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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC MEETING

4

BEFORE THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, May 27, 1999
9:05 a.m.

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BILL 990307 - An ordinance authorizing transfers
and appropriations for Fiscal Year 2000 within the
Grants Revenue Fund and the Director of Finance
Provision for Other Grants to the District
Attorney.

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PRESENT: COUNCILWOMAN JOAN L. KRAJEWSKI, Chair
COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL A. NUTTER
COUNCILMAN ANGEL L. ORTIZ
COUNCILMAN RICHARD T. MARIANO
COUNCILMAN W. THACHER LONGSTRETH

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City of Philadelphia	
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Charles Basselet	7
Information Systems Manager, DA's Office	

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2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Good morning.

4 The Committee on Appropriations is now in
5 session. Will the clerk please read the bill.

6 THE CLERK: Bill No. 990307, an
7 ordinance authorizing transfers and appropriations
8 for Fiscal Year 2000 within the Grants Revenue
9 Fund and the Director of Finance Provision for
10 Other Grants of to the District Attorney.

11 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Good morning,
12 gentlemen. Please state your name for the record.

13 MR. KAPLAN: Good morning. Thank you.
14 I'm Dean Kaplan, the City's Budget Director, and
15 I'm here this morning to offer testimony on Bill
16 990307, which makes FY 2000 budget appropriation
17 transfer between departments in the City's Grants
18 Revenue Fund.

19 I'm accompanied on my right, your left,
20 by Rob Dubow, who's the City's Deputy Budget
21 Direct and also Chair of the Productivity Bank
22 Loan Committee; and on my left, by Al Toslovsky
23 (ph.) from the District Attorney's Office.

24 Passage of this legislation is
25 requested in order to allow the District

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2 Attorney's Office to receive a \$1.5 million
3 productivity bank loan that was approved by the
4 Productivity Bank Loan Committee in April. This
5 loan will be used for an office automation
6 project, which is expected to generate a variety
7 of benefits and improvements in service delivery:

8 It will enable the DA's office to
9 computerize witness subpoenas, provide assistant
10 district attorneys with direct access to court
11 listing information, and capture discovery
12 electronically;

13 It will allow them to create an
14 automated brief bank, which will allow them to not
15 have to rewrite arguments for appeals and other
16 cases on an ongoing basis, and rather use
17 well-written arguments from prior cases on similar
18 grounds;

19 It will allow them to improve planning
20 and management through the collection and analysis
21 of standard case disposition statistics;

22 And it will improve communications with
23 victims, witnesses, and other City agencies.

24 We, as you will recall during the
25 budget process, we had had extensive discussions

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2 here in Council and elsewhere about the District
3 Attorney's need for an information technology
4 upgrade, and I believe that we have reached a
5 broad agreement that this package will allow the
6 DA to substantially upgrade their capacity and
7 improve this crime fighting capability.

8 With that, I will conclude my comments.

9 Obviously, I'd be happy to answer any questions,
10 and Mr. Dubow and Mr. Toslovsky are here as well
11 to go into more detail. But I believe that both
12 my testimony, and more specifically, the DA's
13 testimony provide a fair amount of detail as to
14 the project elements and purposes of the project.

15 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: I just wanted
16 to know, how old is the computer system?

17 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Good morning,
18 Councilwoman. Al Toslovsky from the DA's Office.

19 There are different components,
20 obviously, of the system with different ages.
21 But, for example, our main file server is three
22 years old and obsolete; and worse, the wiring from
23 our data center to most of our floors in the main
24 office is eleven years old, the cabling, and it's
25 causing us some technological problems now. We

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2 have 600 employees and of those, only 158 have
3 computers capable of handling Window-based
4 software.

5 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Thank you.

6 Are there any other questions?

7 Councilman Nutter?

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam
9 Chair. I'm sorry, I didn't your catch name.

10 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Al Toslovsky.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. You said
12 your main file server is three years old and it's
13 obsolete already?

14 MR. TOSLOVSKY: That's correct,
15 Councilman.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So we have to
17 replace your main file server every three years?

18 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Well --

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are we getting a
20 new file server out of this?

21 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes, sir.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. How is it
23 possible that in three years, your main file
24 server could be obsolete already?

