kensington
16 situation right now.

17 The only thing I do have to
18 point out is that a lot of people
19 feel that, well, to have the court,
20 we just have the judge come sit
21 down behind a table and there you
22 go, and it's just not that easy.
23 All the partners have to be
24 available. All the partners have
25 to be willing, they have to be in

1 the courtroom. We have to have the
2 backing of the City. We have to
3 have the infrastructure.

4 So we have created
5 courtrooms almost overnight. We
6 did so up at the prison during the
7 pandemic, went up there and found a
8 space. So if we have the proper
9 space and the conversations are
10 had, the court is more than willing
11 to step up and take a role.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: One of
13 the things that I noticed in
14 community courts, it wasn't just
15 court administration. It's all of
16 the ancillary services, that if
17 you're going to a rehab, if you're
18 long-term housing, if you're
19 dealing with other things that
20 might seem minor, I don't have my
21 driver's license so therefore I
22 can't work, how do I restore that,
23 stay in PHA, there's a lot of
24 moving parts that are consolidated
25 under that court.

1 And what we found was that
2 it cost. It cost a great deal. So
3 I would hope that you guys would be
4 at the table as we start to design
5 that plan for Kensington to kind of
6 say you might want to avoid this
7 because it costs this much, you
8 might want to go with the Ford
9 model that cost less. So we would
10 love that partnership with you to
11 design it.

12 MR. MCSORLEY: With that in
13 mind, Councilman, we do have at the
14 Stout Center, that kind of program
15 right now, the Hub program where
16 anybody who is in the Stout Center
17 can walk in, we have mental health
18 services, we have liaisons with the
19 different services in the City.
20 It's run under the direction of
21 Municipal Court. If you need a
22 driver's license, if you need
23 referrals, we have that.

24 In addition while all this
25 is being talked about, I'll just

1 put a plug in for the Kensington
2 Initiative. Justice Dougherty has
3 started an initiative with mental
4 health and looked at the Miami
5 model. And the Miami model is
6 exactly what you're talking about.
7 It's one location, one-stop shop,
8 all the resources, it's not just
9 about court. It's about all the
10 different resources that can be had
11 right there in one location like a
12 Hahnemann Hospital or something
13 like that.

14 So that is a conversation
15 that the Justice I know started
16 with the Mayor. We've had a couple
17 of conversations going forward, but
18 it's one that we hope we can keep
19 going forward with, because I think
20 that the two join together very
21 nicely.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES:

23 Mr. President, I encourage you to
24 take a trip up to Red Hook, New
25 York where their model exists and

1 you can go in one door, get your
2 agreement for your child support,
3 your driver's license, your housing
4 voucher, you got kicked out of
5 this, all of it is codified in one
6 room. So you walk in one door and
7 walk out with your life right, and
8 it saves time for a defendant to
9 have to come back 10 times one
10 time. And I just thought that it's
11 a great model.

12 And I will close with
13 thanking you, President Judge.
14 Several years ago when the pandemic
15 hit I remember being in this
16 chamber and we were shutting down
17 and all of that good stuff. The
18 most vulnerable population were
19 some of those men and women up on
20 State Road.

21 You guys hunkered down,
22 worked with the prisons, worked
23 with the DA, worked with the
24 Defenders to come up with a list of
25 those individuals that could be

1 allowed out of the facility. Now,
2 keep in mind we were living in a
3 state of fear. We didn't know how
4 it was transmitted. We didn't
5 know -- we were washing our mail,
6 washing our vegetables. I mean, it
7 was a scary point in time. And
8 what I will say is the First
9 Judicial District stepped up to the
10 plate, an independent branch of
11 government but a part of the whole
12 picture, and I'm forever grateful
13 for that.

14 Thank you, Mr. President.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

16 You're welcome.

17 The Chair recognizes

18 Councilmember Rue Landau.

19 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank

20 you, Council President.

21 President Judge, thank you
22 for being here.

23 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

24 PADILLA: Thank you.

25 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I

1 want to start with IT and then
2 probably on the second round come
3 back for some other questions. But
4 my first thing is you've already
5 heard from the previous panel.
6 I've been very focused on
7 conforming contracts and making
8 payments in Philadelphia, and that
9 includes the court-appointed
10 attorneys. So my understanding is
11 how the system works is that court-
12 appointed attorneys do their work,
13 the judge signs off on it, the
14 court administration signs off on
15 it, comes over to the City of
16 Philadelphia. I believe there
17 might be too much paperwork
18 involved at that point. But I know
19 that the court-appointed attorneys
20 are supposed to be paid within 60
21 days.

22 So is there any way on your
23 end that we can make this process
24 happen faster? And I promise we're
25 looking at both areas and I have a

1 few other IT questions.

2 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

3 PADILLA: I'm going to let the
4 court administrator answer that,
5 but I do want to say one thing
6 about that. Before I was a judge,
7 I was a lawyer and I did a lot of
8 court-appointed cases. And for a
9 lawyer to wait to get paid for
10 months is not sustainable. You
11 can't live that way. So I
12 certainly understand the need for
13 the court-appointed lawyers to be
14 paid -- really 60 days is a little
15 long. I mean, really 30 days I
16 think is more appropriate. And I
17 do remember going by the court's
18 fiscal office on a regular basis to
19 find out about my check. And I
20 know that's been an ongoing issue
21 with the court and I've just begun
22 to understand -- I didn't know that
23 was an issue. I've just begun to
24 understand it. And I know our
25 court administration has been

1 working on it, but --

2 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

3 Judge, we're losing good
4 investigators and good attorneys
5 and we need them to do this work so
6 that's why I'm concerned.

7 MR. MCSORLEY:

8 Councilmember, you're absolutely
9 right. And that's one of the big
10 fears of Family Court, especially
11 the Criminal Division, is that we
12 are going to lose those
13 investigators and we are going to
14 lose those court-appointed
15 attorneys.

16 I just ran into a friend of
17 mine yesterday who announced that
18 his partner who does a lot of our
19 PCRA's and is court-appointed is
20 going to leave because he just
21 doesn't want to have to deal with
22 it anymore. As the President Judge
23 said, this has been an ongoing
24 problem that the FJD has been
25 trying to attack from quite some

1 time.

2 When I was the Criminal
3 Deputy Court Administrator, it
4 started to come to a head then and
5 Family Court had already instituted
6 a Quality Control Unit. So
7 basically the attorneys are doing
8 their work, they're dropping in the
9 vouchers and it used to be way back
10 in the day, the attorneys would
11 just get the judge to sign it and
12 they would send them off to the
13 City and there was all kinds of
14 problems, and T's weren't crossed
15 and I's weren't dotted. So the
16 Family Court instituted a Quality
17 Control Unit funded by the FJD to
18 help make sure that these vouchers
19 when they went forward were clean
20 and they were ready to go.

21 I did the same thing under
22 the Criminal Division. We created
23 a Quality Control Unit. We have
24 that unit now that's been operating
25 for several years doing the exact

1 same thing, and the goal here was
2 so the City would know once you got
3 this voucher, it's signed by a
4 judge, it is a court order, it's
5 ready to go, it's been checked and
6 rechecked, pay the bill. And
7 that's the conversation that we're
8 having with the City now.

9 Administrative Judge Murphy
10 has been spearheading this along
11 with Supervising Judge DeFino-
12 Nastasi and Administrative Judge
13 Anders and we have been at the
14 table with the City and those
15 conversations are ongoing, but our
16 goal is, and selfishly it's a big
17 goal for the FJD for just what you
18 said, we need to get this
19 corrected. One, it's not fair.

20 The 60-day notice that you
21 mentioned, the AGB, the
22 Administrative Governing Board, at
23 the FJD created that statute that
24 there was a penalty after that time
25 for the attorneys. And the reason

1 they did that many, many years ago
2 was to try to give the City more
3 influence or more of a prod to say
4 don't let this be late, and that
5 doesn't seem to have worked.

6 So what we're doing now is
7 just sitting down with the City and
8 trying to figure out the best way
9 to make this happen and to
10 streamline the process once it
11 leaves the FJD as much as possible.
12 To just mention one more thing,
13 when we did sit down with the City
14 some months ago, Administrative
15 Judge Murphy offered the City the
16 Quality Unit that they have. She
17 said, if you need help, we'll help.
18 She donated two of her personnel to
19 that unit, and the City sent us
20 some of their backlog paperwork,
21 and this was mostly just the
22 beginning of data entry. And the
23 vouchers went back to September,
24 and I believe there were anywhere
25 from 700 to 1500 that they sent

1 over that hadn't processed yet. So
2 the FJD is at the table and we're
3 trying to do what we can do.

4 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: One
5 quick follow-up to this: If the
6 City sent the money to the court,
7 could the court pay the vouchers?

8 MR. MCSORLEY: We're not in
9 that business of paying the
10 attorneys. Then we become the
11 attorney's employer and then
12 there's a conflict. And this is
13 exactly why we had it removed
14 outside of the FJD into the City.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
16 Can I ask two more IT questions?

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
18 (Gestured).

19 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Nope.
20 Thank you. I will be back. Thank
21 you.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 Chair recognizes Councilmember Jay
24 Young.

25 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank

1 you, Mr. President.

2 And good morning. First,
3 just a brief comment and statement.
4 I'm just trying to review your
5 budget analysis. I would
6 appreciate if we could get a full
7 budget detail because then it helps
8 me really realize and understand
9 what it is that you're doing with
10 the City dollars. And I do note
11 that there is a decrease in funding
12 in this projected budget. But
13 again, I would like to see where
14 that decrease actually is. So
15 again, we can figure out if it's
16 the best use for City money.

17 The first question I have
18 is regarding landlord-tenant
19 officers. And just as a statement
20 in general or question in general,
21 why are we the only county in the
22 Commonwealth to employ landlord-
23 tenant officers?

24 MR. MCSORLEY: That's a
25 good question, Councilmember, and

1 thank you for asking it. And I do
2 not know. That was created 30-plus
3 years ago, I believe. And the
4 stories that I've been told or have
5 been passed down to me have been
6 that we had a constable system like
7 the other counties did way back in
8 the day and that didn't seem to
9 work out. There were stories of
10 corruption. There were stories of
11 constables running rampant in
12 Philadelphia and just basically
13 doing things that shouldn't have
14 been done. Whether they're true or
15 not, I don't know. These are the
16 conversations I've had since I've
17 been talking about the LTO.

18 And back then, it was
19 decided that the best thing to do
20 was not use the constable system
21 and create this LTO system. The
22 statute was created for the
23 Municipal Court President Judge to
24 appoint an LTO. That's all the
25 statute said so that it was a

1 completely independent
2 organization, so the court wasn't
3 in the job of enforcing court
4 orders nor should we be. And then
5 it went off from there for the past
6 30 years. As we know now, there's
7 been issues. But why we are the
8 only county and whether -- I guess
9 my answer is back then it was
10 probably a good idea.

11 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
12 you. And on the same line of
13 questioning regarding evictions,
14 are there any social service
15 components when there are
16 evictions? And if not, how
17 difficult would that be to
18 implement in our system here?

19 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

20 PADILLA: I --

21 MR. McSORLEY: The -- I'm
22 sorry, Judge.

23 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

24 PADILLA: I don't know the answer
25 to that question, whether there are

1 any social services programs. I
2 think there should be. I know when
3 I sat in L&I court, for example,
4 there are issues with hoarders. So
5 they get evicted for hoarding, and
6 they really need social services
7 and I don't have anyone in the
8 court or I didn't have anyone in
9 the courtroom other than a City
10 solicitor to help with that. So
11 services are very, very important.
12 That's just one example of
13 something that I remember being an
14 issue.

15 Then there's the issue of
16 just tenants getting evicted.
17 Maybe they have mental health
18 issues. And if they don't have
19 insurance or if their insurance
20 doesn't address mental health,
21 they're just out there on the
22 street. So there are a myriad of
23 problems with evictions that end up
24 without social services for the
25 people. And I think it should be

1 addressed.

2 I tried to do what I could.

3 But as the judge presiding over the

4 case, the biggest thing for the

5 judge is to be fair, impartial,

6 unbiased. And the follow-up

7 services are nonexistent sometimes.

8 MR. MCSORLEY: And to echo

9 all that, Councilmember, the Judge

10 is exactly right. The court can

11 get involved when the case is in

12 our system. We do have many

13 programs in the Landlord-Tenant

14 Court of Municipal Court. We have

15 the Lawyer of the Day program,

16 Landlord Tenant Help Center, court

17 liaisons, courtroom navigators.

18 The City Eviction Diversion program

19 assisted over 21,000 people in

20 2023. So while the case is in

21 court, we're trying to do

22 everything we can to not let it go

23 to eviction and to help those

24 litigants that are mostly pro se as

25 much as we can. The problem is

1 again that when the court case is
2 done when it's disposed, the
3 court's jurisdiction ends.

4 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Well, I
5 do know that there are some judges
6 that are trying to implement what
7 they're calling resource-based
8 sentencing, right. And so, is that
9 something that we could implement
10 in our landlord-tenant process? Is
11 that as a part of the court order,
12 right, those that are getting
13 evicted are ordered to, you know,
14 these type of resources that are
15 available to them?

16 MR. MCSORLEY: That is
17 definitely a conversation that I'm
18 sure the court would want to have.
19 I know the Supervising Judge of
20 Municipal Court Yorgey-Girdy and
21 the Administrative Judge, Judge
22 Pittman, would be more than willing
23 to sit down and have that
24 conversation. And any assistance
25 we could lend, we would be happy to

1 do.

2 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
3 you, Mr. President. I'll wait for
4 my second round. Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 You're welcome. Councilwoman Nina
7 Ahmad.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
9 you, Council President.

10 Good afternoon. Following
11 up on my colleague's questioning
12 around a resource-based court
13 system, I had a personal experience
14 sitting in Family Court, actually
15 waiting outside to be called as a
16 witness. And I saw that's a very
17 fraught area. Somebody is losing
18 custody -- this was a custody case.
19 Somebody's losing custody,
20 somebody's gaining custody.

21 And I watched unfold in
22 front of me somebody commit a
23 felony against a lawyer because
24 they didn't like what had
25 transpired, and this escalated into

1 something that could have been
2 potentially resolved if there was a
3 space for people coming out of a
4 custody hearing to go and get
5 support and get debriefed around
6 that space.

7 And I wondered if the
8 Department of Behavioral Health can
9 be engaged with the court system to
10 have, as you were saying, social
11 services but mental health
12 services, social services, at that
13 time of great trauma for some
14 family. I mean, everybody's
15 traumatized in that space. So I
16 just wondered if you've thought of
17 having services that would have
18 helped that man not have to now
19 come and again get in front of
20 court and face those charges? So
21 I'm really interested in that.

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

23 PADILLA: Thank you for that
24 question. I spent nine years in
25 Family Court, domestic relations,

1 divorce, support, custody, domestic
2 violence, criminal abuse, so I'm
3 very, very familiar with that
4 emotion that's evoked at the end of
5 a custody trial, especially when
6 one gets custody and the other is
7 denied custody. And you're right,
8 emotions take over and you can have
9 a scene right there in the waiting
10 area and it can involve other
11 people.

12 I think it's a terrific
13 idea. I actually never thought of
14 that. I think it's a terrific idea
15 to offer resources right then and
16 there. I know in Family Court
17 right now there are two days a week
18 I believe, I don't remember the two
19 days right now, but there are two
20 days a week where there's help
21 offered to pro se litigants, which
22 it's really important, that's one
23 of my things, you know, pro se
24 litigants need help. But people
25 need some type of counseling or

1 advice given or resources at the
2 end of a custody hearing.

3 I think that's something I
4 would like to follow up on and get
5 back to you. I think that's a
6 great idea. Thank you for the
7 suggestion.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
9 you. I have another question
10 around the CURE report that was
11 referenced. I was not in Council
12 then and I actually testified when
13 Council had a hearing around this.
14 And my question was that report had
15 been initiated, a whole survey and
16 a study had been initiated at the
17 request of the court. And that
18 generated that report, which there
19 were problems in having it shared
20 and whatnot, so that was what the
21 Council hearing was about.

22 I just wondered that some
23 time has elapsed since then. Is it
24 useful to have another assessment
25 now that you have a DEI officer and

1 some changes have been made to
2 actually measure what the changes
3 have been since that report to now,
4 and if you would consider to have
5 some sort of expansive survey? And
6 they also did focus groups I
7 believe in that report to really
8 see where the court is.

9 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

10 PADILLA: Thank you for that
11 question. That might depend on the
12 budget that you give us today.
13 I've often thought about the CURE
14 report in terms of having a follow-
15 up. I would like our Chief
16 Diversity and Equity Officer to
17 address that issue, if you don't
18 mind.

19 I'm sorry to put you on the
20 spot.

21 MR. WEBB: Absolutely.
22 Thank you, Councilmember. I think
23 that is something that I will take
24 to the leadership to see if they
25 want to do a follow-up survey. I

1 know one of the things that we do
2 now with the anonymous suggestion
3 box, you can submit anything
4 directly to the court
5 administrator. So whether that's a
6 diversity issue, discrimination or
7 it could just be how you're feeling
8 at your job, it's the court
9 administrator's way of keeping the
10 pulse on things. And if he needs
11 my advice, he will send those over
12 to me. But I do appreciate your
13 suggestion about coming up with the
14 new survey. And I think it's
15 something that I will talk to our
16 Administrative Governing Board in
17 leadership about.

18 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: It
19 just gives us a level of
20 transparency that our public and
21 our constituents really look for
22 having heard what happened which
23 was in that report.

24 I'll hold my questions for
25 the next round. Thank you so much.

1 MR. WEBB: Thank you,
2 Councilmember.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
4 Thank you.

5 The Chair recognizes the
6 Councilmember Mark Squilla.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
8 you, Mr. President.

9 And thank you, President
10 Judge. Great answer there on the
11 last response. But this answer may
12 be -- I'll just follow up with what
13 Councilmember Landau was saying.
14 Isn't the Council Fee Unit under
15 the Managing Director's Office that
16 services those payments in the City
17 of Philadelphia?

18 MR. McSORLEY: Currently
19 it's part of the MDO's Office.
20 That's who we send our payments --

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Right,
22 the MDO, Managing Director's
23 Office. So is it possible -- I
24 guess we don't know why it takes
25 them months to go through and do

1 them, right, and that's not your
2 job to figure that out but maybe
3 ours. But is it possible for the
4 courts to process them and if
5 you're doing them or you're sending
6 help already over there to try to
7 do that, can we process them and
8 then get them to do the payments?

9 MR. MCSORLEY: We are
10 processing to the best of our
11 ability. The person who writes the
12 check is the City. So as far as
13 I'm concerned, here's everything
14 you need, write the check and --

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

16 MR. MCSORLEY: -- for some
17 reason between here's everything
18 you need and write the check,
19 there's a slowdown.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Right.
21 All right. That's something that
22 we need to discuss with the
23 Managing Director's Office. But
24 also I want to thank -- because as
25 we heard, the Defender's

1 Association was here earlier and
2 with the Kensington group meeting
3 with the DA's Office and the
4 Defender's Association but also
5 Judge Pittman is part of AMP Court.
6 It's really important, you know,
7 the resources right now is up for
8 two days a week, but hoping to get
9 the five days a week for AMP Court.

10 And when you talk about the
11 social services, it's really
12 important to have all those
13 services funded with the courts in
14 order to make sure that everything
15 is available at that time. And the
16 best part about it is if we could
17 get folks to that court in a short
18 period of time, right. So we're
19 not, first of all, clogging up all
20 our other courts but to be able to
21 get them assistance as soon as they
22 need it is the key.

23 And when Councilmember
24 Jones was speaking about Community
25 Court, we had Community Court at

1 one point here in the City of
2 Philadelphia and it was very, very
3 effective. And it was able to even
4 take the backlog from Municipal
5 Court down, right, because you were
6 able to serve hundreds of cases a
7 day and people not receiving
8 records by getting community
9 service or some other programs,
10 which also ends up helping our
11 communities because a lot of
12 communities worked with the people
13 who were doing community service
14 time to clean up or be a part of
15 community events and things like
16 that. So it became a win-win. So
17 I think we need to look at all
18 these other opportunities now,
19 including AMP which we have up and
20 running and hopefully expanding,
21 and Community Court.

