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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - BUDGET

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, April 9, 2008
10:30 a.m.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA

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COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL

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COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE

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COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.

14

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM GREENLEE

15

COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.

16

COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY

17

COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

18

COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASCO

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BILLS 080022, 080154, 080155, 080156, 080157,
080160, 080161 and 080168

20

RESOLUTION 080173

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V A R A L L O Incorporated

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Litigation Support Services

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning, everyone. This is a continued public hearing of the Committee of the Whole regarding Bill Nos. 080022, 080154, 080155, 080156, 080157, 080160, 080161, 080168 and 080173.

The first department to testify?

MR. MCPHERSON: Is the Free Library of Philadelphia.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr. McPeak, we do have copies of your testimony, so if in fact you would like to abbreviate them, we will give the stenographer a copy of the testimony, which will be transcribed in full.

Oh, I'm sorry. Mayor Goode, I understand you would like to speak.

MAYOR GOODE: Just for a few minutes.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MAYOR GOODE: Good morning,
3 Council President Verna and members of
4 City Council. I am W. Wilson Goode, Sr.,
5 Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the
6 Free Library of Philadelphia. I
7 appreciate the opportunity to speak to
8 you this morning before Dr. McPeak
9 discusses the proposed 2009 budget and to
10 thank you for City Council's support to
11 the Free Library.

12 With your backing, the Free
13 Library of Philadelphia is in very, very
14 good shape at this time. We serve
15 pre-schoolers, job hunters, teenagers,
16 literary enthusiasts and many, many more
17 who take advantage of the wide range of
18 materials, programs, services that we
19 offer. Last year, nearly six and a half
20 million people walked into one of our 54
21 branches to check out a book, log onto a
22 computer, attend a program or hear an
23 author speak. The Central Library itself
24 hosted over one million visitors, a level
25 not reached since the Depression.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Many visitors come to the
3 Library for our collections, which
4 include nearly eight million items.
5 Books and magazines still represent the
6 majority of materials, but new formats
7 are also moving fast as well.

8 The Free Library now offers 150
9 electronic databases, downloadable books
10 and video DVDs and more, all to respond
11 to the changing interests and needs of
12 our borrowers, who number just under a
13 half million. Also in demand are for
14 computers. Last year, there were over
15 one million uses of the Library's 750
16 public PCs. The Library is the largest
17 provider of free Internet access in the
18 region and is wireless in every single
19 branch.

20 Programming is also a critical
21 part of the Library's service. Every day
22 hundreds of children flock to their local
23 branch to participate in LEAP, the
24 largest drop-out after-school -- drop-in,
25 the largest drop-in after-school program

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 in the City. The largest drop-in

3 after-school program in the City.

4 Attendance reached 285,000 last year, an

5 increase of nearly 60,000 from the

6 previous year.

7 Both children and adults

8 enjoyed the Philadelphia Book Festival in

9 2007, which drew 25,000 people to the

10 area in and around the Central Library.

11 This year festivals scheduled for May

12 17-18 promises an equally impressive

13 turnout.

14 The Library's lecture series is

15 renowned for the caliber of authors it

16 attracts and has become a required stop

17 for top authors. One Book, One

18 Philadelphia's selection drew 850

19 enthusiasts. Over 25,000 people attended

20 125 lectures last year.

21 The Free Library also extends

22 beyond the walls of the 54 branches. The

23 award-winning Book Aloud, which last year

24 reached 20,500 parents and caregivers, is

25 now offered at four public housing sites

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 so that more children have the benefit of
3 this school readiness program. One Book,
4 One Philadelphia, the annual
5 collaboration with the Mayor, had 550
6 community partners this year and held 180
7 programs, the majority of which were held
8 outside of a library. Seventy-five
9 hundred copies of this year's book were
10 distributed, including to every high
11 school in the City.

12 The Free Library impact is
13 widespread and it has real meaning. It
14 touches lives from the very young to the
15 citizens.

16 I wanted to come by, Madam
17 President, just to thank you and City
18 Council for your support of the Library
19 over the past years, and I hope that it
20 will continue.

21 I wanted to share those
22 statistics with all of you, because it is
23 important, I think, that you know how
24 impactful the Library is in the lives of
25 so many people in this City and what

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 difference it makes from students to
3 adults to senior citizens, that those who
4 are struggling to make it, those who
5 don't have access to computers. All of
6 those are very, very important.

7 So I wanted to just come by in
8 my last year as Chair of the Board of
9 Trustees just to thank you and all of
10 Council for your enthusiastic support for
11 the Free Library.

12 Thank you so much.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
14 you, Mr. Mayor, and we thank you for all
15 of your interest and dedication to the
16 Free Library.

17 Dr. McPeak.

18 DR. McPEAK: Good morning,
19 Council President Verna and members of
20 Council. I am Joseph McPeak, Interim
21 President and Director of the Free
22 Library of Philadelphia, and I am pleased
23 to be here today to discuss the Free
24 Library's proposed Fiscal Year 2009
25 Operating Budget. And I will abbreviate,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 as requested. I'll read the first
3 paragraph, our mission, and then
4 abbreviate succeeding paragraphs.

5 The mission of the Free Library
6 of Philadelphia is to provide all
7 segments of Philadelphia's diverse
8 population a comprehensive collection of
9 recorded knowledge, ideas, artistic
10 expression and information in a variety
11 of media, including current technology;
12 to assure ease of access to these
13 materials; and to provide programs to
14 stimulate the awareness and use of these
15 resources. In this expansive role and
16 with its wealth of resources, the Free
17 Library is well positioned to play a
18 meaningful role in the achievement of the
19 six goals in the Five-Year Plan. In
20 particular, we have a strong track record
21 in the areas of education, jobs and
22 economic development, and look forward to
23 enhancing these efforts in the coming
24 year.

25 Education and literacy are core

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 functions of the Free Library. You will
3 note in a number of programs that we
4 provide to children and teens which have
5 been very successful and have an impact
6 throughout the City, but may I also add
7 that we also are the home for the Mayor's
8 Commission on Literacy, which provides
9 technical assistance to literacy
10 providers, who themselves provide classes
11 throughout the City of Philadelphia in
12 literacy and job preparedness and GED,
13 and those classes are provided, again,
14 throughout the City, including in 17 of
15 our branches.

16 Job training and preparation
17 and economic development are also
18 important to the Free Library of
19 Philadelphia. And I may say along with
20 the career programs that are provided at
21 the workplace and at our branches, we
22 also, as I am speaking now, are providing
23 our Annual Job Entry Fair at the Central
24 Library on the Parkway where we'll have
25 21 employers and expect an attendance of

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 1,000 job-seekers. And that's happening
3 right now as I speak.

4 The Free Library also provides
5 assistance to a number of electronic
6 databases, which are mentioned in my
7 testimony. These databases help start-up
8 businesses and also folks that are trying
9 to prepare for tests, anything from a GED
10 to civil service exams up to the LSAT.

11 Of course, the Free Library is
12 a key player in the revitalization of the
13 Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Renovations
14 to the existing 1927 Beaux Arts Central
15 Library are underway and will include
16 serving as a visitor's center for all
17 institutions in the Parkway. The
18 construction of the New Parkway Central
19 will bring renewed attention and visitors
20 this spectacular place, and we're hopeful
21 that groundbreaking will take place in
22 December 2008.

23 Now I'll turn to the budget.

24 The proposed budget for the
25 Free Library for FY09 is \$40 million.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 While this represents a one percent
3 decrease, it can be achieved through the
4 implementation of various efficiencies
5 that we believe sincerely will not affect
6 service. And, actually, these
7 efficiencies have been achieved during
8 FY08. So what we have reported to you
9 are things that were already underway
10 this fiscal year. They include an audit
11 that occurred on our General Information
12 Department, which moved work from the
13 librarian class to the library assistant
14 class. And I may say, this request came
15 from the bottom up, not from the top
16 down. It came from the librarians. We
17 worked it out with the affected unions,
18 both Local 2187 of AFSCME, Local 2186 of
19 AFSCME and Local 696 of AFSCME, worked it
20 out, finally have come to the point where
21 the work has been allocated properly, but
22 the result of that allocation is a
23 \$189,000 savings in salary.

24 There is also -- we also during
25 this year underwent an assessment of our

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 collection. There's been a transfer from
3 periodicals, magazines, journal articles,
4 from the print format to the electronic
5 format. In subscribing to those
6 electronic formats, we had a duplication
7 in services. We reduced our periodical
8 subscriptions. That will result in
9 \$114,000 in savings.

10 We've also found another
11 \$100,000 savings as a result of an
12 efficiency in our contract for leased
13 computers. Those prices have gone down,
14 and as a result of that contract and
15 maintenance contracts accompanying those
16 computers will result in \$100,000
17 savings.