25 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Well, if I may, I have

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2 with me Ed Flood from our office, who's our
3 director or administration; Charles Basselet
4 (ph.), who's our director of information services.

5 This is -- I don't know the answer to
6 that myself, but I'm sure they do.

7 MR. BASSELET: The reason why it's --

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Would you identify
9 yourself for the record, please.

10 MR. BASSELET: I'm sorry. Charles
11 Basselet, information systems manager for the DA's
12 Office.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Pull the microphone
14 a little closer.

15 Our sound system is about 50 years old
16 and it was obsolete 49 years ago.

17 MR. BASSELET: Okay. The main file
18 server is three years old, it was purchased in
19 1996. The technology has moved across that much,
20 that if we were going to purchase -- if we wanted
21 to keep pace with what's going on today, we need
22 something at least twice as fast to support 600
23 users. And basically that's the --

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right. So you
25 need it updated based on a fairly significant

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2 increase in the number of people who will actually
3 be using it.

4 MR. BASSELET: That's correct.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, that's a good
6 answer.

7 In terms of the generation of
8 statistics, and I don't know what the -- are you
9 the -- you're the chief information person for the
10 DA's Office?

11 MR. BASSELET: Yes. We have a computer
12 committee which meets regularly, and they give me
13 their list of things that they want to be able to
14 do in the office; and generate statistics is one
15 of them.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So within the
17 committee, if somebody makes a decision that you
18 want to generate certain reports --

19 MR. BASSELET: That's correct.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- they make that
21 decision and pass the request on over to you. You
22 then generate the reports.

23 MR. BASSELET: That's correct.

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what kind of
25 reports will you be able to generate as a result

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2 of this productivity bank loan?

3 MR. TOSLOVSKY: What we're looking to
4 do there, Councilman, is -- I know that I've been
5 at several budget hearings where you've asked for
6 certain types of statistics, and this will give us
7 the ability to generate those. We'll be able to,
8 for example, to capture case dispositions, even by
9 types of charge, and those are the type that we
10 don't -- we can't generate now.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. Well, based
12 on that testimony, then what I would ask is if you
13 could forward both to the Chair and to the Council
14 President on an annual basis as a part of the
15 productivity loan in your request today, if you
16 could get us an annual report on the number of
17 arrests, prosecutions, and the disposition of
18 those prosecutions, whether it's resulting in a
19 guilty, not guilty, plea bargain, ARD.

20 And you would then be able to tell us,
21 because you have access to other systems or
22 information, you would be able to tell us the race
23 and gender of both the victim and the defendant;
24 is that correct?

25 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Excuse me a

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2 moment. I'm sorry, I missed it. Are you
3 requesting that, Councilman?

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: It's a part of a
5 larger request for an annual --

6 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Well, would
7 you please see that the Chair receives that.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yeah. I asked that
9 this --

10 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- be given to the
12 Chair and to the Council President.

13 MR. TOSLOVSKY: With respect to the way
14 our system's going to be built is, in order to
15 avoid recoding a lot of information that's already
16 coded by the court, what we're doing is, we're now
17 working, trying to solve the system with the court
18 to download from their database all the initially
19 captured information.

20 So in answer to your question, if it's
21 captured now by the court, we will be able to do
22 that.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. We assume
24 the court knows who might be coming to the court
25 that day, that it might be a man, it might be a

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2 woman, they might be black, they might be white,
3 they might be 20, they might be 40. I mean, they
4 generally who's going to show up in court every
5 day, right?

6 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes. But your question
7 is not whether they know it but whether it's
8 captured in their database.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: All right.

10 MR. TOSLOVSKY: And it is captured in
11 their database, then we will capture it.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And then you
13 might be able to share, as a part of that, any
14 information regarding defendants and their locale,
15 either by zip code or by police district, or
16 something along those lines, right?

17 MR. TOSLOVSKY: When you say "locale,"
18 are you talking about where they live or where the
19 crime was committed?

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Either.

21 MR. TOSLOVSKY: From what I know of the
22 court database, I don't know that the location of
23 the crime would be in there, but their address
24 certainly would be.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And off of

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2 the address, you'd be able to get a zip code.

3 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And then you'd be
5 able to provide statistics based on that.