22 And even if we still
23 continue to use the PAD, Police-
24 Assisted Diversion Program, we
25 could use these courts to help

1 folks who are committing minor
2 offenses and don't need to be
3 recorded as having a record but
4 then knowing there is a consequence
5 for that, I think becomes very
6 useful but also providing those
7 services to them and with other
8 opportunities that they have for
9 them so they don't come back into
10 the system. But that is not
11 something that we have in the
12 budget here, right, at this point
13 for a Community Court type
14 operation?

15 MR. MCSORLEY: No, we don't
16 have a Community Court budget. We
17 can fund AMP Court and we are
18 willing to expand AMP Court. Right
19 after that testimony I happened to
20 be with Judge Pittman and we
21 discussed your suggestion. It
22 would be nice if we could go to
23 five days. The reality is that the
24 numbers just aren't there for the
25 cases.

1 I looked at some back in
2 some of the previous years
3 prepandemic. The AMP Court handled
4 over in one year, and I think it
5 was 2018 or 2019, over 4,000 cases.
6 This year 290-something cases were
7 diverted to AMP Court, so there's a
8 big drop-off. And it's like a lot
9 of our diversion programs, I think
10 that they are terrific. I think
11 that they do a good job. I think
12 they do the intervention. But if
13 the cases don't come to our court,
14 to our program, there's not a lot
15 we can do. So AMP Court could be
16 expanded. I would like to see more
17 cases go to AMP Court. Why we're
18 not getting more cases, that's a
19 bigger conversation.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And
21 that's why we're having those
22 meetings with the District
23 Attorney's Office because the
24 District Attorney sends those to
25 AMP Court, but Judge Pittman is

1 part of that conversation, Keisha
2 Hudson is part of that
3 conversation. Having all the folks
4 at the table is so important so
5 that we could understand what cases
6 go there, why some cases aren't
7 going there, but having everybody
8 there could help hopefully drive
9 that so we do have the opportunity
10 to help as many people as we can.
11 So thank you. Thank you for your
12 support.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
14 Thank you, Member Squilla.

15 The Chair recognizes
16 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
19 so much, Council President.

20 And thank you to President
21 Judge Padilla and to the District
22 Court Administrator and Deputy
23 Court Administrator. Thank you all
24 for your work. We recognize that
25 civic participation is key in the

1 work that you all do, particularly
2 with a jury participation.

3 And so, correct me if I'm
4 wrong, but I remember FJD had a
5 study around jury participation in
6 2018. And one of the
7 recommendations from the study was
8 to create a child care facility or
9 provide a child care discount
10 voucher to jurors. Do you remember
11 that?

12 MR. McSORLEY: Yes, I do.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Could you just talk
15 about that? And then I just have a
16 question.

17 MR. McSORLEY: At the end
18 of that conversation, I was part of
19 that conversation, we did say that
20 we'd be willing to have that
21 discussion with the City. The
22 biggest obstacle we have is the
23 location of any child care
24 facility. There's no space in any
25 of our courthouses. And to be

1 frank, I don't know now that I'm a
2 father of an 8-year-old, I don't
3 know if I would want a Child Care
4 Unit in the Criminal Justice
5 Center, the Stout Center.

6 So we've talked to the City
7 before. It's a huge cost. After
8 that conversation, I went to our
9 largest partner, Allegheny County,
10 and they do have a program but it's
11 all outsourced. So I think that
12 they do something more of what you
13 just mentioned, a voucher kind of
14 program. They have a flat rate
15 from an outsourced daycare center.
16 I believe the way it works is that
17 people can go there. They can show
18 they have jury duty and they pay,
19 if nothing, maybe it's a \$15 day
20 fee or something like that. So
21 something like that I believe could
22 work, but again having the space in
23 Center City.

24 And one of the other
25 challenges here is that our

1 courthouses are all over the place.
2 You know, we have Stout, City Hall,
3 Family Court, so having a central
4 location where a parent could be
5 able to get right to that. So it
6 is something the court would have
7 no objection having. It's just
8 how -- the nuts and bolts are still
9 out there in how to be solved.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Sure. And you
12 mentioned Allegheny County, but I
13 also wanted to mention for the
14 record Montgomery County. They
15 have a court child care center that
16 is primarily funded by the County's
17 Domestic Relations Office as well
18 as court fees, and I believe it's
19 Pennsylvania Act 105, if I'm not
20 mistaken, that was passed in the
21 year 2000. Do you all at FJD
22 collect a fee relative to PA Act
23 105?

24 MR. MCSORLEY: I checked on
25 that just because I had a feeling

1 that question would come up. And,
2 no, we do not collect that fee.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. So we do not
5 collect that fee?

6 MR. McSORLEY: That's
7 correct.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: And typically how much
10 is it?

11 MR. McSORLEY: Pardon?

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Typically how much is
14 it per case?

15 MR. McSORLEY: It's a \$5
16 fee.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: \$5 fee. And so, in
19 Montgomery County they do collect
20 the fee for PA Act 105, which is
21 how they fund in part the
22 Montgomery County Court child care
23 facility, is that correct?

24 MR. McSORLEY: I believe
25 that is correct. And I am talking

1 to my Finance Director Mr. Wright
2 over here. He informed me that
3 when we had this conversation
4 before, I think we figured that the
5 \$5 fee would come close to covering
6 the cost of a FJD or a court-run
7 daycare center.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Sure, that would be
10 wonderful. And so, my only request
11 for follow-up is if we could work
12 on that issue. I know previously
13 when I was a Chief of Staff there
14 was \$500,000 allocated to FJD. And
15 I don't know, somewhere in the
16 transition process the money was,
17 say, lost or never allocated or
18 sent to FJD. But if we could work
19 together to work on figuring out
20 how we create a child care
21 facility, an opportunity for those
22 who would like to participate in
23 the jury process, I think that
24 would be most helpful for those who
25 want to participate.

1 MR. MCSORLEY: I'll

2 personally reach out to your

3 office, Councilmember.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Please. Okay. Thank

6 you very much.

7 Thank you, Mr. President.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 You're welcome.

10 Next round. The Chair

11 recognizes Councilmember Rue

12 Landau.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank

14 you. Okay. So I wanted to start

15 by going back to some of my IT

16 questions. One, I'm very glad

17 you're requesting money for cyber

18 security, super important. I'm the

19 Chair of the Information and

20 Technology Committee, so happy

21 about cyber security. Will you be

22 getting electronic filing in all

23 areas of Family Court soon?

24 MR. MCSORLEY: The answer

25 is yes. We're doing this

1 internally with our FJD IT Unit.
2 We have been working on, and that
3 my last ask here with City Council,
4 a case management system that we
5 were hoping to have closed that
6 contract and have a vendor in to
7 create a case management system
8 which was going to include many
9 other parts of the FJD besides
10 civil, and that was Family Court
11 e-filing.

12 Unfortunately, as the
13 numbers started to be crunched, it
14 became untenable. We went from
15 hoping to get a \$6 million or \$7
16 million system and then found out
17 that the vendor we were going with
18 after five years would have cost us
19 \$54 million. So we are
20 restructuring that, rebidding that
21 and relooking at vendors.

22 But at the same time, the
23 FJD IT Department is working with
24 Family Court to start an e-filing
25 system. We just completed a

1 scanning system which was integral
2 for that. And I believe -- is
3 there a start date, do you know?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
5 (Inaudible).

6 MR. McSORLEY: We're in
7 Phase 2. And hopefully within the
8 next 60 days, we're going to start
9 a pilot e-filing system in Family
10 Court.

11 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
12 you --

13 MR. McSORLEY: Now, I know
14 Administrative Judge Murphy just
15 heard me say that, so I'm going to
16 be in deep trouble if it doesn't
17 happen.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Yay,
19 yay for that. Second question:
20 There was a lot of interest in
21 reducing the harm for tenants who
22 have gone through the landlord-
23 tenant system in Philadelphia. And
24 the question for you is can we seal
25 Municipal Court records after a

1 certain amount of years so that
2 landlords cannot continue to hold
3 an eviction even if it was a
4 default judgment against tenants
5 going forward?

6 MR. MCSORLEY: That sounds
7 like a legal question to me, and I
8 know my Chief of Legal Operations
9 is here. Most of the court
10 documents are public documents. So
11 I'll have to get back to you on
12 that, Councilmember, to see. I
13 know that this conversation's been
14 had before. I just don't know what
15 legal hurdles we might incur about
16 sealing or what has to be done.

17 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
18 Thank you. Thank you for getting
19 back to me on that. Moving into
20 ADI for a minute. Very happy that
21 you are starting a program for
22 Autism Awareness. That is very,
23 very important and I hope that that
24 can expand throughout the City.
25 Director Webb, is there also going

1 to be training, trauma-informed
2 training for all staff in Family
3 Court and judges?

4 MR. WEBB: Thank you for
5 the question, Councilmember. And I
6 appreciate what you're saying about
7 the Autism Awareness. So for right
8 now April is Autism Awareness, but
9 next month we're looking at what
10 our programs will be in terms of
11 anything related to mental health
12 and trauma and things like that.
13 So there are some plans in the
14 works, but I can't say definitively
15 right now what those training
16 sessions will be.

17 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
18 I would love trauma-informed
19 training for all staff in Family
20 Court.

21 MR. McSORLEY: Just to add
22 to that, the AOPC has joined with
23 the FJD for a mental health
24 initiative that I think is
25 beginning in May, and that's going

1 to include trauma training. And
2 that's going to be for the entire
3 FJD.

4 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
5 you. I'm coming back for Round 3.

6 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

7 PADILLA: Can I just say how
8 awesome Chief Creadell Webb is.
9 He's awesome. I just want to say
10 that. And I really mean that.
11 He's awesome.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 Awesome, that's what's up. I just
14 got a quick question I want to ask:
15 GPS monitoring for adults,
16 currently that isn't a part of the
17 process. Why isn't that the case
18 as we address the issue of gun
19 violence in the City of
20 Philadelphia's public safety?

21 MR. McSORLEY: You're
22 talking about GPS for people on
23 pre-trial and probation release?

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 Yes.

1 MR. MCSORLEY: We've looked
2 at various vendors for GPS and it
3 just hasn't met our criteria for
4 being effective. Having somebody
5 on house arrest with a bracelet has
6 proven to be more cost-effective.
7 And the technology works in the
8 City of Philadelphia, those that
9 we've tried with, we've run into
10 different problems with the GPS not
11 being accurate. They're in the
12 Stout Center right now, but they
13 look like they're in City Hall.

14 I don't know, Mr. Bouchard,
15 if you have anything you want to
16 add to this.

17 MR. BOUCHARD: Yes. Chief
18 Deputy Mike Bouchard with the FJD.
19 The primary problem is the very
20 expensive cost for GPS. So we've
21 piloted them several years ago,
22 five or six years ago while I was
23 the Chief of Pre-trial Services.
24 And our juvenile section does have
25 GPS. The adult section, to

1 Mr. McSorley's point, there are a
2 range of technical issues, but the
3 primary problem is the expense and
4 that goes from not just the
5 equipment, but the 24/7 monitoring,
6 the amount of data that comes in,
7 that whole data center would need
8 to be expanded and also the general
9 supervision, so pre-trial officers
10 and probation officers, to make
11 sure they're as responsive as they
12 need to be to that data.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
14 Is the expense different than the
15 expense with the GPS monitoring
16 with the Juvenile Unit? Is the
17 oversight different for the adults
18 than it would be for the Juvenile
19 Unit?

20 MR. BOUCHARD: Yes, sir.
21 So the Juvenile Unit falls under
22 Family Court, and the other side
23 falls under the Trial Division.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 Under the Trial Division. Okay.

1 So it sounds like the Juvenile
2 Court has more resources than the
3 adult? That's what it sounds like.

4 MR. BOUCHARD: I would
5 venture to say that is true, and I
6 also don't know the number of
7 juveniles that are being actively
8 monitored on GPS, and that might be
9 much smaller than on the adult side
10 as well.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 Smaller than the adults. Okay.
13 All right. Thank you very much.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Councilmember Jeffrey Jay Young.

16 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
17 you, Mr. President.

18 In the testimony I note
19 that just all other City agencies
20 throughout the City, that there are
21 some issues with staffing. And I
22 do know that and I have friends and
23 colleagues and family members who
24 are your court staff. And so, I do
25 know that sometimes they work past

1 their allotted time they're able to
2 work, and they're not eligible for
3 any overtime or bonuses or things
4 like that. So can you talk to us
5 about how the court can or if the
6 court is willing to adjust some of
7 the HR practices to allow flex time
8 or comp. time to be more
9 competitive to try to increase the
10 amount of or try to attract some
11 employees and retain employees?

12 MR. McSORLEY: Well, the
13 FJD does have comp. time now. We
14 do allow comp. time, and we do have
15 to follow the labor laws so we do
16 have overtime. When a person works
17 a certain amount of hours, they
18 have the option of getting comp. or
19 overtime. And we do pay out
20 overtime. Unfortunately, unlike
21 law enforcement or 24/7 services,
22 we only have a few 24/7 services,
23 so our overtime budget is very,
24 very minimal.

25 HR, we're looking at our

1 practices. Those kind of policies
2 come within the AGB, flex time.
3 But we're also under the rules of
4 the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.
5 So, for instance, one of our
6 conversations we had after the
7 pandemic was remote working. We
8 had a lot of conversation about
9 that, and that's something that we
10 are ordered by the Pennsylvania
11 Supreme Court what we can and
12 cannot do. So we don't allow
13 remote working in the FJD.

14 Flex time, that has been
15 discussed. I don't know
16 actually -- you said you've talked
17 to people -- how much of a need or
18 how much of a desire there is for
19 that. But it is a conversation
20 that if any of the employees and,
21 in fact, if anybody's listening,
22 like the Suggestion box, it is a
23 conversation that we have all the
24 time with the AGB and HR.

25 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank

1 you. My next question, as someone
2 who practices are there any
3 upgrades to the system that allow a
4 text notification for upcoming
5 court dates, any changes in court
6 dates, hearing dates, et cetera, to
7 allow that information to get out
8 there a little bit more quickly and
9 efficiently?

10 MR. MCSORLEY: You mean
11 texting the litigants?

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Texting
13 the litigants, attorneys,
14 particularly if in a criminal
15 matter, a defendant, right. Is
16 that something that is foreseeable
17 from the FJD?

18 MR. MCSORLEY: We have
19 already instituted a robocall and a
20 texting system, especially for
21 criminal. That's still ongoing as
22 far as I know. So it's still
23 ongoing so we have that now, and it
24 notifies you of your hearing dates.
25 We have upgraded our Internet so

1 that a lot of our notices can be
2 put out on the Internet. But we
3 are using as much technology as we
4 can and I think we're pretty robust
5 right now.

6 It's not throughout the
7 whole FJD. I know we have it in
8 Criminal Court. I don't think we
9 have it in Civil --

10 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: It's not
11 in Civil.

12 MR. McSORLEY: -- Court,
13 right. So that's something I will
14 definitely explore.

15 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
16 you, Mr. President.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
18 You're welcome.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

21 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
22 you, Council President.

23 I have a follow-up question
24 on just services, particularly
25 language access services for those

1 Philadelphians who don't have
2 English as their first language.
3 Could you tell me how the court
4 diverts those services to those
5 folks?

6 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

7 PADILLA: Thank you for your
8 question. I just want to make sure
9 I understand. How they should
10 access it, you mean how they can
11 get it?

12 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes.
13 So when they're in court and they
14 require language assistance, what
15 is the process for that?

16 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

17 PADILLA: Thank you for that
18 question. It's very important.
19 People don't understand that they
20 really need to request that in
21 advance of their proceeding or
22 trial. So there is an Office of
23 Court Reporter and Interpreter
24 Services. And so, a request needs
25 to be made by either counsel or

1 directly from a pro se individual.
2 They should contact that Office of
3 Court Reporter and Interpreter, and
4 they can make the request by email.
5 There's a form that you can get by
6 email. You print out the form or
7 you can submit it electronically
8 and let them know the date of your
9 proceeding and the type of
10 interpreter that you need. So
11 that's very important, that you put
12 the type of interpreter that you
13 need. And then for the proceeding,
14 the interpreter appears magically
15 if you submit the form ahead of
16 time.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Are
18 those forms in different languages
19 as well because it defeats the
20 purpose if it's going to be in
21 English to request that?

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT
23 PADILLA: Yes. Thank you for that
24 question. That's another important
25 question. One of our judges, Judge

1 Ida Chen, Family court stalwart,
2 has worked so hard to get different
3 languages appearing on those
4 interpreter forms. So you can
5 request different languages, for
6 example, to request Mandarin if
7 that's what you want. So I can
8 remember a case that I had where
9 there was an African language, I
10 don't remember the country, but
11 there's so many languages, you have
12 to have the exact language in
13 Africa or what country it's from
14 and what village, that has to be on
15 the form. And the form will be in
16 different languages, so it's
17 critically important.

18 It's so important that when
19 you're in court if you need the
20 interpreter, the judge really can't
21 proceed without having an
22 interpreter there so that the
23 person understands what's
24 happening. There's nothing worse
25 than not understanding what's

1 happening. My mother's side of the
2 family was Puerto Rican and their
3 first language was Spanish. And
4 so, when some of them went to court
5 in New York City at the time, they
6 didn't understand. So there's
7 nothing worse than not
8 understanding. So I'm 100 percent
9 understanding of that question.

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Well,
11 thank you. I just want to make
12 sure that the fact that they have
13 to be proactive in getting these
14 services. Is there a way we're
15 actually communicating that to the
16 public? And I know you have a
17 community engagement person. Is
18 that part of the portfolio to make
19 sure we are reaching some of these
20 CDC or other places where people
21 get their information?

22 FQHC is another great place
23 to have information where people go
24 for healthcare, banks, things of
25 that nature. I think it behooves

1 us if we have to have a fair
2 justice system so everybody's
3 heard. And the second piece is the
4 quality of the interpreter. That
5 is a real issue. We have found in
6 the medical space that is a real
7 issue, that interpreters put their
8 own spin on things when they're
9 telling the client, you know,
10 saying some information. So it's a
11 tough space. How do you check the
12 interpreter who's doing the work?
13 We do need quality control there as
14 well.

15 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

16 PADILLA: Thank you for that
17 question. These are such important
18 issues. These are things that I
19 complain about sometimes when I'm
20 in court. So, yes, you can request
21 it very easily. Like I said, you
22 can do it online. You can do it if
23 you go to the desk. It's very easy
24 for a pro se litigant without
25 counsel to request it. An attorney

1 can request it. It's no problem.

2 In terms of the quality of
3 the interpreter, if there's an
4 issue, the litigant would have to
5 let us know if we don't understand
6 the language, but they're pretty
7 good about letting us know, at
8 least that's my experience in
9 Family Court and even in Civil
10 Court. They let us know if there's
11 an issue they don't understand.

12 MR. McSORLEY: And for the
13 interpreters, the Supreme Court has
14 a mandate that they have to be
15 certified. So most of our
16 interpreters do have to reach a
17 standard. And I'd just like to
18 point out that that's one of our
19 asks for additional funding, for
20 interpreters. And to give you just
21 a quick number, last year we had
22 over 7,600 requests in 70 different
23 languages.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Wow.

25 MR. McSORLEY: So it's a

1 big lift. But if you're going to
2 have access to justice, you have to
3 meet that lift.

4 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
5 you so much for taking care of
6 that.

7 And thank you, Council
8 President.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
10 You're welcome.

11 Chair recognizes
12 Councilmember Lozada.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yeah,
14 I just have one question. And,
15 that is, what are the possibilities
16 of hiring another full-time Spanish
17 interpreter in Family Court? We
18 understand that you have to fill
19 out a form and that there's an
20 interpreter that's assigned or
21 whatever, but one more full-time
22 Spanish interpreter would be
23 extremely helpful.

24 MR. MCSORLEY: I probably
25 would say that Administrative Judge

1 Murphy would definitely agree with
2 you. But I can also tell you that
3 right now in the Trial Division
4 we've had posted for a full-time
5 Spanish interpreter and we're still
6 trying to fill that slot. Again,
7 they have to meet the AOPC
8 criteria. They have to be a
9 certified interpreter and they have
10 to be willing to work in
11 Philadelphia which is becoming
12 challenging. But we are
13 advertising for it. We are trying
14 to meet those needs.