18 The Free Library currently has
19 four professional service contracts
20 valued at \$279,000. Software services
21 are provided by an Asian-American
22 MBE-certified vendor. The contract is
23 valued at \$32,000. Another contract is
24 with Project H.O.M.E., a local non-profit
25 organization, of \$40,000, and two other

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 contracts are with for-profit agencies

3 awarded according to the City's

4 contracting procedures.

5 Looking forward, the Free

6 Library will effectively manage its

7 personnel budget to ensure that all 54

8 branches remain open and staffed. And I

9 want to reassert that again. With the

10 personnel budget that we have now and

11 which we worked with last year, we can

12 keep all the branches open six days

13 during the school year. And I can report

14 further on that if you wish, Council

15 President, but we believe that we are

16 committed to providing that service and

17 with the personnel budget, we will be

18 able to do that.

19 We're also looking to expand

20 our service to the non-English-speaking

21 populations in the City, and this we'll

22 be doing by adding foreign language

23 collections in the branches, which have

24 effected changes in their ethnicity, and

25 we'll also be looking at different kinds

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 of programming as well.

3 The Free Library is proud of
4 the high marks it receives from its users
5 and, in keeping with the Mayor's
6 commitment to customer service, has
7 identified three standards and means of
8 redress.

9 One, if a branch is temporarily
10 closed due to renovations or building
11 problems, returns will be accepted at any
12 location and fines will be waived.

13 Two, electronic information
14 requests -- we get a lot of e-mail
15 requests -- will receive an immediate
16 acknowledgment and full response within
17 two business days.

18 Three, all pre-school groups
19 that request a library visit and literacy
20 orientation will be scheduled within two
21 weeks. If this is not possible, Library
22 staff will visit the pre-school center.

23 So the Free Library looks
24 forward to continuing to employ its many
25 resources for the benefit of the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 residents of the City, and as an
3 institution, we offer a wealth of
4 information, programs and highly skilled
5 staff that are available every day at the
6 branches, over the phone and increasingly
7 electronically. We strive to maintain
8 our consistently high remarks on customer
9 service while identifying new strategies
10 to promote education, learning, jobs and
11 economic development. And I thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
13 you very much, Doctor.

14 As you know, this City Council
15 has been restoring funding reductions to
16 the Library for many years. I see that
17 the Administration is reducing your
18 funding in Fiscal 2009 by \$403,000; is
19 that correct?

20 DR. McPEAK: That is correct.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Your
22 testimony implies that this reduction
23 will not have any operational impact on
24 your department. Can you let us
25 understand how that is possible?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 DR. McPEAK: Yes, I can. And,
3 actually, these were, as I noted in my
4 testimony, these were actually
5 efficiencies that were occurring during
6 FY08. When we were asked -- as you all
7 recall, there was a three percent and
8 five percent request that all departments
9 were made. We identified efficiencies
10 that we were already undertaking. We put
11 them on the table to move the City
12 forward.

13 I mean, I believe as a manager
14 that you always look for efficiencies,
15 but you try to do them without impacting
16 on service, obviously. So that as I
17 mentioned in my testimony, the first --
18 and these are real dollar numbers. One
19 hundred eighty-nine thousand dollars is
20 the difference between salaries for
21 librarian II's, ten librarian II's in
22 General Information, a library supervisor
23 II, which is an EP-22. I can give you --
24 I mean, I can work this out for you, if
25 you wish. And what we did was, we took a

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 library supervisor II, replaced it with a
3 library supervisor I. Slight salary
4 savings there. And then the remaining
5 positions moved from a librarian II to a
6 library assistant II.

7 The Department itself has
8 moved. And, again, as I said, this was a
9 bottom-up request. As a matter of fact,
10 one of the persons that was writing the
11 annual report was a shop steward for one
12 of the affected locals. So they were
13 saying their professional skills were not
14 being used in this department anymore.
15 The reason was twofold.

16 One, the first desk as you walk
17 in is basically a greet and directional
18 desk, but they used to rotate what used
19 to be our card catalogue and provide
20 readers advisory assistance. We've
21 changed that hallway into a large
22 computer sign-up center. So what people
23 do there is, they're now signing up for
24 computers in that hallway and throughout
25 the library and also cuing up. Our

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 library assistants assist them with that
3 and also with the simple function like
4 downloading discs. So librarians,
5 truthfully, didn't like doing that, so
6 they came to us, brought it up in
7 labor-management. We started moving
8 library assistants in. Local 696 said,
9 Hey, you're moving library assistants in
10 to positions where librarians are
11 working. So then we had to do an audit,
12 because both locals were affected, and
13 the result of the audit was library
14 assistant II worked with one library
15 supervisor I. Result of savings,
16 \$189,000.

17 On the \$114,000, we had a -- we
18 reviewed our serial -- I'll try not to
19 use this technical language. It's
20 periodicals, magazine subscriptions,
21 mostly academic journal subscriptions in
22 our Central Library. We subscribe to a
23 service called JSTOR, which provides the
24 electronic format. We had a duplication
25 in services. As a result, we actually

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 cut back 165,000. The request was three
3 percent. We got the three percent.
4 That's 114. The balance of that goes
5 into our collections. So actually we
6 have more than -- we actually cut more
7 than 114. A hundred thousand dollars is
8 the lease of computers throughout our
9 library. That contract has been reduced.
10 The cost has gotten cheaper, computer
11 costs have gotten cheaper.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
13 Doctor, can you tell us how many
14 vacancies you currently have?

15 DR. McPEAK: We have 18
16 vacancies. We are funded -- our total
17 funding is 821. It's 730 on the General
18 Fund and the balance is in Grants, and
19 we're right now at 18 vacancies total in
20 our system, and ten are in the pipeline.
21 So I guess eight would be the real
22 answer. That represents, I guess, about
23 two percent or something like that of our
24 workforce.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Is it

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 your intent to hire the 18?

3 DR. McPEAK: Oh, yes. Yes.

4 It's just that is the process --

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are
6 they included in your budget?

7 DR. McPEAK: Yes. Yes. We
8 have 730.

9 Are we okay? I'm sorry.

10 Yes, we have 730 on the General
11 Fund, 101 on the Grants Revenue. Last
12 payroll we were funded at -- and I have
13 that here -- 722, I believe, on the
14 General or somewhere around there and the
15 balance in the Grants. So we have -- we
16 are budgeted for --

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
18 you are actually losing nine positions,
19 which seems to be satisfactory with you?

20 DR. McPEAK: No. No.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can
22 you check? Do you have the detail
23 budget, a copy of the detail budget, Page
24 7?

25 (Witness approached witness

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 table.)

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
4 you're actually losing, as I see, the
5 nine positions. Section 24, Page 7.

6 DR. McPEAK: I apologize.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
8 That's okay.

9 DR. McPEAK: We are reducing
10 the allocation in the Grants Fund, not in
11 the General Fund, and we're okay with
12 that, because right now we're funding at
13 40 positions in General Library instead
14 of 50. Yes, we're okay with that.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are
16 you looking at Page 7? You were budgeted
17 739 in '08, and for '09 it's 730.

18 DR. McPEAK: Our target budget
19 was at 730. That's what I've been
20 working with. So we lost the nine
21 actually last year, yes.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
23 you don't intend to --

24 DR. McPEAK: And we've been
25 able to maintain our branches at six-day

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 service at the 730.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
4 Doctor, can you tell us how many
5 emergency closings has the Library
6 experienced this fiscal year?

7 DR. McPEAK: Yes. I have that
8 information, Councilwoman. We've had
9 through -- this is through March. We've
10 had a total of 926 hours of closing.
11 Eight hundred and seventy-eight of those
12 were due to buildings, unforeseen
13 buildings problems, power outages,
14 utility problems, breakdowns of HVAC that
15 were not anticipated. And the balance of
16 that -- for staff shortages, the balance
17 is 47 hours. That's people not
18 showing -- it's usually like a morning
19 coverage where someone -- there's not
20 enough people in the morning to open, so
21 we open it an hour later or so.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
23 it's 47 hours?

24 DR. McPEAK: Forty-seven hours
25 for staff from September -- from July, I

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 mean, until March.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: And,
4 again, you're saying that the reduction
5 of nine full-time employees, in all
6 probability, will not be for emergency
7 closings in the upcoming budget?

8 DR. McPeak: No. I do not see
9 that as reducing that significantly,
10 Councilwoman, to be honest with you,
11 because it's a systemwide thing and it
12 pops up. You have six people in a
13 branch, two people are sick, somebody
14 else is on vacation. Now you can't open
15 until you move somebody to another
16 branch, or somebody is late. So that's
17 basically how that happens.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna:
19 Doctor, can you tell us if you're
20 currently experiencing any water issues
21 at the various Library branches, and, if
22 so, what are the problems?