6 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

8 MR. TOSLOVSKY: And the other thing we
9 could provide is, although we wouldn't tell you
10 the exact location of the crime, there is a police
11 district control number --

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

13 MR. TOSLOVSKY: -- which would show you
14 the statistics.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And these numbers
16 tells you where the --

17 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Exactly.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- activities took
19 place, right?

20 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Exactly, you could know
21 it that way.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right, okay.

23 Now, you feel confident that you'll,
24 one, be able to do this; and, two, be able to
25 fulfill the commitment that you're making here

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2 today?

3 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes. The only issue as
4 far as your statistics, obviously, we can't start
5 generating them until we're fully operational.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

7 MR. TOSLOVSKY: But, yeah, very
8 confident.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. So somewhere
10 into the next fiscal year, and on an annual basis,
11 the fiscal year ends June 30th or whatever the
12 year is -- probably sometime in the fall of that
13 same calendar year -- you'd be able to produce
14 such a report?

15 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yes. If we're talking
16 about the fall of 2001, I think the answer is yes.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right.
18 You anticipate what, it's going to take a year to
19 get --

20 MR. TOSLOVSKY: Yeah, I think it's
21 going to take us a year to do this project,
22 Councilman.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, all right.

24 If you have any problems, if you could
25 be sure to get either back to me or to the Chair

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2 of the committee to let us know what difficulties
3 you might have, if any, with regard to this
4 request, I would appreciate it.

5 MR. TOSLOVSKY: And we would appreciate
6 the help. Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. One last
8 question.

9 Mr. Kaplan, is it my recollection that
10 this issue was discussed back at budget time, and
11 this is the same productivity loan that was
12 declined, if not refused, by the District
13 Attorney's Office back in February or March, where
14 there was a reluctance to push forward on a
15 productivity loan back at that time?

16 MR. KAPLAN: I have to tell you that I
17 don't remember. It's all a blur now.

18 But the-- I think that the productivity
19 bank loan was, you know, part of a larger
20 package. And, obviously, there were a number of
21 positions taken on both sides as to who would
22 accept what when.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

24 MR. KAPLAN: And I think, clearly, by
25 the -- certainly by the end of the budget process,

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2 we were in a group, broad agreement that this
3 would be the way to proceed.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. I just
5 remember -- my recollection is, when this started,
6 the response was that a productivity loan would
7 not work for the District Attorney's office and,
8 therefore, there was less interest in pursuing
9 that as opposed to a straight infusion of cash to
10 essentially pay for bodies.

11 MR. KAPLAN: I think that there was
12 some reluctance on the District Attorney's part in
13 that they were unclear that the -- specifically
14 the repayment portion of the loan would be
15 difficult for them to meet, and once we sat down
16 and met with Mr. Toslovsky and other people on the
17 staff, I think we were able to agree that, in
18 fact, we would be able to put together a structure
19 that worked for them. And then I think it was
20 able to go forward.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I think the Law
22 Department had used the same process to upgrade
23 their computer system, and I think you were trying
24 to explain that the DA's Office would be able to
25 take advantage of the same opportunity.

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2 MR. KAPLAN: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay, thank you.

4 Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: Thank you.

6 Are there any other questions?

7 (No further questions at this time.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: There being
9 none, that concludes our public hearing on Bill
10 No. 990310 (sic).

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2 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: And now we
3 will go into our public meeting.

4 The Chair recognizes Councilman
5 Nutter.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam
7 Chair.

8 I move that Bill No. 990307 be reported
9 out of this committee with a favorable
10 recommendation, and a further recommendation that
11 the rules of Council be suspended so as to permit
12 first reading at our next session.

13 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: All those in
14 favor?

15 All those opposed?

16 (None opposed.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN KRAJEWSKI: That concludes
18 our Appropriations meeting. Therefore, Bill No.
19 990307 will be reported out of this committee with
20 a favorable recommendation and with a suspension
21 of rules so as to permit first reading at the next
22 session of Council.

23 Thank you.

24 (Adjourned at 9:20 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing
proceedings of the Council of the City of
Philadelphia of Thursday, May 27, 1999, were
reported fully and accurately by me, and that this
is a correct transcript of same.

RE: COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
BILL NO. 990307

_____,
JOSEPHINE CARDILLO,
Registered Professional Reporter