15 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

16 PADILLA: One other thing I want to
17 fishtail off of that, with the
18 Spanish interpreters in particular
19 there a lot of people that come to
20 court and say, oh, my aunt can
21 interpret for me or something like
22 that. Our administrator is
23 correct, they have to be certified,
24 they have to be competent through
25 the court's process before they can

1 interpret. So that does become a
2 problem. And so, a case will be
3 delayed if we don't have the proper
4 certified interpreter. That's why
5 it's so critical that we get this
6 budget request satisfied.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: We've
8 heard that those are the
9 challenges, right, that someone
10 wants to bring their family member
11 to be able to interpret and they're
12 not allowed to do so. And so,
13 really looking at how do we provide
14 interpreters or a pipeline of
15 interpreters that will be able to
16 respond to the need more quickly is
17 really something that we have heard
18 and we need to address in the court
19 system.

20 Thank you, Council
21 President.

22 MR. McSORLEY: And I can
23 tell you that's not limited to just
24 Philadelphia. That's a
25 Commonwealth-wide problem.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Thank you.

3 The Chair recognizes

4 Councilmember Rue Landau.

5 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank

6 you. Two more Family Court

7 questions. One, can we -- I

8 would -- can Family Court get a

9 child care center as well? There

10 is the space, and we used to have

11 it and we no longer have child care

12 at Family Court.

13 MR. McSORLEY: I don't know

14 if there is space. You mean space

15 in Family Court itself?

16 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I

17 believe there was space in Family

18 Court where they had the child care

19 center.

20 MR. McSORLEY: I would have

21 to talk to Administrative Judge

22 Murphy about that. I don't think

23 we had a child care center. We

24 have the visitation center.

25 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Well,

1 that's my second question. So you
2 have the Supervised Visitation and
3 Custody Exchange Center. I believe
4 it's grant-funded. Is that going
5 to continue because I think that's
6 also extremely important?

7 MR. MCSORLEY: As far as we
8 know it's going to continue, my
9 Finance Director says.

10 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: When
11 is the grant --

12 MR. MCSORLEY: Is it grant-
13 funded?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
15 (Inaudible).

16 MR. MCSORLEY: We'll have
17 to follow up with you,
18 Councilmember.

19 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
20 And so, supervised visitation and
21 exchange, child care and then the
22 third thing is my understanding of
23 the folks who are there often they
24 would appreciate some more
25 security. Is it possible to get

1 more security at the site?

2 MR. McSORLEY: Well, that's
3 a conversation --

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
5 That's a question for the Sheriff's
6 Office. She'll be here next.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
8 you.

9 MR. McSORLEY: Thank you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 That was right on point, yes.

12 Chair recognizes Councilman
13 Curtis Jones.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
15 you, Mr. President.

16 Very quickly I want to
17 thank you again for being a part of
18 the Blueprint for a Safer
19 Philadelphia. As a result of that
20 work, we sent you questions and
21 recommendations in writing.
22 Hopefully you will respond back in
23 writing. Let us know how that
24 goes.

25 But one of the questions

1 that begs an answer here today, is
2 there such a thing, President
3 Judge, as a dangerous age, 18 to
4 25, we hear is that number? Do
5 statistics bear that out, that's
6 when most activity in that area
7 happens; is that true?

8 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

9 PADILLA: Thank you for that
10 question. I hesitate to call
11 children dangerous. It just sounds
12 so horrible, such a heartbreaking
13 thing to do.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: I get
15 it.

16 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT

17 PADILLA: I'm sorry. I don't have
18 statistics on that. Perhaps do we
19 have any stats on that --

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: So the
21 second part of that, should there
22 be a specialty court for that age
23 group is the real question? Is
24 there some way if it is true, and
25 you don't have to answer today, I

1 don't need you to figure that out
2 at this moment, but if that is
3 true, if 18 to 25 people, say, the
4 brain isn't fully developed until
5 then, there's so many different
6 questions about that particular age
7 group, if it is such a thing, if it
8 is statistically validated, does it
9 merit or can we kind of do
10 something that probably intensifies
11 some of the first-time committing
12 of a crime, some of the alternative
13 courts? Is there something we
14 could put together that is a little
15 more restorative in mind?

16 MR. MCSORLEY: I would say
17 that anything we can do to reduce
18 recidivism or change a person's
19 life, the court would be at the
20 table. That's a very big issue. I
21 mean, you're saying that someone 18
22 to 24 gets a benefit of a special
23 program, but if you're 25 you're
24 going to go into the regular adult
25 criminal court. And if I'm a

1 defense attorney, I'm going to have
2 a problem with that. So I think
3 that that's, you know, if the
4 science is out there and if it's
5 something that should be explored,
6 then it should be something that
7 the justice partners and all of us
8 should sit down at the table and
9 see what can be done.

10 It's the same in my mind
11 the thought behind having
12 diversionary courts. There are
13 certain things that you can take
14 out of the court system that don't
15 have to go through the trial track.
16 If this could be some sort of
17 program like that, then the court
18 would be at that table. But it
19 would have to meet some strict
20 constitutional problems, I believe.
21 But sure, let's have that
22 conversation.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: It's
24 just ironic that someone in Kathy
25 Gilmore's demographic is more

1 likely to do something than someone
2 in O'Neill's demographic.
3 O'Neill's an interesting character,
4 but he's out of that age group.
5 But if that is something that we
6 begin to see, we would like to look
7 at how we can treat that in a
8 humane, restorative, justice way.
9 So thank you.

10 Thank you, Mr. President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

12 Thank you.

13 Chair recognizes
14 Councilmember Young.

15 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
16 you, Mr. President.

17 During the pandemic, the
18 courts initiated a lot of hearings,
19 a lot of conferences with Zoom
20 which I think gave more folks
21 access to courts than I think ever
22 before. Is there a standard rule
23 or guidance from the Supreme Court
24 on which types of hearings,
25 conferences are able to be on Zoom

1 or is that up to individual judges?
2 Can you tell us how that is
3 decided?

4 MR. McSORLEY: There is a
5 strict rule of what we can use
6 under the statutes. There are only
7 certain hearings, obviously not
8 trials. Since the pandemic I have
9 raised this discussion that I think
10 has to be a broader discussion
11 about technology is here and it's
12 here to stay. And without it, I
13 don't think we could have done what
14 we did during the pandemic. But
15 we're still using the same rules
16 proffered by the Supreme Court.
17 And I believe that has to be a
18 bigger discussion above my pay
19 grade.

20 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
21 you. Act 135, I do know that there
22 is a couple of judges, maybe just
23 one, who hear these types of cases.
24 And the court proactively took it
25 among itself to initiate some rules

1 to be in place when these types of
2 petitions are filed. Are there any
3 pending rules or regulations around
4 Act 135 proceedings that the court
5 will be initiating or reviewing or
6 discussing?

7 MR. McSORLEY: I don't know
8 of any pending court regulations.
9 I know that we do have our Act 135
10 cases, the petitioner has to come
11 to court, the property has to be
12 abandoned for over 12 months, they
13 have to meet certain criteria. In
14 order to get that conservatorship,
15 the petitioner has to meet a lot of
16 different criteria for the court
17 and the court stays on top of that.

18 Recognizing the ongoing
19 problem, that would be more of a
20 legislative question. But I also
21 believe it's a question that we can
22 take to the judicial leadership and
23 see what we can do. But I think
24 that we have these cases mostly
25 under one judge right now, and

1 we're trying to make sure that what
2 has to be done is being done and
3 with the court's eye on the
4 conservatorships and what's going
5 forward, and they have to come back
6 to court and prove every step of
7 the way. So the court is doing its
8 part there. Could it be expanded?
9 I would have no objection to that.

10 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
11 you. Regarding your technology
12 upgrades and hardware upgrades,
13 what assurances can you provide I
14 guess to the City, to the Bar that
15 the things that you're doing will
16 actually be protective of some of
17 that most sensitive information
18 that's filed in court?

19 MR. MCSORLEY: Thank you
20 for the question. That's a very
21 tough question, what assurances.
22 As the Court Administrator when I
23 meet with my IT Department, and
24 it's been a big learning curve for
25 me, I think my 8-year-old knows

1 more about technology than I do.

2 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Mine
3 too.

4 MR. McSORLEY: I just had
5 him the other day do something to
6 my phone because I couldn't figure
7 out how to make it operate. Thank
8 you, Kevin, if you're watching. I
9 asked for the same assurances from
10 my IT Department. The FJD does
11 have its IT Department so we
12 benefit from that.

13 After our intrusion which
14 was some years ago, we've installed
15 all kinds of cyberware, security
16 cyberware which is very expensive
17 and which is, again, one of our
18 asks that we're going for. I meet
19 weekly with the IT Department just
20 because of my fear of what you're
21 asking for, and they are telling me
22 that we're doing everything that we
23 can possibly do.

24 And we're working with the
25 City OIT Department because the

1 City has its firewalls. But from
2 what I've learned, there is no
3 assurance that it's never going to
4 happen. And as soon as we let our
5 guard down -- and I can also tell
6 you just from learning it, the
7 amount of hits or attacks that our
8 system gets daily is just
9 mindboggling, that there's just
10 people out there who just got
11 nothing else to do but try to see
12 what they can get into. And so far
13 they haven't gotten to us. But
14 every Thursday morning at 9 o'clock
15 I ask the same question, and we'll
16 continue to do so as long as I'm
17 here.

18 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
19 you so much. I really appreciate
20 your answers today.

21 Thank you, Mr. President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 You're welcome.

24 And last question is from
25 Councilmember Quetcy Lozada.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
2 you, Council President.

3 Very quickly, we have heard
4 from multiple City departments,
5 especially on the law side for some
6 reason, that the salaries are not
7 competitive. And so, my question
8 to you is, is the interpreter
9 salary competitive to be able to
10 fill those roles? And what are you
11 all doing as it relates to outreach
12 to different paralegal schools or
13 others to be able to fill those
14 roles, specifically for Spanish
15 interpreters?

16 MR. MCSORLEY: We are
17 constantly looking at our pay
18 scale. We've had parity
19 conversations with the City when it
20 comes to our law clerks. We've had
21 parity conversations with different
22 court systems. The reality is it's
23 government work and it's hard to
24 get a salary that's going to entice
25 somebody to come into Philadelphia,

1 so we do try to entice them in
2 other ways with our benefits, our
3 pension, our work conditions.

4 I hate to mention it here,
5 but we recently lifted the
6 residency clause for the FJD as
7 another way to try to bring people
8 into the system. As far as our
9 interpreters go, the salaries, our
10 DCA of that Danielle O'Connor, we
11 recently raised our salaries of all
12 of our interpreters just for that
13 reason. And if she was here, she
14 would say they have to be raised
15 again because we just can't attract
16 the people that have to be
17 attracted.

18 So this all goes to the
19 overall budget, but we are doing
20 all we can. And as Court
21 Administrator, I have recently just
22 been looking at the line staff
23 salaries to see where we can start
24 to bring those up to a level where
25 somebody gets out of high school, I

1 would like somebody to be able to
2 support themselves and maybe
3 support a family instead of just
4 getting by.

5 I'm glad you're asking that
6 question because when I met with my
7 team and we had this very
8 conversation, I said, well, not
9 this budget year, but possibly next
10 budget year that might be a bigger
11 conversation I'll be bringing to
12 the table.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:
14 (Inaudible) test for that position?

15 MR. McSORLEY: The test for
16 the interpreter position?

17 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes.

18 MR. McSORLEY: The
19 certification for the interpreters
20 is an AOPC test. It's not an FJD,
21 so it's a state-mandated test that
22 they have to get qualified in. And
23 they just redid that recently.
24 It's something that we have to live
25 by in the FJD.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Okay.

2 Thank you.

3 Thank you, Council

4 President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 Thank you.

7 We want to thank you for
8 your testimony, Your Honor and
9 Richard McSorley, as well. And we
10 look forward to continuously
11 working with you.

12 We stand in recess until
13 2 o'clock.

14 PRESIDENT JUDGE WRIGHT
15 PADILLA: Thank you. Thank you so
16 much.

17 MR. MCSORLEY: Thank you,
18 Council President and
19 Councilmembers.

20 (Afternoon recess.)

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

22 This hearing is now called to
23 order.

24 Ms. Helen Loughhead, can you
25 please call the next person for

1 testimony.

2 THE CLERK: Sheriff

3 Rochelle Bilal.

4 (Witnesses approached
5 Witness table.)

6 SHERIFF BILAL: I'm
7 injured.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 Yes, you can have a seat. Before
10 you get started, I just want to
11 thank you for your hard work and
12 your dedication and working in
13 partnership with members of Council
14 City of Philadelphia as we try to
15 find our way through the pandemic,
16 through the tons and tons of food
17 that you've given out, through the
18 various community outreach
19 initiatives that you have hosted as
20 well as partnering with me on
21 several Peace Not Guns outreach
22 initiatives.

23 And so, just state your
24 name and your title for the record
25 and please begin your testimony.

1 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you
2 so much. Good afternoon, President
3 Johnson and members of City
4 Council. I am Rochelle Bilal,
5 Sheriff for the City and County of
6 Philadelphia. Joining me today are
7 my staff members, Tariq El-Shabazz,
8 who is the Undersheriff; Patrick
9 Lee is our Chief Financial Officer;
10 Craig Martin is our Senior Chief
11 Budget Officer; Deputy Chief Vonda
12 Hairston, she can raise her hand,
13 is our Court Operations; Chief
14 Inspector Sean Thorton is our Court
15 Operations; Inspector Nicole Nobles
16 is our Warrant Unit; Inspector Sean
17 Marshall, our Internals Affairs
18 Division and Training Bureau;
19 Inspector David Fallon, Civil
20 Enforcement; Inspector Josh Perez,
21 Court operations; Captain Paul
22 Fallon, Transportation, and you may
23 see two young ladies sitting back
24 there. They are our Undersheriffs,
25 Lavonda and Cheyenne.

1 I am pleased to provide
2 testimony on the Office of the
3 Philadelphia Sheriff for Fiscal
4 Year 2025 operating budget. Plans
5 for Fiscal Year 2025, our office's
6 main objectives are to support the
7 Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia,
8 execute all orders from the First
9 Judicial District Court, deploy
10 personnel, to find and return
11 excess proceeds to those citizens
12 impacted by property sales which
13 will allow them to have access to
14 homebuying and other economic
15 opportunities in Philadelphia.

16 In supporting the City's
17 Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia
18 and in keeping with the Mayor's
19 platform to have a safer, greener
20 and cleaner city, the
21 Philadelphia's Sheriff's Office has
22 contributed to this plan and stand
23 ready to do more.

24 Under our Civil Enforcement
25 and Warrant Units, Deputy Sheriffs

1 and detectives have been essential
2 in apprehending fugitives in 2023
3 while working in concert with the
4 District Attorney's Office and the
5 Philadelphia Police Department. In
6 addition to our first order in
7 serving and protecting the courts,
8 our civil enforcement personnel
9 have been instrumental in tracking
10 repeat offenders who often appear
11 first in domestic disputes,
12 complaints, summons and subpoenas
13 and more.

14 If we are to achieve our
15 goals of improving the safety of
16 Philadelphia, I propose we expand
17 our efforts using technology and
18 increased personnel to help us move
19 in concert with other law
20 enforcement agencies. To that end,
21 we are very excited to utilize our
22 new Tyler Tech system, which
23 enables our Deputy Sheriffs to
24 receive and execute PFAs,
25 Protection from Abuse orders, and

1 other court orders in realtime.

2 In essence, Deputy Sheriffs
3 will now be able to complete a
4 court order on their mobile devices
5 while out in the field, eliminating
6 the normal waiting period. With
7 this new technology, the normal
8 delays between our office and the
9 courts would be eliminated,
10 potentially reducing the number of
11 repeat offenders left out on the
12 street. All of this will be
13 beneficial to the public.

14 The Sheriff's Office, as
15 demonstrated in providing security
16 details during the election in
17 2023, has become the backbone in
18 meeting the demand for more trained
19 law enforcement officers. This
20 includes bringing more deputies in
21 our Bike and K9 Unit, which the
22 City utilizes daily as an increase
23 on foot patrol presence in our City
24 and outline the Blueprint for a
25 Safer Philadelphia.

1 However, our office's
2 inability to retain high caliber
3 deputies, and I'm sure y'all have
4 heard this over and over but I got
5 to put it in for us, to perform
6 their duties is because the
7 deputies' salaries are not
8 compatible to other counties within
9 Pennsylvania and on national level.
10 We lose deputies to other
11 departments outside the City
12 because of the pay.

13 Our Real Estate Department
14 through court mandate execute
15 foreclosures and evictions, sales,
16 seize properties at auctions and
17 returns excess funds from sales to
18 former owners. Through the
19 integration of a new civil process
20 system provided by our new IT
21 system, Tyler Tech, our ability to
22 lessen the amount of time per sales
23 transaction along with providing
24 transparency and accountability
25 will only improve the Sheriff's

1 Sale process for our citizens.

2 The Sheriff's Office
3 continues to budgetarily fall below
4 the number of personnel needed to
5 effectively handle our
6 responsibilities in protecting and
7 serving citizens. Through our
8 robust Community Outreach
9 Department, our staff participates
10 in hundreds of community events to
11 educate our citizens on the
12 importance of gun safety, sheriff
13 sales and the overall function of
14 how the Sheriff's Office works.

15 My administration carries
16 out these messages through our
17 citywide food box giveaways, events
18 and other signature community
19 events. With the leadership of
20 this City Council body, I am
21 certain we can achieve our
22 objectives together. We must first
23 ensure that this budget process
24 will be handled professionally and
25 fairly.

1 And the reason why I say
2 that, earlier this year we learned
3 that the Sheriff Office's budget
4 proposal from last year and really
5 the last four or five cycles was
6 not placed properly thereof and it
7 was not considered. We can propose
8 and give the reasons why we need
9 certain things in the Sheriff's
10 Office. But guess what, that never
11 got to y'all. There was an
12 alternative budget that was given
13 in place of what we gave and what
14 our justifications were.

15 This means we got virtually
16 nothing at budget time. This is
17 unacceptable. And I trust this
18 year's budget process will be
19 executed honorably to reflect this
20 year's budget proposal and the
21 focus as we strive to adhere to the
22 safety requirements that kept our
23 citizens protected.

24 We will now proceed to our
25 Fiscal Year 2025 through 2029

1 budget plan, and feel free to ask
2 us any questions. And thank you so
3 much.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 You're welcome, Sheriff. And thank
6 you for your thorough presentation.
7 Just a couple questions: So your
8 request is an additional 10.3
9 million beyond the Administration's
10 proposed FY25 budget. So can you
11 just give us an overview on how are
12 you going to be budgeting and
13 utilizing the 10 million? What
14 exactly is it for?

15 SHERIFF BILAL: So for
16 proposed Fiscal Year -- and I'll
17 let the budget people come up
18 shortly -- 2025 General Fund budget
19 totals \$46,655,029, an increase of
20 \$13,788,58 -- I mean 581 over
21 Fiscal Year 2024's estimated
22 obligation levels.

23 This increase is primarily
24 due to an increase in Class 100
25 employee compensations due to

1 needed staff. This increase is
2 essential due to the understaffing
3 of uniformed and non-uniformed
4 employees. This will increase our
5 potential to adequately perform the
6 duties of the Sheriff's Office for
7 Class 200 purchases of services,
8 which entails professional
9 services, improved technology and
10 computer augmentation. For Class
11 300 and 400, for material supplies,
12 new vehicle purchases and
13 equipment, which includes needed
14 tactical gear.

15 What we learned in the last
16 few years is the Sheriff was called
17 on more than you can imagine and
18 did not have the equipment to
19 actually get out on the streets
20 with our other law enforcement
21 personnel.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 What's the current number of
24 uniformed staff?

25 SHERIFF BILAL: That we

1 have now?

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Yes.

4 SHERIFF BILAL: 270.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 270. And how are the --

7 SHERIFF BILAL: Which is
8 way below what we need, because if
9 you could see in our overtime is
10 because we don't have the people.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 Now, I know I talked to folks from
13 the courts when I did a
14 presentation with them on another
15 topic and they talked about the
16 need for Sheriffs inside the
17 courtroom. Elaborate in terms of
18 the number of staff that you have
19 and also being able to cover our
20 court system.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: Okay. For
22 those I will bring up to deal with
23 the court -- come on, Paul, Vonda.

24 Okay. You have Chief
25 Deputy Vonda Hairston who is over

1 court operations and you also have
2 Fallon here who is also involved in
3 a lot of the court operations.
4 When we get down to our deputies
5 and their proportions on how they
6 secure the courts because we go to
7 Criminal -- the Juanita Kidd Stout
8 Center, which people call the CJC,
9 we have Family Court, we have
10 Traffic Court, we have the Widener
11 Building and we have City Hall here
12 in this building.