23 DR. McPeak: Yes. There's one
24 branch in particular in South
25 Philadelphia, our Donatucci branch, which

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 has had a serious roof problem, and it
3 really -- the way rain works, as I
4 understand it, is that some rains it
5 happens and some rains it doesn't. But
6 we know there's a problem with the roof.
7 That being said, we know there's a
8 problem.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And I
10 do understand that that library because
11 of the roof problem, many of the books
12 are being destroyed?

13 DR. McPEAK: That happened on
14 one occasion. The children's books were
15 destroyed and replaced. We have --
16 should I proceed? Capital Programs
17 Office is in touch with us and they're
18 putting it out for emergency bid.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: When
20 do you think they're going to do that; do
21 you know?

22 MR. FLEMING: My name is Bill
23 Fleming. I'm the Administrative Services
24 Director for the Library.

25 I'm in touch with Capital

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Program over an emergency letter bid.

3 That's happening as we speak. I expect

4 to have a contractor and a scope of work

5 within 90 days.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
7 you.

8 The Chair recognizes Councilman
9 Greenlee.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
11 you, Madam President.

12 Good morning, everyone.

13 DR. McPEAK: Good morning.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you
15 for all you do for the libraries and,
16 under the circumstances, I know not
17 exactly unlimited funding.

18 Just a couple questions,
19 Dr. McPeak, if I could. I was glad to
20 hear about the branches staying open the
21 six days during school years. And what
22 is considered a school year? When do you
23 start that?

24 DR. McPEAK: We start October
25 through June.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: But I
3 know I got a question one time, a little
4 concern. Is there a reason why you start
5 October and not September? I mean, I
6 know it's only a few weeks.

7 DR. McPEAK: It's usually the
8 schools. We start our school visits in
9 October as well. The schools usually
10 aren't ready for us in September. They
11 want us to come in then. So that's
12 basically -- it also bridges us after the
13 Labor Day holiday as well.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Got you.
15 The hours, are they basically the same in
16 all branches or do you fluctuate
17 considering the area?

18 DR. McPEAK: The hours in most
19 of our branches are Monday to Wednesday
20 12:00 to 8:00, Tuesday, Thursday and
21 Friday 10:00 to 5:00 or 10:00 to 6:00,
22 around that area. There are nine
23 branches in our system that have 10:00 to
24 6:00 hours.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Because I

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 had heard about a couple of them. Some
3 people are concerned because they don't
4 have night hours. But I guess is there
5 some safety issues?

6 DR. McPEAK: Safety is one of
7 the issues, but one of the things, if I
8 can also mention too, is also usage.
9 Some of those branches were cut back
10 because we found nighttime usage was low,
11 whereas we could have the daytime hours
12 to reach out to the schools, so the more
13 daytime hours.

14 That being said, there are
15 branches that we're looking at in terms
16 of activity. As activity grows in an
17 area, we're looking to see if we can
18 extend hours in the evening. One area
19 I'm thinking of is Kensington there where
20 we have some stores --

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's
22 one where it was raised.

23 DR. McPEAK: They have some
24 stores down the area there, but right now
25 they're still closed at 5 o'clock.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I see.

3 Because I'm wondering that's how those
4 things -- you wonder what comes first.

5 If nothing is open, is that why nobody is
6 out? I know it's a tough call. I know
7 maybe do you work with like community
8 groups and things like that in the area?

9 DR. McPEAK: Yes, we do. And
10 that's one particular branch where we are
11 working with them.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Great.
13 One other question. You mention about
14 your job training, preparation, economic
15 development. That's all great. I just
16 was wondering about one group. And I
17 know it's a group that Mayor Goode has
18 worked with over the years, and you may
19 be working with them, but I just was
20 wondering. The whole ex-offender/reentry
21 programs, do you have any direct
22 connections with them?

23 DR. McPEAK: Yes. We are about
24 to make a connection with the new head of
25 the Mayor's Reentry Program.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Mr. Cuie?

3 DR. McPEAK: Mr. Cuie. Haven't
4 done it yet.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: He's a
6 little aggressive. You'll --

7 DR. McPEAK: I have reached
8 out, but I'll tell you, I have -- this is
9 really a secondary thing. We are
10 reaching out to Big Brothers and Big
11 Sisters as well to try to get them
12 involved in -- what we want to do -- I'll
13 talk about our whole initiative.

14 Basically, we think everybody
15 in Philadelphia should have a library
16 card, and we're starting with the
17 schools. We're working with the School
18 District. We're working with the
19 Archdiocese and the charter schools, but
20 I also met with a gentleman from the
21 Youth Study Center right across the
22 street, and we're also reaching out to
23 Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and next is
24 the Mayor's Reentry Program.

25 We think this is -- we don't

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 want to leave behind the population that
3 may not be thought of.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Because I
5 think that's a key group, because a lot
6 of them may not have access to computers,
7 for example.

8 DR. McPEAK: Absolutely.

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And that
10 whole job training thing obviously is
11 important to that group.

12 By the way, last question on
13 library cards. Roughly, what
14 percentage -- do you have any estimate on
15 what percentage of the population has a
16 library card?

17 DR. McPEAK: Yeah. We got to
18 do a better job. I've just done an
19 analysis of that. We're about 30 percent
20 market penetration. To my mind, we need
21 to do a better job and that's why we've
22 started this initiative.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

24 Thank you.

25 Thank you, Madam Chair.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.

3 The Chair recognizes

4 Councilwoman Blackwell.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
6 you very much.

7 Good morning. All of us
8 received this report from Friends of the
9 Free Library. In it it referenced a one
10 percent cut, which you've just mentioned
11 staffing, and it talks about materials.
12 Let me ask you what efficiencies are.
13 There's a projected cut on efficiencies.
14 What are efficiencies?

15 DR. McPEAK: The efficiencies
16 were -- I can address materials
17 specifically or all three of them, if you
18 wish.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you. Please.

21 DR. McPEAK: I'll do all three.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 DR. McPEAK: The first one
25 involved an audit of the work performed

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 at our General Information Department at
3 our Central Library where the work was
4 reallocated from librarians to library
5 assistants. That occurred in conjunction
6 with work with the unions. What happened
7 was, it was a bottom-up request.
8 Librarians found that their work was no
9 longer -- their skills were no longer
10 being used in that unit, and the reason
11 was, we had transferred a lot of that
12 work to the computer sign-up function.

13 If you're in our Central
14 Library on our second floor, that whole
15 hallway is now computers. It used to be
16 the card catalogue where people provide
17 readers advisory. They don't do that
18 anymore. Now they're helping people sign
19 up for computers and get their computers.
20 Library assistants do that.

21 What we did was, the librarians
22 complained about it, to be quite frank
23 with you, both in labor-management venues
24 and in venues with me when I used to be
25 the head of the Central Library. We

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 started moving library assistants in to
3 do the work and actually Local 696
4 complained, because they said, Hey,
5 librarians are doing this work and you're
6 putting us in here. So what we did was,
7 got an audit done as a result, and the
8 audit came out as a library assistant II
9 function, with librarians moving to
10 branches in other departments.

11 Now, we've just gotten that
12 audit completed beginning of this past
13 year. We just have a library assistant
14 II list now. So we're about to fill
15 those positions. When we fill those
16 positions, it will result in the salary
17 savings of \$189,000. There were between
18 ten librarians and ten library assistant
19 II's essentially, is what that is.

20 In the materials, what we've
21 done -- what we were doing this fiscal
22 year was, we were evaluating our
23 periodical subscriptions, academic
24 journals, which can be expensive. What
25 we've also done is subscribe to something

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 called JSTOR, which is a service that
3 puts all those journals in an electronic
4 format. We had a duplication of
5 services. We had them electronically,
6 which is what all the students prefer.
7 We also had them in paper.

8 So when the Mayor had requested
9 this three to five percent, we were
10 already doing that. It actually yielded
11 us saving \$165,000. One hundred fourteen
12 was put on the table. That was three
13 percent.

14 The final one was our computer
15 leases, which computer costs have gone
16 down. We know that the cost of the
17 upcoming contract is going to be actually
18 a little less, \$85,000 less, but our
19 maintenance contracts are going to be
20 less as well. So that gave us the
21 hundred thousand dollars.

22 So these were all things we
23 were already doing. We didn't do
24 anything more than what we were already
25 doing.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
3 heard you just say to the President that
4 you were dealing with those libraries
5 that need repair in terms of roofs and
6 other kinds of issues.