13 So, Vonda.

14 MS. HAIRSTON: Currently I
15 don't have the numbers for 1501,
16 but I know at the Justice Center we
17 have 87 deputies. We require maybe
18 160 for the court to operate
19 efficiently.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 So you have about 80, but you
22 need --

23 MS. HAIRSTON: We have 87.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 But you would need how many?

1 MS. HAIRSTON: 150 would do
2 us great.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
4 150, okay. And also, I would think
5 that not having the level of
6 staffing --

7 SHERIFF BILAL: She has to
8 get closer?

9 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Yes.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 Not having the level of staffing
12 that you need obviously will create
13 I guess I would say a public safety
14 hazard in the Criminal Justice
15 Center because we hear judges are
16 saying they want to have coverage,
17 right, judges that want to feel
18 secure throughout the building.
19 Obviously that's a direct
20 correlation between the amount of
21 Sheriff officers that are able to
22 cover the building versus not. And
23 so, I just want to get that on the
24 record based upon conversation that
25 I had with the Barristers'

1 Association and told them I will
2 follow up and take a look into this
3 matter to see how we could be
4 supportive from that aspect.

5 At this time, I'm going to
6 call on Councilwoman Quetcy Lozada.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
8 you, Council President.

9 I'd like to thank the
10 Sheriff and her team for all of the
11 outreach that has been happening in
12 the 7th Council District. Even
13 prior to me coming into office,
14 we're grateful for all the
15 education that you have provided to
16 community residents and how the
17 process of your office works.
18 Thank you so much for your work.

19 My first question is in the
20 Mayor's 100th day she
21 enthusiastically announced that the
22 Sheriff and the Administration and
23 government had reached an agreement
24 on beginning sheriff sales again.
25 Can you share with us how that

1 process will work and can you also
2 tell us if this legislative body
3 will receive a copy of that
4 agreement?

5 SHERIFF BILAL: I didn't
6 hear all of what you said. I
7 know --

8 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Can
9 you share with us how the sheriff
10 sales, the new agreement, how that
11 new process will work and will this
12 body receive a copy of the
13 agreement that you all reached?

14 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes,
15 Council can actually see the
16 agreement that we're working
17 together on that. What most people
18 try to believe is that we can't
19 work together, but we can. If we
20 are never invited into the room to
21 have the conversation to work
22 together, then you can assume that
23 we don't, but we do.

24 The Mayor and my staff have
25 had a conversation with the Law

1 Department. We worked out an
2 agreement and hopefully by July,
3 the tax lien sales will go. We
4 never stopped them. We did have
5 the mortgage sales continuing on
6 and there was another sale that was
7 going -- it was one tax sale that
8 continued to go on once the
9 pandemic ended.

10 There needed to be an
11 agreement made to finish up the
12 contract with us, and that's done.
13 We're just working out those. So
14 by July, those sales will go up.
15 We have put a lot of effort in
16 protecting citizens in this City in
17 reference to foreclosures and tax
18 lien sales. We have updated the
19 policies and procedures. We made
20 sure that they had the same
21 protection, even more going through
22 the process.

23 You can stop a sale before,
24 during and immediately afterwards
25 if we get a court order to do so.

1 And in that process when people are
2 going through that, we made sure
3 that we put out information, and
4 all of this is on our website, on
5 how you can save your home. And I
6 mandated a Constituent Services
7 Unit that has never been in the
8 Sheriff's Office, and their job was
9 mandated to get all the
10 information, local, state and
11 federal on how you can save your
12 homes.

13 And so, when this process
14 starts we know in a mortgage
15 foreclosure the company sends out
16 information, but we go further.
17 When we have to post or initiate
18 something, we give them the
19 pamphlet to call us and my
20 Constituent Services will walk them
21 through the process and connect
22 them with the agency that can best
23 help them.

24 And I tell people this
25 because -- and how we know it works

1 because at one point when we first
2 came in office and we put this into
3 place, there was 620 sales going on
4 that day. When we started sending
5 out information to families that
6 were dealing with this issue, the
7 sales went down to 17. What we say
8 is if you know the information and
9 people are there to help you
10 instead of going in your home and
11 just shutting the door, you will
12 step out and grab that help and
13 therefore be helped in order to
14 save your home.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: When
16 I was Chief of Staff prior to
17 become an elected, we often times
18 used Anna Ramos who was a Spanish
19 speaker to help people that were
20 going through the Sheriff's
21 process. Is there a person in your
22 office that will be able to respond
23 to the needs of Councilmembers when
24 working through issues with
25 constituents in the Spanish

1 language as well as in other
2 languages?

3 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes. As a
4 matter of fact, our brochure that's
5 online is in English and Spanish,
6 and we're working on the other
7 languages for everybody else. We
8 have somebody in the office, a
9 Spanish-speaking interpreter, that
10 basically can walk through the real
11 estate part with you. I'm working
12 on hiring if I get the budget that
13 I need a Spanish person in our
14 constituent services so they can
15 basically work on that too.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Okay.
17 And then most of what you mentioned
18 is online. We know that there's a
19 cultural digital divide, especially
20 in poor communities. Is there
21 another way for residents to
22 receive information or become
23 educated in the Sheriff's process
24 that does not require them to go
25 online?

1 SHERIFF BILAL: We are out
2 in the communities. And I say when
3 we are out in the communities, we
4 are out in the communities
5 everywhere with all of this
6 information. And any City
7 Councilmember in the office can
8 basically go online, print down
9 that information for your
10 constituents basically yourself.
11 We would like to print it, but I
12 think everybody has their own
13 budget. So you can go online,
14 print it out and put it there. But
15 we are out in the communities
16 everywhere. And if a Council
17 District wants us to come to your
18 District to have a conversation
19 with your constituents about what
20 the Sheriff's Office does and we
21 can go through step-by-step on the
22 process of sheriff sales, we can do
23 a PowerPoint presentation because
24 that's what we've done to some
25 areas and go step-by-step. We did

1 it up at Enon where their real
2 estate people brought us in to
3 basically go step-by-step on what
4 that process is. We're willing to
5 do that.

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
7 you.

8 SHERIFF BILAL: You're
9 welcome.

10 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
11 you, Council President.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 You're welcome.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Jeffrey Young.

16 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
17 you, Council President.

18 Good afternoon, Sheriff.

19 SHERIFF BILAL: Good
20 afternoon.

21 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Just one
22 quick comment before I have a
23 question. I know that the
24 Administration did not send over
25 your budget detail. I'm asking if

1 you can help us get that detail
2 from the Administration, if they
3 can send that over to us?

4 SHERIFF BILAL: And see,
5 that's what I said to you, when we
6 send over our budget details, we
7 send graphs, we send justification,
8 we send all of that. And we just
9 found out that y'all don't get all
10 of that information, that there was
11 an alternative budget given to City
12 Council for the past four cycles
13 from Finance. And so, when we get
14 here, we get what they want to give
15 us and not what is needed.

16 And so, I can't even say in
17 the past Administrations did they
18 get the funding because they might
19 not even got their budget request.
20 So today I bought copies for
21 everybody.

22 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
23 you. That's really appreciated so
24 we can really see line-by-line
25 where the investments are being

1 made in our city. And just a
2 couple of questions I have. Could
3 you provide us with, tell us about
4 some updates that the office has
5 done? And if you're given an
6 increase in this budget, what
7 exactly will this increase do,
8 right?

9 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes. I
10 will let the Undersheriff start as
11 far as everything that has been
12 updated in the Sheriff's Office.

13 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
14 Well, if we can, we can first start
15 with technology in light of how
16 quickly we can get out information
17 through Tyler Tech and through
18 working with our partners, we have
19 the ability to get all of the
20 information out through technology.

21 For example, we have been
22 dealing with for the first time in
23 the second year in a row
24 escheatment of excess proceeds.
25 The escheatment process through

1 excess proceeds required us to do
2 investigation, the investigation
3 that law enforcement officers can
4 do and other people cannot.

5 The Sheriff was able to
6 deploy a team through technology
7 and through our sources to contact
8 and to find individuals who may not
9 live in the City anymore but
10 actually are the owners of those
11 excess proceeds. We were able to
12 contact them to give them an
13 opportunity to come in and to
14 alleviate the one-third that a lot
15 of lawyers like to charge, but to
16 give them a simple form that they
17 can fill out. We verify their
18 identification, we verify that
19 they're the rightful owner and
20 we're able to cut a check prior to
21 sending out. The same thing with
22 excess proceeds, which is an
23 improvement.

24 We took over excess
25 proceeds from the City based upon a

1 consent decree that was existing
2 before we came. We were able to
3 not only locate people but to
4 prepare the report, to file the
5 report and to actually give back
6 money before sending the report to
7 the state.

8 We've also been able to
9 increase our PFA, Protection From
10 Abuse program, which we do along
11 with other partners. That gives us
12 the opportunity to locate
13 individuals, serve PFAs, but also
14 add the addition of confiscating
15 individual firearms if those
16 individuals have them. We're able
17 to do that by extending our reach.

18 We did that through working
19 cooperatively with the Philadelphia
20 Police Department and other
21 partners to have actual locations
22 where people can turn those things
23 in. We additionally were able to
24 through again technology make a
25 determination whether or not

1 someone actually has a firearm that
2 is registered that indicates that
3 they no longer have it, and then we
4 turn that information over for
5 investigation to the Philadelphia
6 Police Department.

7 In addition to the
8 technology, we've created in our
9 Armory Unit something called the
10 BEAST -- we didn't create it, I
11 shouldn't say that, I sound like Al
12 Gore -- we actually got a program
13 that the law enforcement used.
14 What that does is it allows us to
15 keep a running inventory of those
16 things that are confiscated and we
17 know where they are, when they were
18 confiscated and who the
19 individuals, those weapons belong
20 to or who they were confiscated
21 from.

22 Now, that doesn't help us
23 with illegal firearms. But if in
24 fact we find that there was someone
25 who filed the PFA and indicates

1 that that individual may have a
2 firearm, we work collaboratively or
3 cooperatively with PPD to do
4 further investigation to retrieve
5 those weapons. We retrieve them,
6 we put them in our high tech now
7 innovative armory that didn't exist
8 when the Sheriff came and we're
9 able to place and hold those items.

10 The Sheriff also through
11 innovation, again armory and
12 firearms because firearms is a big
13 issue in the City and County of
14 Philadelphia, we're able to now
15 work on destroying those firearms.
16 So if we have firearms, and I'll
17 finish with this because the
18 Sheriff told me before I came over
19 here don't be a lawyer, just answer
20 the question --

21 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: It's
22 hard. It's in our nature.

23 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
24 We're able to actually make more
25 room for the confiscation of

1 firearms by first locating or
2 trying to locate people who may
3 have firearms in our armory. If we
4 can't and those are by court order
5 ordered to be destroyed, we work
6 with an organization that allows us
7 now to destroy our firearms, and
8 that is something that we used to
9 do jointly, we're able to do alone.
10 So those are just really three
11 narrow or four narrow things. But
12 I think that they're centered
13 around firearms, and I thought that
14 maybe Council would be more
15 interested in those aspects.

16 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
17 you, Mr. President. I do ask that
18 if we could place the Sheriff's
19 budget charts on our portal so the
20 public can access that as well.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Yes, absolutely, granted that the
23 Sheriff's Office provides that
24 information to us digitally. Helen
25 Loughead, our Chief Financial

1 Officer, will handle that process.

2 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes, we
3 will make sure that it's sent over
4 by the end of the day.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 You're welcome.

7 The Chair recognizes
8 Councilmember Jim Harrity.

9 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
10 you, Council President.

11 Good morning -- or good
12 afternoon, Sheriff.

13 SHERIFF BILAL: Good
14 afternoon, Councilman.

15 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Again,
16 I'd like to also commend you on
17 your work you've been doing in the
18 neighborhoods with the outreach of
19 giving food out during the pandemic
20 up until now. I've had the
21 pleasure of being with you on
22 numerous occasions because my union
23 that I belong to is one of the
24 partners, so we had a -- I know you
25 helped a lot of people in that

1 process during the COVID thing.

2 I also am probably I
3 believe the only person on Council
4 that actually worked in the
5 Sheriff's Office, so I'm fully
6 aware of the things that you do.
7 All the things that you guys have
8 to do every day to keep us safe,
9 and we thank you for the Deputies
10 you have here that are always
11 watching out for us.

12 I just have a couple of
13 quick questions. Does the
14 Sheriff's Office operate under the
15 City's IT Department? Do you guys
16 have access to that?

17 SHERIFF BILAL: I'll start
18 off and then I'll have our Chief
19 Financial Officer come up. No, we
20 don't. One of the things -- and
21 since this is my second term, my
22 first four years was education.
23 And when people think that we are a
24 department within the City, we are
25 not. And so, we had to have our

1 own IT Department to operate any of
2 the problems that we have IT-wise.
3 And I'll let the CFO get into it in
4 detail.

5 MR. LEE: Yes. Good
6 afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of
7 Council. My name is Patrick Lee.
8 And as the Sheriff so eloquently
9 presented me, I'm her Chief
10 Financial Officer, and she reminds
11 me every day I report to her. So
12 one of the things that we did find
13 out during the process of our
14 analysis was this, that IT
15 augmentation was going to be
16 integral into the 21st century
17 mindset that the Sheriff was
18 bringing into the office.

19 What we didn't know is that
20 we didn't have direct access
21 because we are considered an office
22 to staff to support that. So we
23 literally have to pay and use one
24 of the City contracts, the IT
25 augmentation contract, to support

1 our data analysis, our day-to-day
2 IT support operations, database
3 management, and those are the main
4 three functions that we use that
5 contract for. Without which, we
6 wouldn't be able to feel the
7 current civil service software if
8 we didn't have these people in
9 place that we were able to get into
10 position about eight, nine months
11 ago.

12 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:

13 Sheriff, can you tell us how have
14 you improved excess -- I'm losing
15 my spot here, I'm sorry -- how have
16 you improved the excess proceeds
17 and real estate process since
18 you've been in office?

19 SHERIFF BILAL: I'll start
20 off with the excess proceeds. In
21 your packet we basically put the
22 analysis of it. If you look in
23 your packets, you have this. This
24 will tell you that we basically
25 took what was done four years prior

1 to us and doubled the amount of
2 excess proceeds that went to
3 families that went through that
4 process. That means we took it
5 from four years under a previous
6 administration of \$4 million to \$8
7 million-plus under the three years
8 that I've been in office. That
9 means it took a year for us to
10 figure it out, and then the three
11 years after that those excess
12 proceeds have doubled.

13 And the reason is this, we
14 had people working in the office as
15 detectives that's in our Civil
16 Unit, and all they were doing was
17 just doing the civil work. Well,
18 I'm coming from the police
19 department. Being there 27 years,
20 if you're a detective, your job is
21 to seek and find. And so, part of
22 their responsibility became the
23 civil part and the other part
24 became the detective part.

25 And so, by using the

1 technology that police departments,
2 law enforcement have that nobody
3 else has, basically put them on to
4 that so they can locate people more
5 efficiently through those type of
6 programs.

7 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

8 It was also the benefit of using
9 the technology, which is now the
10 contract that we reached the
11 agreement with, Bid4Assets as well
12 as Tyler Tech. These processes
13 allowed us to have firsthand
14 touching of individuals that were
15 engaged in excess proceeds.

16 Location, location,
17 location is the most important
18 thing. Then information, that
19 information that we located the
20 person. We inform them that they
21 have excess proceeds and then the
22 ability to track the amount of
23 money that's received, the amount
24 of money that goes into each
25 particular individual designated

1 account and the amount of excess
2 proceeds after, in fact, the
3 lienholders are paid that belongs
4 to the individuals. Because we're
5 able to locate them, because we're
6 able to inform them, because we
7 have the ability to tap into those
8 actual accounts which I am going to
9 add at this particular point that
10 are viewed by Finance, that are
11 viewed by Revenue and viewed by
12 Treasury. There is not a dollar
13 that goes into the account, any
14 account of the Sheriff's Department
15 that can't be seen by Finance,
16 Revenue and Treasury. And by
17 clarifying through technology the
18 accounts and designating them and
19 naming them properly, we can
20 demonstrate where the money is and
21 how that money goes out and we can
22 get it to the people that are
23 actually hurting.

24 SHERIFF BILAL: And one of
25 the things we want to make sure

1 that you know, we advertise that
2 you don't have to pay a person a
3 third of your money to get your
4 money, that you can come directly
5 to us and we'll give it to you
6 free. Most people and we call them
7 wreck-chasers -- y'all know about
8 wreck-chasers -- will go out and
9 tell people you got money and if
10 you give me a third, then we'll go
11 get it for you. We tell the people
12 you don't need to pay anybody a
13 third of your money. If you have
14 excess proceeds, you can come
15 directly to the office to get it.

16 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
17 you for that. Why doesn't the
18 Sheriff's Office have enough
19 funding to add deputies to Class
20 100?

21 SHERIFF BILAL: Why we
22 don't have enough funding?

23 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Yeah.

24 SHERIFF BILAL: Let me say
25 and I believe I need to say this

1 again. He's trying to keep me calm
2 but I am calm. The reason why, and
3 like I said, we just found out that
4 when all the packets that I just
5 gave y'all, City Council never saw
6 it, that Finance will come up with
7 another way or will say we're going
8 to give you what we want to give
9 you. And so, you really didn't
10 know what the needs of the
11 Sheriff's Office was.

12 That's why in 2020 I walked
13 into an office that had computers
14 with backs like your old-tube T.V.
15 My grandchild got the flat screen
16 and she's 7, so prehistorically
17 equipment within the Sheriff's
18 Office that couldn't even take the
19 data that we needed to put in
20 place, the policies and procedures
21 and the information that needed
22 upgraded technology, it couldn't
23 even accept it. So those are the
24 things that we needed to update the
25 office with, and y'all did not

1 receive that information. So
2 that's why I was wondering why he
3 didn't have it and that's why you
4 will get it from now on from us.

5 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
6 Additionally, it's environmental.
7 Law enforcement environmentally is
8 at an all-time low. So trying to
9 get people to engage into and want
10 to be law enforcement officers is
11 difficult. Additionally, we can't
12 get single parents because those
13 individuals have to go to Penn
14 State for 19 weeks to train, and
15 they're away from their family and
16 their loved ones.

17 The Sheriff has engaged in
18 conversations with PPD,
19 Philadelphia Police Department, and
20 we've been trying to negotiate and
21 talk to them. We're going to talk
22 to some people that aid us to allow
23 us to train them with room that is
24 available at PPD's training
25 facility. That would mean that

1 people don't have to go away for 19
2 weeks. They can actually leave
3 their home, go to the actual
4 training facility on State Road,
5 train there and then come back if
6 we're able to alleviate some of the
7 barriers.

8 Additionally, the Sheriff
9 already addressed one of the major
10 barriers, money. There is no
11 starting salary bonus. The amount
12 of money that people are paid in
13 the salary -- that's a CBA issue
14 and not a Sheriff Bilal issue, but
15 it's an issue nonetheless -- is so
16 low that it makes more sense for
17 individuals that are interested and
18 live in Philadelphia that want to
19 be sheriffs to go to one of the
20 counties so that they can take care
21 of their family.

22 These individuals that are
23 sitting back here as the Inspectors
24 and the Chiefs, these are
25 individuals that are actually very,

1 very dedicated. It isn't based on
2 what they're making. It's based on
3 their desire to do an action.

4 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
5 you for that.

6 Thank you, Council
7 President.

8 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
10 You're welcome.

11 The Chair recognizes
12 Councilmember Cindy Bass.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
14 you, Mr. President.

15 Good afternoon.

16 SHERIFF BILAL: Good
17 afternoon, Councilwoman.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, I
19 just wanted to say, number one,
20 thank you for being here. I was
21 just thinking about I think it was
22 a year, maybe a year and a half
23 ago, and we took a photo. And it
24 was a photo of yourself and our
25 then Police Commissioner and our

1 then Prisons Commissioner, and
2 there were three African-American
3 women in law enforcement leadership
4 here in the City of Philadelphia,
5 and you're the last man standing,
6 so to speak.

7 SHERIFF BILAL: I said that
8 to Outlaw just about a week ago. I
9 said, you left. Then I called
10 Blanche up and I said, you left and
11 I'm the only one standing here.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: But
13 you're standing strong, you're
14 standing strong and I have an
15 appreciation for that. And I just
16 wanted to ask a couple of
17 questions, but I do want to just
18 make a remark or two first, which
19 is that we've known each other for
20 a very long time. And I know you
21 as someone who is dedicated, who
22 didn't just show up when you were
23 running for office who has been
24 out, as they say, in these streets
25 for a very long time doing a lot of

1 good things, whether it was with
2 the Police Department, the
3 Sheriff's Office, the Guardian
4 Civic League, banging on our doors
5 and making sure we get that Officer
6 Lauretha Vaird street sign going
7 up, it's coming, it's coming this
8 year.

9 SHERIFF BILAL: Okay.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: But
11 you've been out here doing good
12 things, great things. Prior to
13 becoming Sheriff and then after
14 becoming Sheriff, we see you, we
15 see you out and about doing some
16 things that aren't really
17 traditional for a Sheriff's Office
18 to be doing, with the workshops,
19 with just the office presence, with
20 food giveaways and things that
21 really touch folks so that their
22 interaction with the Sheriff's
23 Office doesn't have to be a
24 negative.

25 If you know them because

1 they took your grandmother's house
2 or they had something to do with
3 somebody in your family being
4 incarcerated or just any
5 interaction that was negative, it
6 may have that sort of a feel for
7 some families, but changing that
8 narrative I think is very, very
9 important for our communities so
10 that we can build relationships and
11 also foster a sense of you're not
12 the bad guy, you're here to help
13 and you're here to make our
14 communities better. So I just
15 really wanted to point that out and
16 say thank you so much for the work
17 that you are doing.

18 And I did want to ask you
19 just a couple of questions. I
20 wanted to ask you specifically
21 about when you do have to engage
22 and have someone taken into
23 custody, and I know that you all --
24 because there's a few different
25 entities that are involved in that

1 work.

2 And so, I know there's some
3 on the federal level, there's U.S.
4 Marshals, but also I wanted to ask
5 you about the Fugitive Warrant Unit
6 and the success of its ability to
7 capture fugitives, because one of
8 the things that I believe that's
9 happening right now is that you
10 have a very small group of people
11 who are doing a whole lot of damage
12 and because they haven't been
13 apprehended, the damage continues.
14 And it spreads, you know it spreads
15 among their colleagues and people
16 close to them. So can you talk a
17 little bit about that and your
18 success in that area to protect us
19 and keep our neighborhood safe?

20 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you
21 very much for that question,
22 Councilwoman. Here with me I have
23 the Inspector of the Warrant Unit,
24 Nicole Nobles. One thing when I
25 came into office my Chief Deputy

1 was Vernon Muse who retired, and
2 one of the things he said to me
3 very nicely is we don't go in and
4 beat up nobody, but we do
5 effectively bring people in because
6 we treat them like human beings.

7 And so, Inspector Nobles
8 will tell you the ins-and-outs of
9 the Warrant Unit and what it does.
10 And some of the things most people
11 don't even know that we're doing
12 right now.

13 MS. NOBLES: Yes. One of
14 the trainings that we get is crisis
15 intervention training, so that
16 helps a lot with issues of mental
17 health. When we go in the houses,
18 they're taught to be respectful, to
19 understand that everyone in the
20 house isn't under arrest. I
21 believe in treating everybody
22 respectfully.

23 We make sure that we come
24 in big numbers and that's just for
25 officer safety. When we bring

1 someone in, we're bringing them
2 into the prison. And most of the
3 time we're just letting them know
4 we're just trying to take them to
5 the next destination because we're
6 only the arm of the court and we're
7 not the judge.

8 Also, we deal with the
9 Probation building. We deal with
10 JBWs, which is judicial body
11 warrants. So anyone who's on house
12 arrest I'm responsible for them.
13 If they go outside of the hours
14 that they're supposed to leave the
15 house, then we are to go arrest
16 them.

17 Also, we deal with the
18 Probation building itself, anyone
19 who is arrested inside that
20 building, the Sheriff's Office is
21 arresting them in that building.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

23 MS. NOBLES: Just recently
24 the Sheriff put in effect our
25 fugitive website, which is for our

1 top priority, people that's wanted.
2 What it does is if we come to a
3 dead-end, we've been to all family
4 members' houses, we've ran through
5 any addresses that the judges put
6 on bench warrants, then we put them
7 on our top priority list. On that
8 list we'd like the public to come
9 and give us tips.

10 So far since we put it in
11 effect, we have arrested three
12 individuals off of that list. So
13 it is very effective. And also, if
14 someone is to give tips and they
15 want to do it anonymously, they
16 don't want to speak to someone,
17 that's a great way that they can
18 give tips.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
20 you.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: The
22 Fugitive Warrant Unit is on our
23 website. And let me tell you how
24 effective it is. And we say to
25 people, especially if you don't

1 know somebody, we tend to meet
2 people at different locations and
3 you try to bring them into your
4 house. What we say is go on our
5 fugitive priority list to make sure
6 they ain't wanted because you don't
7 know them. And if you check that
8 to make sure they're wanted, then
9 you don't get this smoke up in your
10 house because at some point we're
11 coming for that person. So go on
12 the fugitive warrant list.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yeah,
14 there's nothing like seeing
15 somebody outside of your door with
16 a battering ram getting ready to
17 come in to get somebody --

18 SHERIFF BILAL: And you
19 don't know them.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And you
21 have no idea. But I thank you for
22 your responses. The last thing I
23 just wanted to ask and then relieve
24 my time is about, Madam Sheriff,
25 your employees and particularly

1 those who do that more dangerous
2 work of engaging with picking folks
3 up and all of the things that it
4 entails. Can you talk about your
5 staff and mental health services?
6 Do you all provide additional
7 mental health services because I
8 think that that is just really,
9 really important that we make sure
10 that we offer those services,
11 particularly to law enforcement,
12 like it has to be integrated into
13 benefits and things that they're
14 receiving, training that they're
15 receiving?

16 MS. NOBLES: Yes. Again,
17 we do crisis intervention training.
18 That's when another entity would
19 come out. If we needed, they come
20 with us to the location and they'll
21 help us get this person 302'd or
22 even if they need services for
23 their home or anything of that
24 nature.

25 We're made up of 18

1 deputies. We should at least have
2 48. We're a 24-hour --

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Oh,
4 wow.

5 MS. NOBLES: Yes, unit. So
6 we're out there every day trying to
7 help individuals and anybody that
8 we encounter, so any time we
9 encounter someone with mental
10 health, yeah, the Sheriff sent us
11 to training to deal with that.

12 SHERIFF BILAL: Our
13 employees get the same type because
14 we get all the City services that
15 come down for any mental health
16 service, any special issues that
17 they're dealing with. We make sure
18 that they get that. And so, yes,
19 we try to keep people level-headed
20 in the Sheriff's Department,
21 especially our Warrant Unit.

22 And when she said we are 18
23 and we are down and we should have
24 48 out there --

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: That's

1 a lot.

2 SHERIFF BILAL: -- and we
3 run 24/7, one of the issues that
4 we're having is I don't even
5 know -- and when I say to you I
6 don't know if y'all got our budget
7 request prior to me coming on
8 board, but the vehicles that we use
9 today, all of them are flagged
10 right now. And so, in the budget
11 request that you see, we need
12 vehicles because not only do we use
13 it for transportation, but the
14 Philadelphia Police Department
15 calls on us regularly in dealing
16 with any civil unrest, any protest,
17 any major events that happen in the
18 City. The Sheriff's Office is a
19 part of that. We are part of the
20 Task Force.

21 We have Deputy Sheriffs in
22 the FBI, BNI, the Attorney General
23 Narcotic Task Force. We are
24 working together as a law
25 enforcement collaboration. DEA,

1 FBI, Philly PD, the Sheriff's
2 Office, we are always there and
3 working together. And when the
4 Mayor said, One Philly, One Philly.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 Thank you.

7 Chair now recognizes
8 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

9 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
10 you, Council President.

11 Good afternoon. Good to
12 see you.

13 SHERIFF BILAL: You too.

14 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And I
15 have to commend you. When you ran
16 for office, you talked about how to
17 make this sheriff's sale process
18 much more humane --

19 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes.

20 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And I
21 hear and see that you're continuing
22 to do so. And to Councilmember
23 Cindy Bass's point about mental
24 health resources, I don't know if
25 you work with the Department of

1 Behavioral Health or you have your
2 own training. But I just said this
3 to the First Judicial District as
4 well, that these spaces are so
5 traumatized and so fraught that if
6 we can give more resources to calm
7 things down so they don't escalate
8 into other issues, we would love to
9 see that happen. So I don't know
10 if you can speak to who's doing the
11 training and what help you get from
12 the Department of Behavioral
13 Health?

14 SHERIFF BILAL: We work
15 with Behavior Health in all of
16 this. The police department has a
17 training to deal with mental
18 illness that our deputies are a
19 part of. See, we latch on to what
20 we see is already happening. So by
21 me being in the police department
22 for 27 years, I still know people
23 in the police department. So I
24 will call up, if you got this
25 training going on, can I send some

1 of my deputies up there, can I have
2 somebody go over there. If
3 Behavior Health is having something
4 special, can I send some of my
5 people there.

6 We tend not to live in a
7 silo by ourselves. I kind of look
8 at everything that's going on
9 around the City and whenever I can
10 engage everybody or my unit into
11 it, we make sure that they get
12 involved.

13 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Do you
14 have data around the sheriff's sale
15 properties, right, in the sense
16 that these are coming from tax
17 delinquent, absent landlords or
18 these are coming from owner-
19 occupied spaces? Is there a way to
20 sort out that data so we know where
21 their services are needed more
22 specifically?

23 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So you
25 do have a breakdown of what you do.

1 Can you tell us what percentage of
2 what you do is owner-occupied,
3 somebody who just fell behind
4 versus somebody in New York who
5 bought up a whole bunch of
6 properties and is tax delinquent
7 and is absent?

8 SHERIFF BILAL: Okay. I'll
9 let Tariq speak to that. But one
10 of the things we made sure that
11 when we went from inperson and when
12 inperson was going on, we
13 interviewed our real estate people.
14 And what we found out was the
15 biasness, the bullying that
16 happened in person and because of
17 the mandate of the Mayor at the
18 time and the pandemic, we had to
19 find a way to do our responsibility
20 so we went virtual.

21 And by talking to them,
22 what we saw doing it virtual takes
23 away the intimidation, the
24 biasness. And when people said
25 that people are going to come in

1 from Mars and Venus to buy
2 everything, we have data that says
3 that does not happen, that it gives
4 those residents of this City an
5 opportunity to get to a sheriff's
6 sale when they wasn't able to.

7 And so, we would put that
8 data specifically together.

9 Because of our new technology
10 system called Tyler Tech, we are
11 working on the different entities
12 that need to be prevalent when it
13 comes down to services in this
14 City.

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So I
16 have a question about Tyler Tech
17 since you mentioned it. I see they
18 have -- how long is their contract?
19 Start date was 2023 I see.

20 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes.

21 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
22 then it says exemption due to
23 emergency. There was no RFP for
24 this, correct?

25 SHERIFF BILAL: Is that --

1 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
2 so, how long is this contract on
3 for?

4 SHERIFF BILAL: Go ahead.

5 MR. LEE: Yes. Based on
6 that exemption, it runs out as far
7 as our office paying until about
8 seven years because software is a
9 service. So that includes the
10 updates, the upgrades and the
11 maintenance that's involved with
12 that just to get it fully
13 activated. That's the best way to
14 put it.

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And it
16 says --

17 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
18 And so, that we're clear this
19 process although it didn't go
20 through the RFP process, it did go
21 through the interview process. We
22 interviewed three separate
23 companies with the idea towards
24 getting one that would be able to
25 meet the needs that we had.

1 In addition to preparing
2 the contract, preparing all of the
3 legalese, for lack of a better term
4 and not wanting to bore you, we
5 worked directly with the Law
6 Department, I would say, both the
7 young attorneys Cheyenne and
8 Lavonda worked tirelessly with me
9 kind of standing over them with a
10 whip to get this done. So
11 everything that we did with respect
12 to Tyler Tech was ran through the
13 Law Department, was approved by the
14 Law Department and the contract was
15 indicated that we can do it for
16 this length of time.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
18 you.

19 I'll hold my questions for
20 the next round, Council President.
21 Thank you so much.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
24 Rue Landau.

25 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Hi.

1 Thank you so much for being here,
2 and thanks for this additional
3 budget information. It's very
4 helpful. I wanted to first get an
5 idea of the staffing because I was
6 confused as to what I was reading.
7 It seems to me I believe you asked
8 for \$2 million last year for Class
9 100, but you're asking for \$12.6
10 million this year. And then you
11 have 432 budgeted positions. I
12 believe 32 are filled. And now,
13 you're asking for 80 uniformed
14 positions and 30 civilian
15 positions, but there's still 90
16 vacancies so you're basically
17 asking for 200 positions?

18 MR. LEE: Right. So let me
19 start off and I'm going to let our
20 budget analyst fill in the gaps.
21 Part and parcel infrastructure when
22 it came to personnel, there were
23 really gaps with regard to the
24 types of skills that were required
25 to run the office efficiently. We

1 found out we needed data support
2 clerks just to handle the data
3 entry due to the sheer volume of
4 cases that have to be entered.

5 And then in conjunction
6 with that, we also have entries
7 that are financial in nature. The
8 sheer volume requires oversight to
9 make sure that we keep it accurate.
10 And so, with those positions that
11 were mentioned, they are added to
12 what the Sheriff came in with. But
13 as we saw, we needed to add more to
14 cover these gaps in real estate,
15 accounting, the general financial
16 operations and procurement as well.
17 So it's a conglomerate.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: So it
19 is --

20 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
21 Additionally -- I'm sorry. I
22 didn't mean to interrupt you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: No,
24 please.

25 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

1 Additionally, we have been tasked
2 with and there's been some
3 legislation that came down from the
4 State House, and I think Council
5 President is going to have that if
6 he doesn't already, we are actually
7 being considered to take on all
8 evictions. And in order to take on
9 all evictions, then it's going to
10 require us to take on some more
11 personnel. And so, that personnel
12 is in that grouping of extra
13 personnel that we may need.

14 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
15 What's the breakdown? So if you
16 have 90 vacancies, 80 uniform, 30
17 non-uniform, out of the 90
18 vacancies, how much of that is
19 uniform versus non-uniform that you
20 still need to fill?

21 MR. MARTIN: Craig Martin,
22 Chief Budget Officer. We have
23 actually about 120 vacancies. We
24 have 80 vacancies in uniform and we
25 have 30 -- we have basically about

1 40 or more vacancies non-uniform.
2 One of the problems that we have is
3 in Class 100 where we hire, the
4 Budget Department is
5 categoristically listing in the
6 budget a certain amount of people.
7 However, they don't give us the
8 money to hire the people.

9 So we go from fiscal period
10 to fiscal period with a budget that
11 says we have to have maybe 428
12 people, and we can probably only
13 hire maybe 30 or 40 people, only
14 because what happens is we hire
15 from Class 100. Class 100 is
16 broken down to subobject codes.
17 And there are subobject codes that
18 suck away from the hiring money.

19 For example, we get a
20 certain amount of money to hire
21 staff, but one of our subobject
22 codes is injured on duty. Injured
23 on duty as of right now is about
24 \$750,000. That money takes away
25 from the bodies that we can hire.

1 When the Sheriff wants to hire, the
2 Budget Department multiplies out
3 from the payroll that she's at to
4 the end of the fiscal period and
5 they say, well, you can't hire
6 because you're overdrawn.

7 But the reality of it is
8 that we have never ever, ever been
9 able to hire since I've been here
10 eight years the amount of people on
11 staff that we should have. We're
12 falling behind, and that includes
13 we can't hire replacement people
14 and hire the people that we're
15 supposed to hire because not only
16 of the slowness, but also how long
17 it takes them to approve the hirees
18 because the money is not there.

19 Our key problem is Class
20 101, where we hire people should be
21 a class that the other subobject
22 codes don't take the money from.
23 So if we are over and overtime
24 takes money from people, injured on
25 duty takes money from people or

1 terminal leave, all those dollars
2 take money from the dollars that we
3 can hire. So what happens is we
4 just don't get to hire them and the
5 process is slow.

6 SHERIFF BILAL: That means
7 if we have 428 listed and I go say,
8 okay, let's put out so we can hire
9 somebody and then I send it over,
10 they'll say, no, you can't because
11 everything that has drawn down off
12 that budget does not allow me to
13 hire the 428 that you said that I'm
14 budgeted for.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Real
16 quick clarifying question about
17 Class 100 though, there's a certain
18 part for a salary, you're right,
19 I'm sure in your world there is a
20 part for injured on duty and
21 variety of things, whatever amount
22 you have for salary though, that's
23 just salary and there's certain
24 amount of positions too. Two
25 questions: One, can't you move

1 between Class 100 yourself if you
2 don't have as many injured on duty?
3 And two, the amount of money for
4 the salary positions never changes.
5 If you budget X amount for 420
6 people, whatever that was, 422, X
7 amount for that many people, it
8 should be the amount enough to
9 cover the amount of people that you
10 need.

11 SHERIFF BILAL: No.

12 MR. MARTIN: Well, let me
13 explain what's going on here. The
14 Class 100 consists of a lot of
15 subobject codes. If we are
16 budgeted, say, \$25 million in
17 salaries, the other subobject codes
18 have a budget, some of them do.
19 When money is sucked out by budget,
20 it sucks away from the personnel
21 portion. The personnel portion is
22 not protected, meaning Class 101,
23 if you -- what you ask could happen
24 if we could protect Class 101 from
25 being drawn from the other classes,

1 then we could hire.

2 The other thing is that we
3 recently found out that budget
4 calculates the shortage. So what
5 happens is we're talking about a
6 budget shortage of about \$40,000 in
7 pay. Okay. So what happens is by
8 the time we want to hire, we just
9 don't have the money there. And
10 then there are times we get to
11 budget ordinance time and they
12 still don't give us enough money to
13 hire or do what we need to do.

14 It would be really nice if
15 the staffing portion of Class 100,
16 101, was protected from the other
17 subobject codes, then we could hire
18 the people that we budget for and
19 not worry about maybe injured on
20 duty or excess overtime sucking
21 away from the personnel portion.

22 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I
23 think I finally understand.
24 Thanks. So your subobject codes
25 like overtime are eating away at

1 your personnel?

2 MR. MARTIN: Absolutely.

3 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

4 Understood. And if you could have
5 enough people, your overtime would
6 go down, right?

7 MR. MARTIN: That's right.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I'll
9 be back. Thank you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 Thank you.

12 The Chair recognizes
13 Katherine Gilmore Richardson. You
14 didn't go in this round yet, did
15 you?

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
17 RICHARDSON: No.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 Okay. Jay Young went in this round
20 already, correct?

21 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Yes.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 Okay.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

25 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

1 so much, Mr. President.

2 And thank you, Madam
3 Sheriff, and I was listening to the
4 conversation relative to the FY25
5 budgeted positions versus the
6 positions that were filled as of
7 2023. You could see there is a
8 noticeable difference that you all
9 are down about 110 positions.

10 So my question is relative
11 to courtroom staffing. With you
12 all being down so many positions,
13 how many deputies are needed to
14 cover all of the courtrooms and are
15 you fully staffed for the
16 courtrooms?

17 SHERIFF BILAL: Let me
18 understand what your question is.
19 You're asking us how many deputies
20 do we need to staff the actual
21 courtrooms?

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
23 RICHARDSON: Yes. Meaning, are you
24 fully staffed for that based on
25 these numbers that we've received?

1 SHERIFF BILAL: Right now?

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Right.

4 SHERIFF BILAL: We're sort
5 of like figuring that out. I'll
6 let Vonda tell you how we're doing
7 it now.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay.

10 MS. HAIRSTON: I can only
11 speak for CJC right now. We have
12 63 courtrooms in the building. At
13 any given time there's about 45 of
14 them working. We have 87 deputies
15 assigned to CJC, but those deputies
16 are broken down between three
17 shifts. So the 87 covers our
18 Transportation Unit, which is 37
19 deputies. For actual courts, we
20 have 22 deputies. Our building
21 security, 13 deputies. And to man
22 our cell room we have 14 deputies,
23 which is short of course.

24 What we're doing as far as
25 manning the courtrooms, basically

1 all the supervisors are in court as
2 well. And that's still not enough.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Right. So my
5 question there is with the proposed
6 allocation that we've received, and
7 obviously we haven't received the
8 full detail, is there enough in
9 Class 100 to meet the staffing
10 requirements for the courtrooms?