7 DR. McPEAK: Yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: In
9 keeping with that, I acquired through
10 reapportionment St. Georges Library. I
11 know it's kind of been on hold. It was
12 on the -- first Public Property had it,
13 we thought, to be sold and then it was
14 back to the Library, and when the Mayor
15 was Councilman, he had appropriated
16 \$80,000, I understand, to do something
17 there. Would you check on that and let
18 me know what the status is?

19 DR. McPEAK: Yes.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
21 another issue that I wanted to ask you
22 about is library hours in the evening, in
23 terms of the libraries really need to be
24 open in the evening, and I think that
25 most of us would support it. We don't

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 know what it would cost, but it's very
3 difficult for -- I mean, libraries need
4 to be open in the evening for students to
5 be able and seniors in the community to
6 be able to access them. But we need them
7 open until 7:00 or 8:00 or so.

8 We know that there's an issue
9 out there, but we believe that in terms
10 of crime, we, as a Council -- I'm sure I
11 can speak for everyone in this regard --
12 are willing to work in terms of safe
13 corridors or Town Watch groups or
14 whomever we have to, our Police
15 Department, in order to make sure that we
16 get the kind of protection we need. But
17 within communities, we really need our
18 branches open as well, and we would ask
19 that you consider that and likewise get
20 back to us.

21 DR. McPEAK: Yes, Councilwoman,
22 I will.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
24 think you talked about materials. You
25 talked about vacancies. I talked about

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 library hours, efficiencies. So I guess
3 you've gone through my list.

4 DR. McPEAK: Thank you,
5 Councilwoman.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you. Thank you.

8 Thank you.

9 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: The Chair
10 recognizes Councilman Goode.

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
12 Madam Chair.

13 Good morning, Dr. McPeak.

14 DR. McPEAK: Good morning.

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: You
16 referenced in your testimony four
17 professional service contracts and some
18 other contracts, and as part of this
19 budget process, we have been reviewing
20 formally with each department their level
21 of minority participation.

22 Can you tell me why your
23 participation is only at 11.5 percent?

24 DR. McPEAK: I can give the
25 dollar numbers and then I can move the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 question over to my Administrative
3 Services Director, if you don't mind.

4 As I said in my testimony, the
5 total of the four professional services
6 contracts were valued at \$279,000. The
7 one MBEC is \$32,000 for software. So
8 that \$32,000 -- we're doing it by money
9 amount. So that gives you the 11.5.
10 It's not by participants. It's by money.

11 And the other contract is with
12 Project H.O.M.E., a local non-profit,
13 which is not an MBEC. The other two
14 contracts, one of which I know is an
15 agency that works with dunning and
16 notifying people for their overdues and
17 collecting fines. That agency has to --
18 what they need to do is get into our data
19 in our integrated library system and pull
20 it out. They have to be what's called
21 Sirsi certified. Sirsi is our integrated
22 library services. So my hunch is they're
23 the only show in town, but that's my
24 belief. They're the only ones that do
25 that, but I think that's why we have that

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 one.

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Why is that
4 your belief?

5 DR. McPEAK: Because the Sirsi
6 certification, they're a library industry
7 kind of thing and I think they're the
8 only ones that work with our integrated
9 library system. I can verify that for
10 you, sir. I don't want to say that
11 without verifying it, but that, just to
12 be honest in trying to reveal to you what
13 I believe, I believe that's that case.
14 But I would certainly verify that for
15 you.

16 The rest I'm not aware of, so
17 I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Fleming.

18 MR. FLEMING: Councilman, Bill
19 Fleming, Administrative Services
20 Director.

21 We don't have a lot of
22 contracts in this area from year to year,
23 but one contract that has started to be
24 recurring is the Unique Management
25 contract. It's about \$175,000. It makes

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 up the lion's share of the \$279,000 that
3 we have in this category.

4 As I understand -- well, our
5 library catalogue software, so to speak,
6 is Sirsi. It's proprietary and is the
7 industry standard for libraries. It's
8 all over the country and I don't know how
9 much further, but they're one of the only
10 games in town.

11 In order to follow up on some
12 of our fine issues for patrons who have
13 materials outstanding beyond the allotted
14 period, in the past we had generated our
15 own notices to patrons and weren't very
16 successful. It would cost us a lot of
17 money to do this internally, a lot of
18 postage and a lot of staff time. We went
19 outside to the industry and found a
20 vendor who could work with the City with
21 the Sirsi system.

22 Now, under the new -- and that
23 turned out to be Unique Management. And
24 how we were able to contract with them
25 was, we worked with the City's

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 procurement process and posted it on the
3 City website, and they were the only firm
4 that bid and the only firm that actually
5 met the requirements to be able to work
6 with the Sirsi system. Other than that
7 one contract --

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: That is one
9 contract.

10 MR. FLEMING: That is one
11 contract.

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: You have
13 other contracts.

14 MR. FLEMING: We have three
15 others. I think Dr. McPeak referred to
16 Empower. That's an Asian-American firm.
17 That's \$32,000. Another contract for
18 network support, I believe that's an
19 individual, PJ Dever. We contracted with
20 him. That's not much more, around
21 32,000. And we have another --

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My question
23 is, why is the level of participation for
24 disadvantaged businesses what it is, not
25 what your contracting process is.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Can you tell me what amount of
3 contract dollars were spent in Fiscal
4 Year '07?

5 MR. FLEMING: Well, we do have
6 contracts for maintenance. If you want
7 those included, they're the ones that the
8 City bids out for all City agencies.

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My question
10 was, can you tell me what amount of
11 contract dollars were spent in Fiscal
12 Year '07?

13 MR. FLEMING: I'd have to get
14 back to you with that information.

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I can
16 actually tell you, if you'd like.

17 MR. FLEMING: Okay.

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It's over
19 \$500,000. I think \$551,000 were spent
20 last year. And do you know what level of
21 disadvantaged participation it was last
22 year?

23 MR. FLEMING: It was probably
24 similar to what it is this year. I don't
25 have the exact number.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: No.

3 Actually, last year it was 3.32 percent.

4 MR. FLEMING: Again, we abide
5 by the City's rules on how we get our
6 contracts. We post it to the City's
7 website and ask that they bid.

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Each
9 department that comes before us tries the
10 same thing, says basically they take the
11 lowest responsible bidder. What I've
12 asked each department to do, since you
13 identify what services you want to be
14 bid, since you're involved in the bid
15 process, to whatever extent possible, to
16 identify qualified disadvantaged firms
17 for utilization. And basically the point
18 I've made with each department is,
19 essentially, we can't reach a goal of 37
20 percent participation for disadvantaged
21 businesses when you have departments with
22 participation levels of 11.5 percent or
23 even worse the year before, 3.32 percent.

24 If it is not possible in the
25 case of there only being one bidder, I

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 can understand that, but there are other
3 contracts, and we will never reach the
4 citywide goal that we're trying to reach
5 unless we hold each department
6 accountable. And I have had this
7 conversation with the Chair of your Board
8 and encouraged him to pay more attention
9 to it, but I wanted for the record also,
10 as a matter of being fair, to raise it
11 with you as well.

12 Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.
14 Councilman Jones.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
16 morning.

17 DR. McPEAK: Good morning.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: How are you?

19 DR. McPEAK: Very good. Thank
20 you.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good.

22 I'm interested in your online
23 services to citizens, but particularly to
24 school-age youth. Could you kind of
25 describe how that works and what is

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 available online?

3 DR. McPEAK: School-age, did
4 you say, Councilman?

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, sir.

6 DR. McPEAK: Yes. We have a
7 number of databases. I'm going to call
8 on staff in a minute on this that will
9 flesh it out for you more, but I'll give
10 a general idea.

11 We have databases available not
12 just simply in the library, but at home
13 as well with your library card. These
14 are databases you'd have to pay a
15 significant amount of money for otherwise
16 if you didn't have that library card.
17 And what they are is, they are anything
18 from homework help where you have online
19 tutors, you have tutors that could be
20 anywhere around the country that help you
21 out between 2:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. in
22 the afternoon to help you with your
23 homework. It's interactive. It's like a
24 chat box. We have that -- and, actually,
25 I've seen them. They'll send you graphs.

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2 They'll send you everything over the
3 computer and they'll walk you through
4 your assignment.

5 We have anything from that to
6 like the scholarly databases and history
7 and research databases that you can get
8 into where you can get not only articles,
9 but you get full text. You can download
10 and print a text of an article for
11 yourself.

12 So we run the whole range for
13 students from interactive homework help
14 to all the way to research databases and
15 everything in between.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are all or
17 some portion of your physical library
18 books online?