11 SHERIFF BILAL: For the
12 increase that we're asking for?

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Yes.

15 SHERIFF BILAL: With the
16 increase, Patrick?

17 MR. LEE: Yes.

18 SHERIFF BILAL: For the
19 increase that we're asking for
20 we'll be able to staff the
21 courtrooms and for deputies to be
22 in basically each courtroom.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.
25 That answers my question.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 You're welcome.

4 Chair recognizes Nic

5 O'Rourke.

6 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

7 Blessings, Sheriff. Just a quick
8 question. Our office has had
9 several constituents calling us to
10 help them with navigating the
11 tricky terrain that is municipal
12 government. One of the things
13 they're trying to do is also figure
14 out tangled titles, but they'll
15 receive notices of their homes
16 going up for sheriff's sale.

17 I want to know is there a
18 streamlined way or some pathway
19 that we might be able to work out
20 with your office and our office to
21 make sure that folks are able to
22 handle that and maybe put the
23 sheriff sales on hold while they
24 figure out the tangled title piece?

25 SHERIFF BILAL: That

1 conversation was being had under
2 the previous Register of Wills. As
3 a matter of fact, their office and
4 the attorneys working in my office
5 were trying to come up with a way,
6 and maybe City Council can
7 legislate that as to anybody going
8 through a tangled title, that
9 there's a period of time in which
10 that cannot go up for sheriff's
11 sale while they go through that
12 process. It's not ever-ending,
13 that means you can't hold it off
14 forever. But give it a period of
15 time where it can be put to the
16 side while they untangle that title
17 and, therefore, rectify the
18 situation and then it would never
19 have to go up for sheriff's sale.

20 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Where
21 did that conversation end before
22 the Register wasn't re-elected?

23 SHERIFF BILAL: What did
24 you say?

25 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Where

1 did that conversation land? Where
2 did --

3 SHERIFF BILAL: It was
4 still working on the legal aspect
5 of it as to how it could be done
6 because you're talking about
7 mortgage foreclosure and you're
8 talking about tax lien sales. So
9 those will probably have to bring
10 in all the entities to come up with
11 an agreement.

12 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
13 Absolutely. What happens is the
14 Sheriff is the arm of the court.

15 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Say i
16 again.

17 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
18 The Sheriff is the arm of the
19 court. We don't do anything
20 without a court order. We don't
21 have the ability to stop a sale
22 other than a judge saying stop that
23 sale, postpone it or stay it or the
24 attorney on the writ, the attorney
25 that is operating for the mortgage

1 company, the attorney that is
2 operating for collecting on the tax
3 lien, that particular attorney
4 saying we're going to pull this,
5 we're going to stay this, we're
6 going to postpone it. Absent that,
7 we don't have that authority.

8 What we were working on and
9 what we will continue to work on
10 and since I've been here with the
11 Sheriff, we've been working on is
12 trying to get with all the
13 stakeholders. And to the same
14 thing that the City did, and they
15 have one of the best mortgage
16 foreclosure programs definitely in
17 the Commonwealth, is that judges
18 got involved and they allowed the
19 entities or the interested parties
20 to sit down and they worked things
21 out and it was an agreement signed.

22 Now, we're absolutely open
23 and we were already working on it
24 to being one of those parties to
25 have that discussion. However, if

1 a judge orders us absent another
2 court order or the pulling of that
3 particular writ or that particular
4 decree from actually being filed
5 and go forward, we don't have that.
6 Do we sometimes call the attorneys
7 on the writ and have conversation
8 with them? We absolutely do. But
9 absent that attorney, that
10 individual that holds that court
11 order or the court making some type
12 of court ruling or judicial ruling,
13 we are obligated to effectuate
14 those sales.

15 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:
16 That's clarifying. Thank you very,
17 very much. We'll try to see if we
18 can pick that conversation back up.

19 Thank you, Councilman --
20 Council President.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Chair recognizes Councilmember
23 Cindy Bass.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
25 you, Mr. President.

1 I just wanted to go back to
2 something when we talked about the
3 staff shortages that you have. And
4 can you give us some more detail
5 about what are your plans to
6 address that? How do you plan to
7 staff up? Obviously it doesn't
8 happen immediately all at one time
9 in one hiring event. So how long
10 will it take? Is it going to be
11 over a period of several years or
12 is there a plan in place? Can you
13 talk about that?

14 SHERIFF BILAL: Well, we've
15 been discussing a whole weather of
16 avenues to try to see how we can
17 get more people in quicker. The
18 problem I'm having is I'm having
19 little conversations with PCCD up
20 at Penn State that does the sheriff
21 training. I basically have asked
22 them could they bring the sheriff
23 training here because I already had
24 the conversation with the police
25 academy where they have room for

1 our sheriffs to be trained.

2 They said if you can get 25
3 people in each of the classes that
4 will happen, but they turned us
5 down at the end of the last Board
6 meeting. So now I'm talking to the
7 State Representatives. I'm trying
8 to set up a meeting with them so we
9 can figure out whether it can be
10 some type of legislation on the
11 statewide as to the sheriffs'
12 training that can be here.

13 We're still trying to
14 figure out the money aspect of all
15 of that as to why we can't bring
16 the sheriffs' training here because
17 it's been there forever. So if
18 something's there forever, it takes
19 a little time for us to get it here
20 but that struggle has not stopped.

21 We also looked at the other
22 avenues because we'll go up to the
23 police academy, and the Nelson-
24 Denny test, when they fail the
25 Nelson-Denny test up at the police

1 academy, that does not affect the
2 Sheriff's Office. We don't go by
3 the Nelson-Denny test at all. So
4 if they go up there and they want
5 to be in law enforcement and they
6 fail that test, we're trying to
7 grab them into the Sheriff's Office
8 because that test is not an end-all
9 for the Sheriff's Office at all.

10 We also looked at avenues
11 of sending deputy sheriffs, well,
12 recruits to outside -- was it Bucks
13 County or Montgomery County?
14 Where's the other sheriffs
15 training?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
17 Montgomery County.

18 SHERIFF BILAL: And that
19 would be a cost of like 5,000 a
20 person to send up there. The issue
21 comes in this way, if they get an
22 Act 120, which we are not an Act
23 120, but we have all the training,
24 we have additional training than
25 Act 120 gives, then they may go to

1 other police departments. And so,
2 we have to weigh out six in one
3 hand and six in the other.

4 The best thing for us to do
5 is actually get that training here.
6 We're going out to different
7 agencies and schools and Temple and
8 anywhere we can go to basically let
9 them know that the Sheriff's
10 Office -- and as a matter of fact,
11 we should be setting up with a
12 recruitment entity hopefully by the
13 end of this month.

14 But what happened was we
15 were supposed to go March 4th to
16 advertise that we're open for
17 people to put in for an application
18 to be a deputy sheriff. But the
19 Administration, OHR sent us back
20 300 that we had already went
21 through that we had already
22 notified to come take the agility
23 test or orientation, that they did
24 not show up so we took them off the
25 list. OHR said that they talked to

1 one or two people and said that
2 they didn't get notified, so they
3 sent us back a 300 list to now have
4 to contact them again for them to
5 not show up, which majority of them
6 have not been showing up. And so,
7 that put our recruitment on hold.

8 So these are the issues
9 we're having with the
10 Administration part of the City,
11 because if we go through -- and we
12 have all the documentation that
13 show we notified everybody. But
14 because somebody tells you that
15 they did not get notified, you hold
16 off our recruitment which we
17 desperately need and you send us
18 back 300 people to basically notify
19 them again. And out of that 300
20 people, I think we got about 8. So
21 we're having kind of like halts in
22 all kinds of areas in order for us
23 to get the people that we need to
24 try to recruit into the Sheriff's
25 Office.

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So it
2 set you back?

3 SHERIFF BILAL: Set us
4 back.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It set
6 you back, yes.

7 SHERIFF BILAL: Because we
8 still -- that 300 list we got, I
9 think we got about one more agility
10 test for them to take and then
11 maybe we can advertise that the
12 Sheriff is hiring, but that set us
13 back because we were supposed to
14 start at that March 4th and it is
15 April what.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
17 you.

18 SHERIFF BILAL: So we're
19 out a round. I mean, if anybody's
20 watching this, we are hiring. We
21 just haven't put it up yet. You
22 can just call our office and put
23 your name on the list. So when we
24 start it, we will let you know.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: PSA.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Madam Bass, you're finished?

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
4 you, Council President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 You're welcome.

7 The Chair recognizes
8 Anthony Phillips. Welcome.

9 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
10 Council President, being in the
11 District is important.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 Absolutely.

14 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: We
15 were in West Oak Lane earlier doing
16 some work with some children, so
17 I'm excited that I'm back here
18 during budget hearings. So I just
19 wanted to note to you, Sheriff,
20 that you're doing a a fabulous job
21 and advocating for your office and
22 really looking forward to
23 continuing to work with you.
24 You're also a tremendous advocate
25 in our community, so I want to say

1 thank you.

2 I would love for City
3 Council to help you and support you
4 with your work. So one of the
5 things that I'm thinking about as I
6 was listening to Councilwoman
7 Landau asking you about hiring,
8 right, what can we do on our end to
9 support you with getting through
10 what it seems to be very
11 bureaucratic measures with the
12 Budget Department to support you
13 with hiring? What is the right
14 question? What is the right
15 request so that we can help you as
16 much as possible?

17 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you
18 so much, Councilmember, and my
19 Councilperson in the 9th District
20 which I live --

21 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
22 Me too.

23 SHERIFF BILAL: -- so first
24 of all, thank you so much. I think
25 under the new Administration that

1 we're having here in the City and I
2 do see a light at the end of the
3 tunnel because when we all work
4 together, we win. And so, the
5 roadblocks that we have been
6 receiving since I've been in office
7 seem to start moving past that.

8 We have gone to talk to the
9 state legislators in reference to
10 getting the academy here in
11 Philadelphia so that we can train
12 deputies here in this City and we
13 can get those single-family parents
14 to be able to want to take this
15 job. We're also advertising that
16 our deputy sheriffs, most of them
17 have the weekends off and holidays,
18 which I don't know what a holiday
19 was dealing in the Philadelphia
20 Police Department because that was
21 no question. You don't even have
22 to talk about that because holidays
23 and weekends off in the Sheriff's
24 Office, most of the deputies do
25 have that. Other than getting the

1 word out and getting those changes
2 in, we're trying to do the best
3 that we can.

4 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
5 Excellent.

6 Thank you, Council
7 President. That was the only
8 question I had. Thank you.

9 SHERIFF BILAL: And we also
10 need money.

11 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Money
12 of course.

13 SHERIFF BILAL: Let me add
14 that to the end of it.

15 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yes,
16 indeed. Yes, indeed --

17 SHERIFF BILAL: Our Deputy
18 Sheriffs need to be --

19 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: To be
20 able to do the Lord's work.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: The Deputy
22 Sheriffs need to be paid more
23 because to me they are the lowest
24 paid law enforcement professionals
25 that do a lot more work than most

1 people can see.

2 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

3 This body was instrumental in
4 making sure that the PPD received
5 not only a raise but also a signing
6 bonus, and that helped PPD in
7 getting more recruits. We have to
8 address it from again the CBA and
9 from the bargaining standpoint.

10 The salary, the salary for
11 a deputy sheriff that desires to
12 have a family will not allow them
13 to continue to be here. And
14 without advertising, you get a
15 sign-in bonus plus weekends off, it
16 is hurting us. And rolling
17 enrollment, right now the Sheriff
18 talked about how they won't allow
19 us or give us another list. But if
20 it's continual, if it's a continual
21 enrollment, a continual list, we
22 can get people. Sometimes people
23 are interested, but we take too
24 long to open up so they go
25 somewhere else.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Thank you.

3 The Chair recognizes

4 Councilmember Jim Harrity.

5 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
6 you. You actually pretty much
7 answered my ques -- what is the
8 average salary of a deputy in other
9 counties?

10 SHERIFF BILAL: Wow. Let
11 me do it this way: I think our
12 captain's pay is a -- what our
13 captains get in the Sheriff's
14 Department is what I think a
15 second-tier police officer gets.
16 That's a captain to just a regular
17 police officer.

18 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Oh,
19 that's --

20 MS. NOBLES: After three
21 years, a regular police officer who
22 walks the street makes as much as a
23 captain here. Also, they can
24 retire in 20 years. We have to
25 work 33 years or we have to be 60

1 years old. So that's another
2 problem, the retirement. So it's
3 definitely the money because a
4 police officer and a captain making
5 the same thing. A lot of people
6 say don't compare to the police; am
7 I right?

8 SHERIFF BILAL: Well, a lot
9 of people say don't compare to what
10 they do. We are all law
11 enforcement personnel. We have
12 different responsibilities, the
13 police patrol and investigative,
14 we're the arm of the courts and we
15 deal with a lot of the court
16 orders. But with anything major
17 that happens in this City, we're
18 all one.

19 MS. NOBLES: Exactly. Us
20 going in houses to do warrants,
21 that's a big deal. People's lives
22 is on the line every day going in
23 houses and we do arrest warrants,
24 we do bench warrants, we do FTA
25 warrants, that's failure to appear

1 warrants, we do custody orders, we
2 take children from one parent to
3 another, you can imagine how
4 hostile something like that could
5 be. We also do custody warrants.
6 We do scofflaw warrants. We do any
7 type of warrants you can think of.

8 Also, we have bike officers
9 on the street that patrol this
10 area. A lot goes on there.
11 They're on the street like any
12 other patrol officer. Also, we
13 have deputies in the courtroom.
14 They're in the courtroom with
15 people who may have murdered
16 someone, but it's one deputy in the
17 courtroom.

18 Also, we have
19 transportation. In transportation,
20 you're taking people from one
21 entity to another just like the
22 prisons would, and we get paid less
23 than the prisons also.

24 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Yeah,
25 that's crazy really. And I know, I

1 was actually assigned to the
2 Warrant Unit as a civilian employee
3 there under Sheriff Green. So I
4 know most of the warrants that we
5 were serving over there were
6 murder, rape, domestic violence.
7 This isn't --

8 MS. NOBLES: Exactly.

9 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: This
10 isn't little petty crimes like the
11 Philadelphia Warrant Unit because
12 you guys are actually going after
13 people who are part of manhunts.
14 For the Marshals, I know you guys
15 were partnering.

16 MS. NOBLES: Just today we
17 got two weapons. We also got some
18 drugs and cash. When we work with
19 the other units, so far it's been
20 22 weapons that we've retrieved off
21 the streets, and then we also work
22 by ourselves every day going into
23 houses. We don't know who's behind
24 the door. And knock on wood, I
25 haven't had any issues. We safely

1 get people to the next destination
2 and we safely get our officers home
3 every day.

4 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Good.

5 I appreciate that. And listen, I
6 respect the work that you guys do
7 and appreciate you. I'm for giving
8 our deputies a raise. I mean, it's
9 definitely needed. I know they
10 haven't had a raise since I worked
11 there in the '90s. Because at one
12 time, the prisons actually made
13 less than the deputy sheriffs
14 because that's where we got our
15 deputies from was the prison
16 system, and they would transfer to
17 us because they made more money.
18 And the fact that we haven't kept
19 up with them is just ridiculous.
20 But thank you.

21 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

22 And you asked for numbers.
23 Doylestown goes between 122 -- now,
24 this is average salary, \$122,000 to
25 \$137,000 for sheriff deputies.

1 Ours is at \$67,000.

2 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: That's
3 a big disparity. Thank you.

4 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you
5 so much, Councilman.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Chair recognizes Councilmember Rue
8 Landau.

9 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
10 (Inaudible). Oh, there we go. Got
11 it. Thank you. I wanted to follow
12 up on one thing because I think
13 we're calling things something
14 different so I wanted to be clear.
15 You were talking earlier about
16 excess proceeds. And is that the
17 money that was in the custodial
18 accounts?

19 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
20 Well, custodial accounts we've
21 changed and put the actual name of
22 actual accounts. For example, we
23 have an individual sale as an
24 individual account. So if there is
25 a tax account, that tax account

1 would have a -- if it's a
2 Linebarger tax account, it would be
3 a Linebarger tax account. The
4 excess proceeds that I'm referring
5 to is different than service fees,
6 which I think that people refer to
7 when they talk about a custodial
8 account.

9 A custodial account is a
10 custodial account. We have custody
11 of that particular account, the
12 legal verbiage. But the excess
13 proceeds is money that is remaining
14 after we pay for all of the bills
15 of the lienholders. That money is
16 still in that particular account
17 under that particular person's
18 name. That's the excess proceeds
19 account. Custodial account has
20 been used for years, and it
21 referred to service fees account or
22 service fee --

23 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
24 So for the excess proceeds, I know
25 we were having an issue with

1 mortgage and tax sales of getting
2 the excess money that was left over
3 back to the homeowner even though
4 their property was sold. Has the
5 new Tyler Tech helped that in any
6 way to more quickly get the money
7 back to the owners who should
8 receive their funds?

9 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

10 Absolutely. First, I have to -- we
11 haven't had any problems getting
12 the money back to homeowners even
13 during the pandemic. What we have
14 is we have a streamline effect now
15 with the IT system. That'll allow
16 us to, not only since the Sheriff's
17 been in, to align each account with
18 each particular sale, but also to
19 quickly pay off the bills because
20 now we're making sure that we get
21 the proposed distribution policies
22 within the statutory amount of
23 time, trying to pay off those
24 particular bills and then
25 highlighting the amount of money in

1 terms of excess proceeds.

2 We actually give each
3 particular individual -- when there
4 is a petition posted, we give that
5 individual a letter that indicates
6 to them you may have excess
7 proceeds as a result of this sale,
8 contact our office. They contact
9 our office. We inform them whether
10 or not there appears to be excess
11 proceeds here. We never discuss
12 the amount because somebody's
13 contacted and we don't know what it
14 is, and they need to come in.

15 Once they come in and
16 produce the correct documentation
17 and the distribution policy is
18 certified by the title company,
19 they retrieve their excess
20 proceeds. We actually have done an
21 unbelievable, I want to say,
22 yeo-person's job of getting excess
23 proceeds back. So I didn't mean to
24 evade a question. I just think
25 that the question was asked as we

1 were having difficulty. And since
2 I've been there, there has been no
3 difficulty.

4 SHERIFF BILAL: And the
5 answer is yes. The new system
6 Tyler Tech, the portals are
7 partners, the water company, the
8 electric company, the gas company,
9 the taxes can upload into the
10 system. So therefore, what needs
11 to be paid off is paid off a lot
12 faster and therefore leaves the
13 ending balance, if there's a
14 balance, to go back to the
15 homeowner because we changed it
16 from DART, which was Defendant
17 Asset Recovery. We didn't think a
18 person losing their home is a
19 defendant, so we changed it to
20 homeowner asset recovery. So
21 that's quicker that we can clear
22 all that out, and then the excess
23 proceeds go to that homeowner.

24 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
25 And my Director of Real Estate or

1 the Sheriff's Director of Real
2 Estate just reminded me prior to
3 the Sheriff's Office and prior to
4 what we're doing in terms of
5 escheatment it did take longer, and
6 it took longer because the money
7 was escheated to the City first who
8 would hold onto the money for two
9 years and then -- we would hold
10 onto the money for two years. So
11 that means the Sheriff's Office
12 escheated to the City. The City
13 would hold onto it for an
14 additional three years. We would
15 have to go to the City to get the
16 money back to the Sheriff's account
17 to get the money to the people for
18 excess proceeds. We no longer
19 escheat any money to the City. We
20 hold onto the money so that they're
21 able to have the turnaround quick.
22 There's no red tape in terms of it
23 because we have it, we have it in
24 the account and we're able to get
25 it out. So that probably was the

1 better answer.

2 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Final
3 quick question: I know you're
4 still going to start the tax sales
5 again soon. Are you going to give
6 the homeowners sufficient notice
7 before the tax sales start?

8 SHERIFF BILAL: Of course.

9 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Do
10 you know how much notice that'll
11 be?

12 SHERIFF BILAL: According
13 to the law, we have to advertise at
14 least three months in advance.
15 Isn't it three? April, May, June,
16 July?

17 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
18 Depending on the sale, it's two
19 months. One of the reasons why the
20 Mayor indicated that in the
21 summertime is that during our joint
22 meetings we advised her and some of
23 members of the team that we have to
24 advertise that certain period of
25 time. So even though we're at the

1 threshold of the door getting it
2 started, we have to advertise
3 giving people sufficient notice.
4 If we didn't give people sufficient
5 notice, then we would have a legal
6 problem on our hands and we don't
7 anticipate that.