19 DR. McPEAK: Yes. We also have
20 something called eBooks, and many of
21 those -- that's a separate service, but,
22 yes, and somebody --

23 Anyone know the number on that?
24 Anybody know the number of eBooks?

25 I may have that for you, but

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 it's thousands, sir.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: So there are
4 thousands of books online?

5 DR. McPEAK: Yes, online. It's
6 eBooks. And I may have that with --
7 14,425.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'd like,
9 Madam Chair, a list of those to be
10 distributed to Council.

11 Are there plans to -- how many
12 physical books are within the Library
13 system?

14 DR. McPEAK: Books, I know in
15 the -- I'd have to get back to you the
16 firm figure, but I'll give you a rough
17 idea.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Round up.

19 DR. McPEAK: Books would be
20 somewhere around four to five million,
21 and that's systemwide. The Central
22 Library has maybe about two million of
23 those.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Has the
25 Library a plan for downloading, scanning

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 those books to make them available online
3 as well?

4 DR. McPEAK: And actually right
5 now there are services that are doing
6 that for us and we're subscribing to.
7 That's probably the most cost efficient
8 way to do it, and that's how we're
9 proceeding. But we are looking to
10 partner with Consortia. They're academic
11 libraries. And there's a buzz right now
12 from an agency called PALnet, which is
13 the agency that oversees a lot of the
14 academic and public libraries in the
15 Pennsylvania area, and they're looking to
16 partner -- to get collections to partner
17 to participate in an electronic download.
18 But right now until that happens, our
19 most efficient way is subscribing to
20 other services that are already doing
21 that.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: How many
23 schools -- better yet, is there a way to
24 track how many young people and from
25 where actually use this service, school

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 age?

3 DR. McPEAK: I believe so. I
4 know that we break library cards down by
5 age, so I'm just going to -- I would have
6 to get back to you with our IT people,
7 but I would think you could do that, but
8 I'm not absolutely certain.

9 Well, then I'm being told no.
10 I guess it's because of whatever the --
11 in terms of us, we can track our
12 borrowers that way, but I'm assuming it's
13 because of whatever service we're linking
14 into, they may not be able to track.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, just
16 as a thought -- and this is a gentle
17 nudge, compliment, pat on the back, if
18 there is such a thing, that I think this
19 is exciting. I had an opportunity to
20 travel to Jordan and their online
21 learning process would make us look like
22 we were backwards. Because of distance,
23 because of other issues by way of safety,
24 they committed a lot of their public
25 resources to online learning. To the

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2 degree that Philadelphia and other
3 municipalities can start to move in this
4 direction in a major way, I think we keep
5 pace with other entities around the
6 world, global competition, particularly
7 for our public school and private school
8 students to be competitive in a global
9 economy, number one. So as a goal, I'd
10 like to encourage you to have a marketing
11 campaign for getting a library card --

12 DR. McPEAK: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- within
14 our schools. It's a useful piece of
15 identification. It's a useful piece of
16 an empowerment tool through education.
17 That's number one.

18 Number two, we need to market a
19 little bit to those parents through the
20 Home and School Associations, through the
21 principals, and the way that you do that
22 is to find out who is using them and who
23 is underutilizing this valuable resource,
24 and in so doing, kind of encourage them
25 to do so.

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2 I know you and online libraries
3 are replacing the physical job
4 responsibility for the Encyclopedia man,
5 who used to come around to households to
6 sell us antiquated books, even though the
7 books are important, but online is the
8 way that people are receiving their
9 information.

10 So for us to have a strategic
11 plan that moves library cards into the
12 hands of young people, I think it's in
13 concert with this Administration's effort
14 to stop the dropout rate, to increase the
15 number of citizens that have post high
16 school diplomas and degrees, that you are
17 integral in that process. So if it isn't
18 measured, it isn't managed. I'd like you
19 to measure who is using it, how many
20 people are using it, and then create a
21 marketing effort to get more people to
22 utilize this valuable resource.

23 DR. McPEAK: Absolutely. If I
24 could add to that comment, I will say
25 that we are already engaged with the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 School District of Philadelphia with the
3 goal of every student has a library card.
4 We're also engaged with the Archdiocese
5 of Philadelphia, charter schools and
6 private schools.

7 With the School District, what
8 we're trying to get done right now to
9 make this efficient is, we're trying to
10 merge the databases. There are privacy
11 issues that we have that we think we can
12 overcome, but we have a commitment from
13 both the Free Library and the School
14 District to make that work. So you will
15 be hearing about that shortly, we're
16 hoping very soon.

17 So that I'm in full agreement
18 of what you're saying. It's wonderful.
19 And I appreciate your enthusiasm on this,
20 because this is really great stuff. The
21 one problem that we're hearing, the
22 measuring. You see this is -- and I hear
23 what you're saying. If we can measure
24 our users through the library card,
25 through the borrowing, but we've got to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 find a way to get the people who provide
3 the databases to us -- and, again, I
4 don't know the technical stuff well -- to
5 pick up that data as well for us by age,
6 and then that will get that -- we'll
7 conquer that final number.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: My only
9 comment is the marketing part through the
10 Home and School Associations. It is
11 critical to engage the parents of the
12 students to be as involved, as motivated
13 to use this learning tool as the students
14 are. Through that, it gives positive
15 reinforcement to the classroom experience
16 and to the educational opportunity that
17 teachers and schools provide.

18 So marketing to the parent is
19 as important as marketing to the student.
20 So that one of the biggest challenges I
21 hear at Home and School Associations is
22 that, I can't help my child with the
23 homework, and, therefore, they aren't
24 empowered enough to be the parents they
25 could be. So I think this is their help.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Homework Hotline can give parents a
3 helping hand with that. So I would
4 encourage the marketing of that.

5 DR. McPEAK: Thank you very
6 much.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
8 Madam Chair.

9 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.
10 Councilman Rizzo.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Good
12 morning. Thank you for being here today.

13 DR. McPEAK: Good morning.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Can you give
15 us an update? You know there are in the
16 past lots of controversy, investigative
17 reports on R-rated videos, computer
18 access. Could you just give us an update
19 on your efforts to make sure that videos
20 on DVD or whatever that aren't getting
21 into the Library? I hope there's some
22 scrutiny. I know that there's a lot of
23 conversation about oversight or -- I
24 forget the organization that's involved,
25 but what are you doing to make sure that

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 DVDs and other access to pornography on
3 the computers is not happening in our
4 system?

5 DR. McPEAK: I'll try to
6 address these in a number of ways, step
7 by step for you. In terms of library
8 card registration, we'll start with that.
9 As you know, Councilman Rizzo -- and you
10 were very instrumental in this. And I'm
11 going to try to get this correct -- that
12 parents have to sign to agree to allow
13 children to have an open-access card. In
14 other words, parents have to agree --
15 this was, I believe, part of the
16 agreement with City Council. So that is
17 a first step.

18 In terms of the purchase of our
19 materials in general, we have no
20 pornography. There's no pornography in
21 the Library. There are R-rated videos.
22 There probably are books that some people
23 might find parts of it offensive, but we
24 select everything according to reviews.
25 We do not select things willy-nilly. So

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 everything is part of a professional
3 review, with the idea that there are some
4 positive value in this material. Not
5 that there's just some negative element
6 there that might bother somebody, but
7 there's some overriding positive value.
8 That is the guidance through which we
9 select.

10 In terms of computers, all our
11 computers are filtered as part of the
12 SEPA Act, so that you can't access to
13 things that, I guess -- whatever the
14 industry determines is pornographic, you
15 can't get to. And that has changed our
16 environment dramatically.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Is "R" right
18 now the highest rating that we have in
19 the system? We have no X-rated, do we?

20 DR. McPEAK: No, no, there are
21 no X-rated.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: So "R" would
23 be the --

24 DR. McPEAK: Am I correct on
25 that?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Yes. Thank you.

3 I want to talk to my staff to
4 make sure that, yes.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: One of the
6 comments -- I've gotten some -- not
7 complaints, but just people talking.
8 When a person takes a DVD from our
9 library, when they return it, if it's
10 damaged or they had trouble reviewing it,
11 it skips, it locks up or whatever the
12 terms are, is there a little feedback
13 card? It's a shame to receive it and
14 it's defective and then give it again to
15 someone.

16 DR. McPEAK: We should be able
17 to -- I'll get -- we should be able to do
18 that, sir, so I have to --

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But do we --

20 DR. McPEAK: We usually take it
21 off the shelf if the person reports it.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But how
23 would you know?

24 DR. McPEAK: Well, yeah. They
25 would have to report it, otherwise we'd

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 have to screen them.

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It might be
4 nice to have a way of marking it when
5 it's returned that it's defective.
6 Because there's nothing worse than
7 getting a DVD that right at the best part
8 it becomes defective. Even Blockbusters
9 or the other places you have that
10 trouble, but I heard from some people --
11 one person told me that it's rare that
12 they don't get one that somewhere during
13 the experience of watching the video that
14 there isn't an issue.

15 Do we ever occasionally -- is
16 there a device that they can be put in to
17 check for their quality before we reissue
18 them? Again, I'm just trying to make the
19 experience a good experience, and I don't
20 know how many complaints you get. You
21 can't beat the price, so not many people
22 are going to jump up and down and want
23 their money back because they had a
24 problem. But I think it would be nice to
25 know that a person that's taking a video

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 out -- I try my best, even though I don't
3 use a lot of libraries, if I run into a
4 problem, I'll put a yellow sticky on it
5 and say "defective" so when they get it
6 back, they see it.

7 DR. McPEAK: If it's reported
8 defective, we take it off the shelf. But
9 our problem is, we are reactive. Someone
10 has to tell us, This DVD skips in this
11 place. Then we don't put it out again.
12 But if we're not told, then it's back on
13 the shelf and then somebody has that bad
14 experience again.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZIO: Maybe a card
16 inside the box that if there is any
17 issues with it, that they could check.
18 And I assume the intake process is to
19 open it and --

20 DR. McPEAK: Yeah. The only
21 thing we do on intake is, we open it to
22 see that it's there. We don't view it.
23 Again, if we're told, someone says, Oh, I
24 watched this, it was a lousy experience,
25 it skipped, we don't put it back on the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 shelf again.

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Right. But
4 it might be nice to have a comment card
5 inside the video, the DVD, that when it's
6 open to see if it's there, an employee
7 would spot the card with a comment on it
8 and that would tell them that this one
9 either -- I don't think we should just
10 take them off the shelf based on a
11 comment, because it could have been their
12 technology, but we ought to have
13 something in our organization to plug it
14 into to say it's good or it's bad. And I
15 think the commercial stores have the
16 ability to do that. We should, too,
17 because it would be a shame to throw one
18 away if it's not a problem with the disc.

19 DR. McPEAK: Very good point.
20 Good point. We'll follow up.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: So we should
22 be considering that.

23 DR. McPEAK: Very good.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Thanks.

25 Thank you, Madam Chair.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: You have
3 to also calculate how much that's going
4 to cost, Councilman Rizzo.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'm sure the
6 Library can figure it out.

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I don't
8 know if we do that when you take your
9 video back to Blockbuster, you know.
10 They don't have a comment card.

11 Thank you.

12 Any other questions from
13 members of Council?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
16 so much for your testimony.

17 DR. McPEAK: Thank you. My
18 pleasure.

19 MR. McPHERSON: The next
20 department is the Civil Service
21 Commission, then the Personnel
22 Department.

23 (Witnesses approached witness
24 table.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Good

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 morning and welcome, my dear friend,
3 Reverend Warren. How are you today?

4 MS. WARREN: Fine. Good
5 morning, Madam Chair, in the absence of
6 President Verna, and City Council. I am
7 Repsie Warren. I'm Chair of the Civil
8 Service Commission, and I have with me
9 today Celia O'Leary, who is Deputy
10 Personnel Director, and Deborah Beatrice
11 representing our administrative service
12 cluster, and I'm here to present
13 testimony in support of the Department's
14 169,209 Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget
15 request.

16 Our Fiscal '09 proposed budget
17 contains 142,647 in Class 100; 24,500 in
18 Class 200; and 2,062 in Classes 300 and
19 400. Our Fiscal '09 budget is unchanged
20 from our Fiscal '08 estimated
21 obligations.

22 Now, in accordance with the
23 Home Rule Charter, the commissioners
24 ensure the application of merit
25 principles to public employment. We

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 approve or disapprove a large variety of
3 actions affecting Civil Service
4 employees. These include the
5 establishment and updating of job classes
6 and pay rates, residency waivers,
7 personal services contracts, Civil
8 Service regulations and exemptions from
9 the Civil Service.

10 A great deal of our time is
11 also spent performing another major role
12 of the Civil Service Commission; that is,
13 hearing and deciding on Civil Service
14 employees' appeals of personnel
15 decisions. Most appeals are regarding
16 dismissals, suspensions of more than ten
17 days, demotions, oral examinations,
18 denials of requests for leaves of absence
19 and claims regarding injuries-on-duty
20 time. We provide an unbiased review of
21 such actions and support the Mayor's goal
22 of achieving ethics in government. In
23 the first eight months of Fiscal Year
24 2008, the commissioners received 100
25 appeals and issued 83 opinions and orders

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 resolving appeals.

3 With this budget, Chairman and
4 members of Council, the Commission can
5 continue its important work of assuring
6 the preservation of the Philadelphia
7 merit system as mandated by the
8 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter.

9 At this time, I will be happy
10 to answer any questions that you may have
11 regarding the very important function of
12 the Philadelphia Civil Service
13 Commission.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
15 so much, Reverend Warren.

16 How many staff members staff
17 the Commission?

18 MS. WARREN: Commissioners? We
19 are one short. There's supposed to be
20 three. I'm glad you asked that question.
21 We have been short of a commissioner for
22 one and a half years. There are only two
23 of us.

24 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: And there
25 should be three?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MS. WARREN: There should be
3 three.

4 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Who breaks
5 the tie when you disagree?

6 MS. WARREN: Well, I do, the
7 Chairperson.

8 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So you're
9 the majority of one.

10 MS. WARREN: It's a split
11 decision, you know, but usually we try to
12 come to some consensus. Yes, we try.
13 Even if we have to leave it for a day and
14 revisit it at another time, we do try.

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: How many
16 staff members do you have?

17 MS. WARREN: There are two. We
18 have an administrative assistant and a
19 secretary, and, of course, an
20 administrative counselor, who aids us in
21 helping to go over -- just be there, you
22 know, to help us to review the cases.

23 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So most of
24 the cases that you review in your duties
25 here under your mission, the work is

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 pretty much done by the Civil Service
3 Department?

4 MS. WARREN: That is correct.

5 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: And then
6 they refer -- you have to approve the
7 upgrading of job classes, but the work is
8 done by the Civil Service Commission?

9 MS. WARREN: No. Let me inject
10 here. Deputy Commissioner for Personnel
11 is here, and, of course, Department of
12 Personnel is responsible for overlooking
13 the pay rates and the changes that should
14 be made, and then they bring them to us
15 for our approval or for our input.

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: All right.

17 MS. WARREN: Yes, but that is
18 their job. That is the function of the
19 Personnel Department.

20 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.

21 During the budget hearings for
22 Fleet Management, we were told that
23 Personnel reviewed and updated the auto
24 mechanic classification and that they are
25 still having extreme difficulty in hiring

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 auto mechanics, that the School District
3 and SEPTA have a higher salary than the
4 City. Can someone explain how you review
5 for classification and pay be done?

6 MS. WARREN: Yes. We have
7 someone on staff that can address that
8 for you.

9 MR. McANALLY: Good morning.
10 Michael McAnally for the Personnel
11 Department.

12 Councilwoman, the Personnel
13 Department will conduct audits. We will
14 interview the employees, document all
15 their job duties, revise the job
16 classification. We then conduct an
17 internal pay evaluation where we compare
18 the pay rate for automotive mechanic with
19 our other civil service classes in order
20 to ensure that we have an internally fair
21 rate of pay, and then we will also
22 conduct a market survey to determine if
23 we have -- if we're offering a
24 competitive rate of pay.

25 For automotive mechanic, we

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 compete against employers other than the
3 School District, and the School
4 District's -- their workforce for auto
5 mechanics is very small in comparison to
6 ours, so they're not our main competitor.
7 Our main competitor will be other local
8 private automotive companies, car dealers
9 and car repair companies.

10 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So if you
11 have difficulty hiring an auto mechanic
12 for the Fleet Management, which oversees
13 the City vehicles, and you're finding
14 difficulty doing that basically because
15 of the salary, what would be your next
16 action? Would you appeal to the Civil
17 Service Commission to upgrade the
18 salaries so you can get someone?

19 MR. McANALLY: Yes. If our
20 determination was that our pay rate was
21 too low, we would appeal to the Civil
22 Service Commission and ask for a pay
23 increase. We have increased the pay for
24 those classes recently and we've also
25 instituted two bonus programs for

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 automotive mechanics. We pay an annual
3 bonus for automotive mechanics who have
4 professional certifications and we
5 recently instituted a referral bonus
6 program for mechanics in Fleet
7 Management, where if they refer other
8 mechanics who are hired and who pass the
9 probationary period, they're eligible for
10 a cash referral bonus.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Well, I
12 understand that even with all of this,
13 they're having a problem recruiting a
14 mechanic. Do you have any idea what the
15 problem might be?