8 SHERIFF BILAL: And you
9 know that.

10 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I do.
11 Thank you.

12 SHERIFF BILAL: You're
13 welcome.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Chair recognizes Councilmember Nina
16 Ahmad.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
18 you, Council President.

19 I have a quick question
20 just housekeeping here. You
21 submitted this testimony, correct,
22 this is your documentation?

23 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
25 then you just handed us this also?

1 SHERIFF BILAL: Mm-hmm.

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: It's
3 both coming out of your office. I
4 just want to make sure you wrote
5 it. I just have a quick question
6 about Class 200. I see that in
7 this handout it's about 4 million
8 is the difference between FY24 and
9 '25. And in this handout, it's 4.9
10 million in Class 200. And the
11 actual total amount is also
12 different, the appropriation amount
13 is different. So I wondered which
14 is the correct one? So this is
15 Page 4 of the testimony and the
16 financial summary by class on the
17 colored sheet.

18 SHERIFF BILAL: Got you.

19 MR. LEE: Let me clarify
20 that question, ma'am. So what
21 occurred here was this was in
22 addition to -- it was a variance
23 between the two years based on the
24 calculations from what we didn't
25 get. So what you're seeing is a

1 combination of numbers that are
2 reflective of what we didn't get
3 from the ordinance that was rolled
4 in the current Fiscal Year '25. So
5 that's why you see the numbers are
6 slightly different only because of
7 that.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So
9 about a 900,000 difference?

10 MR. LEE: Yes.

11 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Okay.
12 So this number is the correct
13 number?

14 MR. LEE: Yes, ma'am.

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Got
16 you. My question is about your
17 hiring and the diversity in hiring.
18 I saw your new hires had no Asian
19 American Pacific Islanders. And I
20 just wondered what was the
21 percentage of AAPI in total, not
22 just the new hires across the
23 board?

24 MR. LEE: Ma'am, could you
25 clarify and expound on that

1 question a little bit more?

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So I
3 see in your new hires you had no
4 Asian American and Pacific
5 Islanders. It was zero, but there
6 were only nine hires, right. So I
7 just wanted to know across all of
8 your employees what is the
9 diversity with respect to Asian
10 American and Pacific Islanders?

11 MR. LEE: Well, I know
12 right now there's a -- yes, that is
13 in there, ma'am. It should be
14 on -- let me get to the right page,
15 demographics in the chart that you
16 have.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: This
18 chart?

19 MR. LEE: Right, the
20 demographics start to show on the
21 first and second pages, the last
22 two pages.

23 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: On
24 your testimony?

25 MR. LEE: No, ma'am. It's

1 in the chart.

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Oh, in
3 the chart.

4 MR. LEE: Yes, yes.

5 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: You
6 can just read that. By the time I
7 find it, you can just tell me.

8 MR. LEE: Well, for
9 example, we have --

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes, I
11 did see that.

12 MR. LEE: Yes. It's
13 Hispanic right now, that would be
14 under other and it just shows one.

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So I'm
16 questioning that. Why one?

17 MR. LEE: So a lot of it
18 has to do with again what the
19 Sheriff was speaking to, how we
20 promote, how we hire, where we can
21 promote and advertise. And a lot
22 of that's tied to the budget.

23 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: How
24 deliberate are you in reaching
25 communities in the Asian American

1 community in the outreach you do?
2 I know you do a lot of outreach.
3 So I just wondered if you have
4 in-language outreach, if you are
5 getting feedback? And they don't
6 understand or they need more
7 education around what the Sheriff's
8 Office do.

9 We have some representation
10 in the police department. And I
11 just wondered where we are with
12 this and what efforts you are
13 willing to make to change those
14 numbers?

15 SHERIFF BILAL: We work
16 really well with some parts of the
17 Asia American community.
18 Mr. Hor --

19 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes, I
20 know.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: -- he's the
22 mayor up there.

23 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: I did
24 introduce you to him.

25 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes. And

1 we've been working with them and
2 looking at interpretation as to the
3 Sheriff'S Office and what it does
4 and information to them as to being
5 partners and being onboarded with
6 the Sheriff's Office. So those are
7 the things that we're working on
8 with Mr. Hor and the clarity of
9 what the Sheriff's Office does. So
10 we look like we need to do more and
11 we don't have a problem doing that.

12 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So
13 just saying that AAPI is a big
14 umbrella term just like African is
15 a big umbrella term with different
16 countries coming from the
17 continent. So talking to Mr. Hor
18 is Cambodian American community.
19 We have South Asian, we have other
20 East Asians and other Southeast
21 Asians. So I'm happy to be a
22 resource for you to make that
23 outreach. I just want to make sure
24 when we say we are an inclusive
25 city we really mean that in the

1 real sense, and I'm happy to be
2 that solution to help make that
3 happen. So just want to be
4 publicly noted about that.

5 SHERIFF BILAL: Okay.

6 Thank you so much.

7 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
8 you.

9 Thank you, Mr. President.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 You're welcome.

12 The Chair recognizes
13 Jeffrey Jay Young.

14 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
15 you, Mr. President.

16 My colleagues pretty much
17 asked the questions I previously
18 wanted to ask. But, Sheriff,
19 nationally there seems to be a
20 trend or the conversation
21 nationally has been picking up
22 regarding squatters, right. So can
23 you tell us what the Sheriff's
24 Office role is in removing illegal
25 occupants from properties?

1 SHERIFF BILAL: I'm going
2 to let him answer that. The lawyer
3 over here, but we're going to keep
4 him on a timer.

5 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:
6 Well, the Sheriff's role is when we
7 receive an order from the court,
8 then we will effectuate the
9 removal. The unfortunate part is
10 the red tape that a homeowner whose
11 property they may have vacated for
12 a little while has to jump through
13 to get a court order. It becomes
14 equivalent to an eviction, so they
15 have to go through that particular
16 process even in the instance of a
17 squatter.

18 We encourage people --
19 well, I shouldn't say encourage
20 people. We can't give legal
21 advice, but we do advise people if
22 the question is asked that they
23 should call, first of all, the
24 police department because that
25 person is there and you get a 48,

1 which is a police report, and then
2 they have to go through the
3 procedure. So we effectuate
4 evictions in those instances when
5 there is a court order, and that's
6 after that process. Unfortunately,
7 we don't have any authority to do
8 it prior to.

9 SHERIFF BILAL: Let me make
10 this suggestion, because talking to
11 the law enforcement agencies in the
12 City, the squatter bill is unclear.
13 It's unclear. Most police officers
14 don't actually know what to do when
15 they come across a squatter, what's
16 the reasoning, what's the law,
17 what's the way to do it. Because
18 people claim that they're
19 squatters, to my understanding they
20 got to have some actually
21 legitimate information in order to
22 say that they actually reside in a
23 property.

24 Some people just been
25 pulling up, taking off and going

1 in, have no lease, have no
2 electric, have no water, have no
3 gas bill. To me that's squatting.
4 And they shouldn't be allowed to go
5 into court for somebody to be
6 evicted out of it. So the squatter
7 bill is not clear. I think it
8 needs to be clearer.

9 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
10 you.

11 Thank you, Mr. President.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

13 No, thank you.

14 Last question,
15 Councilmember Rue Landau.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
17 you. It's a good learning process
18 for me, so thank you so much.

19 Going back to the custodial
20 accounts, what's happening with the
21 service fees in the custodial
22 accounts? That's supposed to go to
23 the City, right?

24 UNDERSHERIFF EL-SHABAZZ:

25 No, ma'am, it's not supposed to go

1 to the City. The state has
2 authorized -- and people have said
3 this and they haven't sent me any
4 law that indicates that. The state
5 has authorized the Sheriff to use
6 the service fee, service fee being
7 if we serve subpoenas or divorce
8 decree or things of that nature, to
9 use that fee as an operations cost
10 fee.

11 What does that mean? That
12 means that the Sheriff's Office can
13 be underbudgeted as a city of the
14 first class institution. And if it
15 is under budget with respect to
16 operations cost, for example,
17 bulletproof vests or things of that
18 nature, they're allowed to use
19 those fees that are generated, a
20 portion of them to pay for those
21 items. The other portion goes to
22 the state because the state --
23 actually under the state mandate
24 and under the state the Sheriff's
25 Office being a quasi city-state

1 office, we have fees that we have
2 to pay to them.

3 That's why I said people
4 use the term a custodial account.
5 It's a service fee account. When
6 we pay money from that account,
7 it's transferred to our operations
8 cost payable. That's why I
9 indicated also that those accounts
10 are reviewed regularly and can be
11 seen at any transaction by the
12 Revenue Department, by the Finance
13 Department. It could be seen by
14 the City as to what they do, their
15 tracking.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
17 I might submit some more in
18 writing. I'm sorry. I'm still
19 trying to catch up to all that
20 counts and appreciate that.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: Well, we
22 offered a tour of the Sheriff's
23 Office because we really understand
24 that really most of the people in
25 the City do not understand what we

1 do and they don't know half of what
2 we do. And so, when we put out
3 that you can come take a tour, ask
4 the questions to all the entities,
5 every department in there, that
6 City Council can look at, see
7 what's going on, see what we're
8 operating.

9 The fact that we are over
10 top of each other, when we put in
11 for more spaces because we had to
12 hire the different people for
13 specific departments up there,
14 especially our IT and accounting,
15 the last day of Marissa Waxman's
16 day, she denied it. And we're over
17 top of each other over at 100 and
18 so, we're open for Council to come
19 over so you can get a real look at
20 what the Sheriff's Office does
21 because most of the time in this
22 City nobody really knows. So it's
23 easy for people to say what it is
24 that we should be doing when they
25 don't even know what we do.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
2 you.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
4 That's what you said to me, but
5 anyway that's a different story.
6 But I know all the great work that
7 you do. I'm just giving you a hard
8 time today. But anyway I know you
9 and your team work hard. Y'all
10 always out in the community and
11 really go over and beyond the call
12 of duty of what you're required to
13 be doing.

14 And so, any other questions
15 or comments from members of the
16 Committee?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 Hearing none, thank you very much
20 for your testimony.

21 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you,
22 Councilman. We appreciate you.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 You're welcome. Oh, one last part.
25 I do thank you and your team for

1 y'all service when y'all go after
2 those fugitives. I thank each and
3 every last one of y'all because
4 y'all putting y'all lives on the
5 line when y'all going after the
6 people that's on the run, but also
7 that adds another level of public
8 safety. So if y'all going to do
9 that two, three times a month, four
10 times a month, we'll get that
11 budget up with no problem. So
12 thank you very much.

13 SHERIFF BILAL: I'm going
14 give you a preview. We have a mini
15 task force that does it every week.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Every week, oh, okay. All right.
18 Ms. Lundy, keep up the good work.

19 MS. LUNDY: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 Will the Clerk please call the next
22 person for public testimony.

23 THE CLERK: Anthony Erace,
24 Interim Executive Director.
25 Apologize for the pronunciation.

1 (Witnesses approached
2 Witness table.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. Good afternoon.
5 Please state your name for the
6 record and proceed with your
7 testimony.

8 MR. ERACE: Thank you very
9 much. My name is Anthony Erace and
10 I'm the Interim Executive Director
11 of the Citizens Police Oversight
12 Commission.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Excellent, excellent.
15 And to your right?

16 MR. GUY: Hi. My name is
17 Daniel Guy. I am the Office
18 Manager for CPOC.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Please
21 proceed with your testimony.

22 MR. ERACE: Thank you very
23 much. Good afternoon, President
24 Johnson and members of City
25 Council. I am Anthony Erace,

1 Interim Executive Director of the
2 Citizens Police Oversight
3 Commission. And I'm pleased to
4 provide testimony on CPOC's
5 operating budget for Fiscal Year
6 2025.

7 The mission of the Citizens
8 Police Oversight Commission is that
9 we oversee and investigate the
10 conduct, policies and practice of
11 the Philadelphia Police Department.
12 The Commission works to increase
13 transparency and accountability of
14 the PPD, work collaboratively to
15 improve police conduct, enhance the
16 quality of internal investigations
17 and improve the relationship
18 between the community and the
19 police department.

20 Additionally, CPOC provides
21 recommendations on how to improve
22 the Police Department to the Mayor,
23 the Managing Director and the
24 Police Commissioner. During Fiscal
25 Year '25, CPOC will continue to

1 expand its Investigations Unit to
2 further the Commission's ability to
3 provide robust investigative
4 oversight and databased
5 transparency of police misconduct.

6 The Commission will also
7 continue to provide excellence and
8 outreaching constituent services to
9 further the Unit's tremendous
10 efforts to rebuild community trust
11 and impact in neighborhoods. The
12 Commission will continue to
13 emphasize oversight and
14 accountability for community
15 members impacted by police
16 misconduct.

17 In Calendar Year 2023, the
18 Commission provided intake and
19 referred 143 complaints to the
20 PPD's Internal Affairs Bureau for
21 Investigation. CPOC's
22 Investigations Unit responded to 12
23 PPD officer-involved shootings and
24 monitored -- and monitored --
25 sorry, I apologize, and monitored

1 involved shooting investigations in
2 realtime.

3 In FY23 CPOC's Audit Unit
4 conducted reviews of 400 closed
5 Internal Affairs investigations
6 into complaints against police and
7 reviewed bodyworn camera footage
8 and reviewed bodyworn camera 3,472
9 minutes of footage for compliance
10 with PPD policy and its designing a
11 formal process for monitoring
12 investigations into complaints
13 against police.

14 CPOC's Policy Unit houses
15 several compliance processes and a
16 complaint mediation program that is
17 embedded in PPD operations. The
18 Charging Unit reviewed 274
19 administrative misconduct
20 discipline cases that resulted in
21 sustained misconduct
22 investigations.

23 I want to highlight some of
24 our successes from the last year.
25 As we stated, CPOC was at the scene

1 for 12 police shooting
2 investigations, including the Eddie
3 Irizarry shooting in August of '23.
4 CPOC investigators were called to
5 the scene immediately, reviewed
6 bodyworn camera footage that day
7 and we recommended the dismissal of
8 the officer based on a review of
9 that evidence within days. We
10 updated the community on our
11 monitoring of the investigation and
12 held a community town hall with
13 simultaneous Spanish translation to
14 provide space for community to
15 express thoughts and reactions.

16 I would also like to
17 highlight that CPOC staff now sits
18 on every Police Board of Inquiry
19 Disciplinary panel. A CPOC staff
20 member is a member of a three-
21 person panel that participates in
22 the hearings and votes on
23 discipline recommendations for
24 police officers charged with
25 misconduct.

1 The staff member's
2 recommendation is compiled
3 alongside the other PBI panelists
4 and sent to the Police
5 Commissioner, who makes the final
6 disciplinary decision. I want to
7 highlight the first two things that
8 I said there because they are
9 transformative reforms that only a
10 few years ago really never could
11 have really been conceived of in
12 police oversight in Philadelphia.

13 We have civilian and
14 oversight present during officer-
15 involved shootings and civilians
16 present in a forum that was largely
17 closed to the public. CPOC has
18 worked alongside PPD to
19 collaboratively reform PBI
20 disciplinary hearings. There's
21 been more than 30 recommendations
22 to increase efficiency and
23 transparency in police disciplinary
24 hearings since 2021, and more than
25 20 of these recommendations have

1 been implemented by PPD.

2 Our complaint referrals are
3 increasing yearly. As we said, we
4 referred 143 complaints against
5 police in 2023, 278 separate
6 allegations of misconduct. This is
7 an increase from the 120 complaints
8 we did in 2022. 93 percent of our
9 complaints were taken to Internal
10 Affairs within five business days,
11 an increase from 89 percent in
12 2022. These increases in our
13 successes are attributable to
14 additional staff and a new case
15 management system that we launched
16 in January of 2023.

17 Our Policy Unit has
18 released in FY23 30 different
19 policy reports and explainers to
20 help the public navigate policing
21 in Philadelphia. Since 2021, CPOC
22 staff has grown from 5 full-time
23 staff members to 24 full-time staff
24 members today. This growth
25 includes the creation of the

1 Investigations Unit and Auditing
2 and Monitoring Unit and our
3 Outreach Unit.

4 And I wanted to take this
5 time to highlight our most
6 significant achievement of the last
7 couple of years, and that has been
8 finding our permanent Executive
9 Director. Our permanent Executive
10 Director is here with us today, and
11 her name is Tonya McClary. And I'd
12 like to introduce her to you all
13 now. Please stand up Tonya.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ERACE: I'm going to
16 let her sit in this chair because
17 it belongs to her. So I'd like to
18 have her sit and say a few quick
19 words about herself.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Please state your name
22 for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony.

24 MS. McCLARY: Great. Tonya
25 McClary, incoming Executive

1 Director for the Citizens Police
2 Oversight Commission. I'm very
3 excited to be here. I'm coming to
4 you all from Dallas, Texas, but I
5 lived in Philly for a long time. I
6 have family here. And so, I'm
7 excited to come back and really
8 start this new chapter in the City.

9 I was so excited about this
10 opportunity because before I said
11 yes to the job, I looked at the
12 tremendous work that this office
13 has done since its inception. So I
14 have had a phenomenal foundation
15 laid, so now I'm coming to help
16 build the house on this foundation.
17 So I'm very excited and I'll be
18 making appointments to come and see
19 each of you and talk to you about
20 the work of the office. Thank you.

21 MR. ERACE: And we're
22 available for any questions.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Well,
25 thank you very much for your

1 testimony and for all the work of
2 the Oversight Commission over the
3 past several years. And in the
4 absence of my colleague and our
5 Chair of Public Safety, who I know
6 cares deeply about this work,
7 Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr., we
8 say thank you. I know that this
9 was one of the legislative
10 initiatives that he has worked very
11 hard towards and we appreciate his
12 efforts. And so, I just want to
13 say that for the record.

14 Are there any questions
15 from colleagues? The Chair
16 recognizes Councilmember Landau.

17 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
18 you. First, this is becoming a
19 theme for me. I wanted to tell you
20 I'm a huge fan and welcome, so
21 happy that you're here. And,
22 Anthony, you have always done such
23 a great job of holding the place
24 up.

25 I served on the Police

1 Community Oversight Board which was
2 the bridge between making the
3 Police Advisory Commission turned
4 into CPOC along with Councilmember
5 Jones and a previous Councilmember
6 who was here, and it was super
7 insightful and helpful to do that
8 work to help to build the
9 organization into what it is now.
10 And you guys have just taken your
11 mandate and run with it, so I'm
12 very proud of you.

13 I'm also the Chair of the
14 Information and Technology
15 Committee and trying to dig deep
16 into the data. So tell me more
17 about how you track the data of
18 your complaints and all the
19 monitoring and everything that
20 comes from this. I know from
21 working with the City that each
22 department and agency has a
23 different database and is tracking
24 different things. So I'm trying to
25 get a better understanding of what

1 information you have and what
2 you're going to do with it.

3 MR. ERACE: Okay. We're
4 kind of building this plane while
5 we're flying it, right. So we're
6 creating the ability to gather data
7 and use that data to display to the
8 public and to the police department
9 and use it internally to make
10 recommendations.

11 Now, we are doing that via
12 our case management system. We
13 have already hired our first sort
14 of data analyst person who is
15 navigating those things, defining
16 what we need and how to do it. The
17 police department has been
18 receptive to the legislative
19 mandate requiring data transfer,
20 and we're in the process of working
21 out formal systems for each one of
22 those points to figure out how they
23 can collect it and deliver it to us
24 appropriately and how we can get it
25 and get it where it needs to be so

1 that data can be used effectively.

2 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: So I
3 introduced a resolution to look at
4 the 57-plus blocks that have had
5 the most crime over the past few
6 years. And part of what has been
7 gathered already and what we're
8 looking at is what those blocks
9 need. And through all of the
10 disinvestment that's happened over
11 the years, what are the low-hanging
12 fruit and the easy things we can
13 fix, what are the harder things we
14 can fix and what can we do. Is
15 there any way in which we can
16 partner with your data to
17 strengthen the work that we're
18 doing?

19 MR. ERACE: 100 percent. I
20 mean, there's always going to be an
21 opportunity. I mean, one of our
22 mandates is to collect and
23 disseminate an extensive amount of
24 data to the public, and we are
25 always available to City Council.

1 If there's a way that we can help
2 and our data can help you further
3 your mission, we would always be
4 happy to partner.