16 MR. McANALLY: No, I don't.

17 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Would you
18 confer -- I'm sure you will confer --
19 with Fleet Management to kind of figure
20 out what might be done to address this
21 issue?

22 MR. McANALLY: Yes.
23 Absolutely.

24 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.
25 Thank you.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Any questions?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Any other
5 testimony?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
8 all for your testimony, and we appreciate
9 and hope you get a commissioner soon.

10 We'll ask for the Personnel
11 Department now.

12 MS. WARREN: Thank you so very
13 much. Have a good day.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.

15 MS. O'LEARY: Good morning.

16 I'm Celia O'Leary. I'm the Deputy
17 Personnel Director. We had hoped that
18 the Personnel Director would be back from
19 medical leave, but, unfortunately, she
20 won't be back for another couple of
21 weeks, so I will give the testimony for
22 our department.

23 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. O'LEARY: This testimony is

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 in support of our annual budget request
3 of \$4,732,808 for Fiscal Year 2009. We
4 use these funds to support our mission,
5 which is to support all the City agencies
6 in recruiting, selecting, developing and
7 retaining a qualified and effective
8 workforce through which the six core
9 goals of the City can be achieved. As
10 you know, most of what our work does is
11 providing candidates for employment
12 through the Civil Service process by
13 which we create eligible lists.

14 This year we're supporting this
15 goal through two major initiatives, one
16 of which is establishment of a web-based
17 job application system. This will be
18 installed on April 28th. We're very
19 excited about it. It will allow us to
20 compete with major job search engines
21 such as Monster.com, HotJobs and
22 CareerBuilder, and it will allow our
23 applicants to log in online and apply
24 through that vehicle, in addition to the
25 normal paper process, because we're very

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 conscious of the digital divide and we
3 don't want to disenfranchise anyone, but
4 we think this will aid a certain segment
5 of our applicants in applying quickly.

6 We also are interested in using
7 e-mail notification to kind of speed up
8 the hiring process, and this is the first
9 vehicle that we've been able to install
10 to support that goal.

11 We are also in the middle --
12 well, not in the middle. We're actually
13 in the home stretch of installing our new
14 Human Resource Information System, which
15 Council approved funding for in the fall
16 of 2006. We've been working on it ever
17 since, and it will come up this Memorial
18 Day. And it should help us greatly
19 reduce the resources consumed without
20 processing paper-based at the moment
21 employment transactions across the
22 government, but it will also help us by
23 immediately identifying job vacancies the
24 minute they occur. That's been a problem
25 in the past and this will be a great leap

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 forward for us with the installation of
3 that software.

4 You have their written
5 testimony. The other major goal of our
6 department is also to control the
7 increasing costs of health benefits. You
8 have some information there about what
9 we've done last year. We're going to
10 continue to work with the Finance
11 Department to control costs where we can.
12 This coming year we're looking into
13 enhanced employee health management as a
14 way to perhaps reduce the increased costs
15 by reducing utilization through promoting
16 employee wellness.

17 That's pretty much our summary.
18 If you have any questions, I'd be happy
19 to answer it.

20 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Sure. We
21 have some questions because during the
22 course of our budget hearings, there's
23 been a continuing discussion about the
24 number of vacancies in the various
25 departments. Can you explain why these

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 departments are having problems filling
3 vacancies? We heard, Well, it takes a
4 long time, and we ask, Well, what can we
5 do to streamline the process. So could
6 you help us out?

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 MS. O'LEARY: Good.

10 Mr. Agostini is here, because
11 we actually just kind of discovered a
12 reason for the problem yesterday.

13 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: A problem
14 for the difficulty in filling -- the time
15 it takes to fill a vacancy?

16 MR. AGOSTINI: Yes, Madam
17 Chair.

18 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: You got an
19 answer?

20 MR. AGOSTINI: I'm going to try
21 to give you one.

22 Steve Agostini, Budget
23 Director.

24 As I'm learning the process
25 here, what Celia mentioned and what we

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 were talking about in response to the
3 original question regarding Recreation
4 positions and how those were being
5 funded, there seems to be a mismatch, and
6 let me see if I can explain this clearly.

7 When we put together our plan
8 for the budget, we have an estimate of
9 the number of positions that can be
10 funded with the dollar levels that are
11 available to the department. The
12 department or the departments have
13 another list that doesn't necessarily
14 conform to that one, and it is a list of
15 all of their authorized positions.

16 There are many instances when
17 the departments will send a list to
18 Personnel that request the filling of
19 positions even though they do not have
20 budgetary authority to fill those
21 positions. And what's happening
22 currently is that Personnel has been
23 caught in between the two where they are
24 attempting to be responsive to
25 departments, departments have not

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 necessarily checked off with us on which
3 positions need to be filled, and so there
4 is an expectation that positions, for
5 which there are no dollars, will get
6 filled. We then in the Budget Office
7 have to go back and say to departments,
8 Hang on a second, we need to be sure that
9 you're funded.

10 You will be getting a response
11 back from us -- we're still drafting
12 this -- the Council will be, on the
13 Recreation situation where they mentioned
14 they had approximately 57 vacancies, I
15 believe, and what they actually have
16 funding for is approximately 26 of those
17 57 vacancies. There is a long list that
18 they have asked Personnel to work on in
19 the past for which they do not have
20 funding. In those areas where you have
21 been asking, I think, I believe Streets,
22 perhaps Fleet --

23 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: L&I.

24 MR. AGOSTINI: -- L&I and
25 Recreation --

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Police.

3 MR. AGOSTINI: I'm sorry. The
4 last one was?

5 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Police.

6 MR. AGOSTINI: Yes. We have
7 been looking at those, and we are
8 committed to meeting on a regular basis
9 to be sure that we're working from the
10 same list.

11 I'll let Celia comment on her
12 end and then as you have questions, we're
13 here to answer that for you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay.

15 Thank you very much.

16 MS. O'LEARY: We actually have
17 eligible lists in existence for 575
18 classes, and there are 1,100 job titles
19 in the whole government. So we have
20 active lists for half of the jobs. As
21 Steve mentioned, though, we had
22 communication disconnects between what a
23 department actually needs and will act on
24 and what they're asking us to produce an
25 eligible list for.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 So I think there's been a
3 certain amount of misallocated resources
4 in my department because of lack of
5 adequate information about what was
6 actually needed. Thankfully, with
7 Recreation, the two job titles that
8 Commissioner Carapucci identified as
9 critical, we have large eligible lists
10 for. So they can hire tomorrow.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Did he
12 know that?

13 MS. O'LEARY: He knows as of
14 yesterday.

15 MR. AGOSTINI: He sat with us.
16 We talked for about 45 minutes yesterday
17 to be sure that he understood what the
18 lists were. Celia's office, Personnel,
19 has indeed been putting together the
20 lists, but as she said -- and I can't
21 emphasize this enough -- if departments
22 are asking her to fill positions or go
23 through the process of creating lists for
24 positions for which they have no funding,
25 it misallocates her resources, it

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 misallocates the Department's resources
3 and now we're sort of off on a chase to
4 try and fill positions for which you have
5 no funding, and then everybody in that
6 process gets very frustrated, which is
7 not the way we should be doing this.

8 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Could you
9 tell us what job classifications we have
10 difficulty recruiting for?

11 MS. O'LEARY: Recruitment
12 difficulty, Mike.

13 MR. McANALLY: We have
14 recruitment difficulty for --

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you,
16 Mr. Budget Director.

17 MR. McANALLY: We have
18 recruitment difficulty for several of the
19 medical classes, nursing classes,
20 pharmacist classes. We regularly test
21 for these jobs, but there is just a
22 shortage of the employees nationally.

23 We have recruiting difficulty
24 for some skilled trades jobs and we have
25 some recruiting difficulty for some

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 information technology, engineering and
3 other scientists type jobs.

4 But for the majority of our
5 jobs, we do not have difficulty
6 recruiting. The City offers a very
7 competitive compensation package, very
8 attractive worklife balance
9 opportunities, and the work itself is
10 very attractive. For most of our jobs,
11 we have in excess of candidates and we do
12 not have a serious recruitment problem.

13 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I guess
14 your new online recruitment or --

15 MS. O'LEARY: Yes. We do have
16 a web presence, if you go to
17 www.phila.gov/personnel, all our
18 opportunities are listed online. We've
19 tried to make hot links so people can
20 readily determine what's open for
21 application at any one point.