5 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
6 you. And the last question is I
7 just wanted to be clear of
8 something. I think I heard you say
9 you have a seat alongside the
10 police arbitrations? Let's go back
11 to the arbitrations.

12 MR. ERACE: Yeah, sure.
13 Well, not an arbitration. What I
14 was talking about was what we call
15 PBI, which is the Police Board of
16 Inquiry. That is essentially the
17 court forum, right. If an officer
18 is accused of misconduct where they
19 can defend themselves and a case is
20 rendered, then it's decided by a
21 three-person panel.

22 Now, historically that was
23 a three-person panel comprised of
24 police officers. One of the
25 reforms we achieved over the last

1 few years was the seating of a
2 civilian on that panel and with
3 additional reforms of creating what
4 is essentially a jury sheet, right.
5 So you can have an opinion, but now
6 you have to write down individually
7 what that opinion is and why you
8 have it. And that was done to
9 prevent nullification, right.

10 So we now have a system
11 that you can analyze for
12 effectiveness and track the results
13 for it and also having a civilian
14 present increases legitimacy.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
16 That's excellent. Thank you so
17 much.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
19 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
20 so much, Councilmember Landau.

21 The Chair now recognizes
22 Councilmember Ahmad.

23 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
24 you, Madam Chair.

25 Hi, everyone. Good to see

1 you all again and welcome --

2 MR. ERACE: Nice to see
3 you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: -- to
5 your new Executive Director. I
6 don't know why you were in Dallas,
7 but you're back, or Texas.

8 MR. ERACE: She's not a
9 Cowboys fan.

10 MS. McCLARY: I am not.

11 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Good
12 sense prevailed and you're back so
13 that's wonderful. I wanted to
14 first ask about a budget detail. I
15 see in your proposed budget
16 overview in the table that you gave
17 us it's about 3 million and then in
18 the actual funding request, you
19 detail it to be 4.3 million. So
20 not clear what happened there and
21 why. So you have a budget table
22 here giving the totals for FY25 and
23 then it says there was an increase,
24 and your total ask now is 4.3?

25 MR. ERACE: Are you -- I

1 want to make sure I'm looking at
2 the same page that you are. Is
3 this the proposed budget overview
4 where it has Class 100?

5 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes.

6 MR. ERACE: Right here?

7 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes.

8 And then on the next page behind it
9 is the -- oh, this is my notes.
10 The narrative is different because
11 you're asking for 4.3 with an
12 increase of 1.35.

13 MR. ERACE: Well, I think
14 that this particular form described
15 our past budget, our FY25 proposed
16 budget. I think we might have --
17 that might be an error. Yeah, I
18 think that's an error. I
19 apologize.

20 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yeah,
21 because it's all the same number --

22 MR. ERACE: Yeah, we made
23 an error. I apologize.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So the
25 actual number is 4.3?

1 MR. ERACE: Yes.

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: With a
3 1.35 increase. And most of that is
4 going to be Class 100?

5 MR. ERACE: Yes, most of
6 that would be Class 100. There
7 would be some allocations for Class
8 200 and 300 or 400, but the
9 overwhelming majority would be
10 staff allocations.

11 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: All
12 right. Then I have a question
13 about your demographic data. And I
14 asked the same question, and you
15 have a breakdown showing race. And
16 you have White, Black African
17 American, White/Hispanic, POC, two
18 or more races. I don't know where
19 Asian American and Pacific Islander
20 went?

21 MR. GUY: One of the
22 individuals on our staff identifies
23 as Asian American but is two or
24 more.

25 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So --

1 MR. GUY: They identify as
2 both Latino and Asian American.

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So I
4 think since you've mentioned Latino
5 here and not AAPI, that's a
6 problematic oversight.

7 MR. GUY: Sure.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
9 I'm finding this true of the entire
10 City. They're completely having
11 overlooked an entire population of
12 8 percent people who live here and
13 represent 11 percent of the
14 business community and none of you
15 seem to care, so it's a problem.
16 And you guys need to articulate
17 that, reflect that. Because when I
18 go to my community and say zero
19 hires for this, and nobody lists it
20 because they don't see you. You
21 could take the trouble to write out
22 and say double or mixed or
23 whatever. This is really -- I'm
24 just -- you're getting the brunt of
25 my irritation because I have had so

1 many people do this during these
2 budget hearings and it is
3 unacceptable just plain and simple.

4 MR. ERACE: Councilmember,
5 I apologize and I totally agree
6 with you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: And
8 there needs to be better hiring
9 processes to have more people
10 represented, not just how you
11 tabulate them, but who you actually
12 hire. And that means going into
13 the community, which is your job,
14 and connecting with these
15 communities.

16 I made the same offer to
17 the Sheriff. Happy to be a conduit
18 and be a part of the solution, but
19 I can't do your work. You have to
20 have the impetus to want to do that
21 work. I'm happy to be helpful in
22 that process. So I just want to
23 elevate this for the entire City.

24 I started with the Mayor.
25 I started with the Mayor's hires.

1 Nobody got off. And I've been put
2 here because I have to represent
3 everyone, and we want to make sure
4 everybody is seen and no one is
5 left behind. And department after
6 department keeps doing it, so you
7 need to do better.

8 MR. ERACE: We absolutely
9 will, Councilmember, and --

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So you
11 can give me a plan of how and who
12 you know in the Asian American
13 community and how you plan -- so I
14 need a report. How do you reach
15 out to them, how many community
16 events have you organized, what
17 languages do you have, do you have
18 translated materials, do you have
19 an interpreter, all of those things
20 I would like to see.

21 MR. GUY: Yeah, we actually
22 did two -- Councilmember, we did
23 two events this year, partnered
24 with SEAMAAC back in the fall and
25 then we just did one in March. And

1 at that event, the most recent one,
2 we had seven interpreters of
3 different languages, but we'd
4 always love to do more. So if you
5 have feedback, we would really
6 love --

7 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So
8 SEAMAAC represents mostly Southeast
9 Asian. We have South Asians. We
10 have West -- we have a whole gamut
11 of people under this big umbrella,
12 right. So I want you guys to get
13 educated about who that community
14 is and then meet them where they
15 are.

16 MR. ERACE: We'll
17 absolutely do that, Councilmember.
18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Thank
20 you.

21 Thank you, Mr. President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 You're welcome.

24 Councilmember O'Rourke.

25 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank

1 you, Council President.

2 And good afternoon, CPOC.

3 I want to start by recognizing my
4 colleague who is still upstairs.

5 We were up there hearing the good
6 news that you, Council President,
7 actually were a part of as it
8 relates to the ghost gun settlement
9 piece, but Councilmember Jones for
10 his leadership on the issue of
11 police oversight and
12 accountability.

13 I'd like to commend you all
14 for all the work that you and your
15 team have put into re-energizing
16 police oversight in our City and we
17 thank you for that.

18 In the wake of the killing
19 of George Floyd and Walter Wallace
20 in 2020, over 500,000
21 Philadelphians took to the ballot
22 box to approve the creation of
23 CPOC. That's something I want to
24 ground us in as I jump into a few
25 of these questions. We have a

1 public mandate to get this right
2 and to set this Commission up for
3 success.

4 With that in mind, can you
5 talk us through your FY25 priority
6 of implementing an Investigations
7 Unit? If this was already brought
8 up before I came down, I apologize.
9 But if you don't mind.

10 MR. ERACE: Sure. No
11 problem. Investigations are going
12 to be an integral part of the
13 future development of CPOC. Our
14 goals now are to sort of staff that
15 up and stand that up in a way that
16 everybody can see. Now, there are
17 a lot of obstacles to implementing
18 an Investigations Unit for
19 misconduct investigations. It
20 involves negotiation and CBA
21 negotiations, but that is not the
22 be-all and end-all of
23 investigations and we can start
24 before that's done.

25 We intend on standing up an

1 Investigations Unit that's capable
2 of After Action Reports and what we
3 call NTSB-style investigations,
4 right, where essentially you
5 highlight an incident, you break it
6 apart, you examine it, you examine
7 all of the evidence, you put it
8 together and find a better outcome.
9 There's a gap in oversight
10 nationally in this area where you
11 have -- trying to hold a person
12 accountable for a thing that
13 happened, and that's important.
14 Equally as important there's a lot
15 of incidents and outcomes that are
16 not out of policy where no one gets
17 arrested or no one is held
18 accountable, but the outcome is
19 terrible for the community, for
20 everyone, for the police
21 department. We want to fill that
22 gap and prove that our
23 investigation capability is
24 competent and capable and worthy of
25 misconduct investigations.

1 We will do that. We're
2 going to be breaking apart
3 incidents and finding a better path
4 forward. Sometimes a police
5 officer does everything that
6 they're technically supposed to but
7 the outcome is really distasteful.
8 And part of our job is to make sure
9 that the outcomes are better even
10 if there's no one to blame for it.

11 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:
12 What's CPOC's current capacity --
13 if you can state for the record,
14 your current capacity to conduct
15 investigations and how could the
16 \$1.1 million budget increase aid
17 you in serving Philadelphians in
18 that manner?

19 MR. ERACE: Our current
20 capacity we have a Director of
21 Investigations, we just hired a
22 Chief investigator and we just had
23 an internal transfer to an
24 investigator position. This is the
25 foundation of our Investigations

1 Unit. The work of our Director of
2 Investigations Jamison Rogers has
3 been transformative in the world of
4 officer-involved shootings. Where
5 our capability now exists to begin
6 to do After Action Reports and
7 NTSB-style investigations. That
8 has not begun yet because the unit
9 build-out is literally in process.
10 Our Chief investigator started only
11 a few weeks ago.

12 Our capacity it's
13 flowering, right. So over the next
14 year we're hoping to hire five more
15 and two legal support staff to help
16 bolster investigations and After
17 Action Reports.

18 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank
19 you very much. Your budget
20 materials describe outreach and
21 engagement as CPOC's highest
22 priority. What does that look like
23 in practice and can Council partner
24 with you to expand your reach?

25 MR. ERACE: Oh, Council can

1 absolutely partner with us to
2 expand our reach. Our Outreach
3 Unit has expanded exponentially and
4 needs to expand further. We just
5 recently hired our first Spanish-
6 speaking constituent services
7 representative and we are trying to
8 make inroads into all communities
9 in Philadelphia. Hiring additional
10 staff to enhance our capacity is
11 going to be crucial to getting
12 CPOC's message out to all
13 communities in Philadelphia so they
14 know that they have an ally in
15 this.

16 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: I
17 want to shift now and talk a little
18 bit about the Mayor's Public Safety
19 Plan, which was released last week.
20 I had it somewhere around here.
21 I've been clear about my concerns
22 that the plan lacks some details,
23 at least our office feels that way,
24 including around how police are
25 involved in the arrest sweeps of

1 unhoused people.

2 Yesterday the Managing
3 Director and the Chief Public
4 Safety Officer kind of struggled to
5 provide details on how final
6 warnings would be delivered before
7 arrest began or concrete plans for
8 handling of folks' personal
9 belongings which was alarming for
10 me.

11 I know that one of CPOC's
12 functions is to advise the police,
13 MDO and the Mayor on matters of
14 policing. Have you all been
15 contacted to advise on the Mayor's
16 Public Safety Plan at all,
17 including the Kensington Community
18 Revival?

19 MR. ERACE: We have not
20 been contacted directly, but we are
21 in constant contact with the Chief
22 Public Safety Director and the
23 Managing Director and the Managing
24 Director's Office. We will be
25 inviting all of you to a community

1 event on April 30th where we plan
2 on having the community provide
3 their voice on this issue and get
4 community impact. You all will be
5 receiving an invitation to that in
6 the coming days.

7 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Thank
8 you for that. I know CPOC is
9 fairly new, but I am curious have
10 you all had any experience with
11 police oversight around issues of
12 clearing and sweeping encampments
13 of unhoused people? And are there
14 any common complaints or concerns
15 from community members when we
16 engage in that particular practice?

17 MR. ERACE: Specifically --
18 so we have monitored these removals
19 in the past and we do intend to
20 monitor the upcoming one. We have
21 been in contact with members of the
22 Administration about how and where
23 we can be most effective in that.
24 And when we do monitor that, we
25 will be reporting it to the

1 community and Council as a body.

2 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: I
3 also want to ask just a little bit,
4 and I'll be done, about the
5 Commissioner selection process. I
6 understand that there are currently
7 five vacancies on the Commission
8 itself; is that accurate?

9 MR. ERACE: There's three
10 vacancies and there's two impending
11 vacancies at the end of the month,
12 this month.

13 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Okay.
14 Duly noted. But that would mean
15 that Council will have an
16 opportunity to soon appoint our
17 Selection Panel and confirm some
18 new Commissioners, right?

19 MR. ERACE: That's correct.

20 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: As
21 this new Council body starts that
22 process, what are some learnings
23 that you all have had in your first
24 two years of operations working
25 with the Commission and what

1 qualities in a Commissioner are
2 helpful to support the actual
3 day-to-day work that you all do at
4 CPOC now that you know really what
5 it takes?

6 MR. ERACE: Well, I think
7 that future Commissioners should
8 have a combination of lived
9 experience and professional
10 experience, governance experience,
11 familiarity with how government
12 works, with how policing works. I
13 mean, I think that there needs to
14 be a knowledge base and an
15 education program once new
16 Commissioners are seated so they
17 can hit the ground running and
18 really provide the insights needed
19 to help CPOC complete its mission.

20 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE: Okay.
21 Last one and I'm done. How would
22 you describe the current role of
23 Commissioners versus the staff?
24 What are some of the decision
25 points that Commissioners are

1 responsible for or what are the
2 tasks that staff require approval
3 from the Commissioners to actually
4 do?

5 MR. ERACE: Well, the
6 primary role of the Commissioners
7 outside of hiring the general
8 counsel and the Executive Director
9 is to really be the heart and soul
10 of police oversight in
11 Philadelphia. It's advisory in the
12 sense of that's our conduit to the
13 community, right. We want a
14 diverse group that can really
15 represent all parts of Philadelphia
16 and really provide insight into
17 what's needed and necessary in the
18 neighborhoods that we have. I
19 think that a disciplined commission
20 that is active and involved can
21 really enhance CPOC's operations.

22 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:
23 Indeed. Well, thank you, Council
24 President, for the grace. Thank
25 you for your responses and thank

1 you for the work that y'all do.

2 MR. ERACE: Thank you,
3 Councilmember.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
5 Excellent line of questioning.

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilwoman Rue Landau.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank
9 you so much. Just one last
10 question: Why do you need --
11 you're seeking \$100,000 for rent,
12 but you're currently in a City
13 building?

14 MR. ERACE: That's correct.
15 The space that we currently have,
16 any expansion -- if we do make any
17 hires over the next year, any
18 expansion that we would engage in
19 would require remodeling our new
20 space, right. So we're not sure,
21 we don't have a place in mind where
22 we're like, oh, we want to rent
23 this place. But we do need the
24 ability to move and expand our
25 operations. Basically we need

1 chairs and computers and everything
2 else to sit in and a place to sit.
3 We're not sure what that's going to
4 entail, but we have been working
5 with public property to try to
6 create an expectation and build-out
7 plan once this process is concluded
8 and we know what we're working
9 with.

10 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: But
11 is there no City building that can
12 accommodate you?

13 MR. ERACE: There might be,
14 but we're not sure.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay.
16 Thank you so much.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
18 Thank you. Any other questions or
19 comments from members of the
20 Committee?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 I have a couple questions briefly
24 before we wrap up, and I remember
25 when this Oversight Committee was

1 established. Just from your
2 perspective what are any barriers
3 to police oversight from your
4 perspective since your short period
5 of time of being established as a
6 Committee?

7 MR. ERACE: Well, I would
8 say that we're still in sort of the
9 adolescent stage of development,
10 right. I will say that the
11 Administration and the police
12 department have been very willing
13 partners in this process, and
14 there's always things that you're
15 going to disagree on or maybe have
16 a different path forward on, but
17 they have been very willing
18 partners in this process and open
19 to negotiation, open to talking
20 through issues. And frankly as
21 we've said in our testimony,
22 they've implemented a number of our
23 recommendations anyway.

24 So the barriers really -- I
25 mean, they're in the build-out

1 process, right. And being able to
2 hire, train and execute what we
3 want to do, because in oversight
4 you can't do everything fast
5 enough, right, because lives are at
6 stake. So when lives are at stake,
7 civilian, police and quality-of-
8 life issues in the City of
9 Philadelphia are the biggest
10 barriers that we can't do fast
11 enough, right.

12 We can't execute our vision
13 and the legislation fast enough.
14 But you can't build a house in one
15 day. So we recognize those issues
16 and we're working to make sure that
17 we are doing more with less and
18 running as fast as we can no matter
19 what.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 And out of the \$1.4 million
22 increase that you're asking for to
23 support 16 additional positions and
24 space, tell me more about what
25 those type of positions will

1 actually be, where will the space
2 be to accommodate the staff as well
3 that you're requesting funding for?

4 MR. ERACE: Well, the space
5 itself is to be determined
6 depending on what our funding
7 allocation is and sort of what the
8 plan Public Property comes up with.
9 I mean, frankly if they can come up
10 with a plan that doesn't cost very
11 much money, we won't spend it,
12 right.

13 But most of our expansion
14 is to support our Investigations
15 Unit. We intend to hire five
16 investigators, two staff attorneys
17 and one legal services clerk. Our
18 constituent services and outreach
19 is going to be three outreach and
20 constituent services and one
21 administrative assistant. Our
22 policy research and data, we need
23 two data analyst specialists and
24 two research analysts, and that's
25 to provide transparent information

1 to the residents of Philadelphia
2 and you as a body.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 Any other questions or comments
5 from members of the Committee?

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

8 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: Yes,
9 thank you. I wanted to ask about
10 you working with other workers who
11 respond to violent crime, not just
12 PPD, such as mobile crisis units,
13 victim advocates, violence
14 interrupters, anybody else who's
15 sort of working either alongside or
16 in the same vein as police. What
17 is your relationship to those
18 entities or do you have one?

19 MR. ERACE: Well, we do
20 have monthly meetings with the DA's
21 Office for a free flow of
22 information. We consider ourselves
23 a problem-solving agency, so we
24 recognize issues when they come up.
25 If we have a caller who maybe has a

1 complaint against police, for
2 example, but it appears to be more
3 issue-related or maybe mental
4 health-related, we try to make sure
5 they get what they need and where
6 they need to go.

7 We frequently interact with
8 multiple different agencies, but
9 part of our constituent service and
10 outreach build-out of this year is
11 going to involve further outreach
12 into those areas and how we can
13 provide more services to residents
14 that need them.

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: So
16 that's part of what your staff will
17 be used for when you hire or is
18 it -- I can't remember your
19 breakdown --

20 MR. ERACE: In our outreach
21 service and constituent service.

22 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: You do
23 have outreach there. Okay. All
24 right. Thank you.

25 Thank you, Mr. President.

1 MR. ERACE: Thank you,
2 Councilmember.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
4 Thank you very much.

5 Any other questions or
6 comments from members of the
7 Committee?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
10 Okay. Well, we want to first and
11 foremost just thank you for your
12 testimony. Thank you for your work
13 in the area of social justice. And
14 if there are no other questions,
15 have a good day.

16 MR. ERACE: Thank you,
17 Council President. Thank you,
18 Council.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 If there are no other questions or
21 comments from members of the
22 Committee, the Chair recognizes
23 Councilwoman Kathy Gilmore
24 Richardson for a motion to adjourn.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
2 Mr. President.

3 I move that City Council's
4 Committee of the Whole stand in
5 recess until Friday, April 19th at
6 11:00 a.m.

7 (Duly seconded.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 It has been moved and properly
10 seconded that we will stand and
11 adjourn and recess until Friday,
12 April 19th at 10:00 a.m.

13 All those in favor will
14 signify by saying aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

17 Those opposed?

18 (No response.)

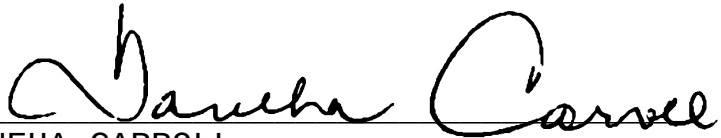
19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 The ayes have it and the motion
21 carries. We will have our next
22 Committee of the Whole hearing
23 Friday, April 19th at 10:00 a.m.

24 (Committee of the Whole
25 concluded at 4:24 p.m.)

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Taneha Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Taneha" and the last name "Carroll" clearly distinguishable.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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