22 Mike's team actually just
23 created career ladders, which we're going
24 to post online, which are -- we have
25 someone with a graphic design background,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 so they're very interesting to look at,
3 and we're going to post them online, and
4 folks who are looking for a job can
5 determine the great career opportunities
6 with the City government. So if you are
7 a college graduate, we have a career
8 ladder out. If you're a graduate with a
9 high school diploma, we have a different
10 career ladder. And we are sharing that
11 with Lori Shorr so she can help us get
12 the word out to Philadelphia high schools
13 and local colleges the attractiveness of
14 opportunities with the government.

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: If a
16 department sends you a request for a
17 position that they've been approved to
18 fill and if you don't have an existing
19 list for that position, how long would
20 that process take to fill that position
21 from the date that you are notified that
22 you need to recruit?

23 MS. O'LEARY: It varies. We
24 have some requirements for notification
25 of candidates that make it impossible to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 make it an immediate turnaround. For
3 example, we have to give them two weeks
4 notice to report to a test. We have to
5 provide a two-week-ahead-of-time notice
6 for approval or disapproval to allow for
7 appeal processing.

8 Our goal has been to have a
9 turnaround from announcement to list date
10 of 75 days on average, but depending on
11 what kind of assessment a department
12 wants, it may take more time. If you
13 want a two-part test, a written and an
14 oral to assess different skill-sets, it
15 will take longer.

16 So in view of that, what we try
17 to ask the departments to do is tell us
18 in advance. We run two planning sessions
19 with every department, one time in May
20 for the upcoming first and second quarter
21 of the fiscal year and we do it again in
22 November. And I have the manager of this
23 process sitting here. In case you have
24 any specific questions, Delores is here.

25 But the idea there is for them

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 to tell us what job classes do they want
3 a list for in the upcoming period so we
4 can start early enough, so that when
5 their vacancy occurs, we have a list and
6 so we can set expectations on the part of
7 the job-seekers when we plan to fill it.

8 So we've been attempting to get
9 around the issue of how long it takes.
10 But if we're surprised and something
11 happens and we have to slide it in when
12 we've already allocated our resources, it
13 can be perceived as taking a long time
14 from the date we're notified that a
15 vacancy happened and we need to generate
16 an eligible list.

17 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: How does
18 one access information about employment
19 opportunities with the City if they do
20 not have a computer? Where do they
21 apply? In the old days they could apply
22 down in the office on the courtyard, but
23 where do they go now?

24 MS. O'LEARY: We do have an
25 application center in the Concourse level

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 of the MSB. We also send paper copies of
3 our job opportunities announcements to
4 community groups. I believe every
5 Council office gets it, the Library.
6 Every Library branch has a copy of this
7 and they post the paper copy. So if
8 there is a digital divide issue, we're
9 hoping we're getting it out through paper
10 media as well.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Do you get
12 many requests for waivers for some of the
13 positions that we recruit for?

14 MR. McANALLY: For application
15 fee waivers or residence?

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Residence.

17 MS. O'LEARY: I'm sorry. We
18 get requests every now and then from a
19 department who is experiencing
20 recruitment difficulty and they'll
21 request a waiver. There are 104 active
22 waivers right now, which is about five
23 percent of the job titles in use in the
24 government right now, have a waiver. We
25 think that's adequate right now.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MR. McANALLY: Yes.

3 MS. O'LEARY: I mean, when we
4 get pressure we can't get enough
5 applicants, we open a discussion about a
6 residence waiver.

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: And the
8 resident waiver requires them to
9 eventually move into the City?

10 MS. O'LEARY: Yes, ma'am.
11 There are four waivers that do not
12 require an eventual move in. Those four
13 are in the Medical Examiners' Office.
14 They're pathologist, deputy medical
15 examiner and so on.

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: All right.
17 Councilman Rizzo.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair.

20 Good morning.

21 MS. O'LEARY: Good morning.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: I want to
23 pick up where the Chair left off. Could
24 you provide to the Chair those residency
25 waivers. And would you tell me the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 part-time doctors that work for the
3 Health Department, in many cases they
4 have residency waivers, correct?

5 MS. O'LEARY: Yes. They don't
6 have indefinite waivers, though.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: We've had
8 some for decades, from what I understand,
9 working for the Health Department. Do
10 they get benefits?

11 MS. O'LEARY: Part-timers do
12 not get benefits, no.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Part-time
14 doctors get no benefits?

15 MS. O'LEARY: They do not.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: So would you
17 provide to the Chair -- you said there
18 was 105 waivers?

19 MS. O'LEARY: One hundred and
20 four waivers in existence right now.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: In the whole
22 City?

23 MS. O'LEARY: Yes. Class
24 waivers, yes.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: I'm sorry?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MS. O'LEARY: Not people, but
3 job classes that have a waiver associated
4 with it.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: How many
6 people?

7 MS. O'LEARY: It's a moving
8 target, so I would have to get it for
9 you.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Do you have
11 a ball park?

12 MS. O'LEARY: It's generally
13 about 30 people.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thirty
15 people?

16 MS. O'LEARY: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And you'll
18 provide that to the Chair?

19 MS. O'LEARY: Yes, sir.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I want to go
21 back to could you explain how you plan to
22 implement the legislation of the
23 residency requirement for police
24 officers?

25 MS. O'LEARY: How we planned

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 it, sir?

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: How do you
4 plan to implement that, to start
5 recruiting police officers that don't
6 live in the City?

7 MS. O'LEARY: Well, the Police
8 Department is taking the lead on the
9 recruitment effort. The Personnel
10 Department actually only has 30 percent
11 of the human resources in the government.
12 Two-thirds of the people doing human
13 resources work in the departments. So
14 recruitment efforts are one of the things
15 that's really delegated out to the
16 departments, because they know where the
17 professional associations are and so on.

18 So the Police Department has a
19 very extensive recruitment team working
20 on recruiting. You've probably seen
21 their website.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But don't
23 you interact with -- don't they have to
24 flow through you to be hired?

25 MS. O'LEARY: Yes, sir. They

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 send all the applications to us, and
3 we're in the process of putting them in.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: So how do
5 you understand the residency waiver, that
6 they can recruit a police officer
7 anywhere in the United States of America,
8 but they must move in after six months?

9 MS. O'LEARY: Yes.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: There's a
11 resistance to do a similar with the
12 paramedic issue. We have 111 vacancies
13 for paramedics. I can't imagine you not
14 bringing that up. If that's not
15 critical, what is?

16 Why are we not -- and could you
17 explain to me if the Fire Department did
18 not want to do a permanent waiver of
19 residency, could you authorize them to do
20 one, two, three and end it?

21 MS. O'LEARY: The Civil Service
22 Commission authorizes it. We would not
23 normally do it over the objection of a
24 hiring authority, though.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Well,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 Commissioner Lloyd Ayers didn't like when
3 I used the word "resistance," and with
4 111 vacancies and not to figure out why
5 or fill those positions, there's got to
6 be an answer. And I think we're going to
7 get it.

8 MR. AGOSTINI: Councilmember,
9 after the discussion that you initiated
10 on this topic, we are reviewing that
11 internally and we have a response to your
12 question that is attempting to reconsider
13 some of the things that we brought to
14 your attention, that you've brought to
15 our attention. So if you would be
16 patient with us, we have a response
17 that -- I have a draft. I think I've
18 either signed off on it yesterday or the
19 day before that is coming your way that
20 sort of lays out what we would like to do
21 in response to your question. And
22 fundamentally, we understand that it's
23 something -- it's a tool that we should
24 be looking at using in order to fill
25 those very critical vacancies.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So the Civil
3 Service Commission is the one that
4 authorizes the -- do we have them coming
5 here today? We already had them. Okay.

6 The Civil Service Commission
7 authorizes the waiver?

8 MS. O'LEARY: Yes, sir.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Do you know
10 maybe from your knowledge, have they ever
11 issued just a temporary waiver for a
12 period of time until they satisfied the
13 hiring requirements?

14 MS. O'LEARY: Certainly.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They have
16 done that?

17 MS. O'LEARY: Yes.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. I'll
19 be anxious to see, but that, Budget
20 Director, is a good signal that there are
21 at least some conversation about filling
22 those positions from outside, if it's
23 necessary. I'm big on hiring as many of
24 our locals as we can, but when we run
25 into those critical situations, it's

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 important that we do what we need to do
3 here.

4 Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Councilman
6 Goode.

7 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
8 Madam Chair.

9 I actually don't have any
10 questions. I just wanted to, for the
11 record, thank you for your responsiveness
12 to my recent information request. It was
13 extremely helpful. I just wanted to say
14 thank you.

15 MS. O'LEARY: You're very
16 welcome, sir. Thank you.

17 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
18 very much for your testimony.

19 MS. O'LEARY: Thank you.

20 MR. McPHERSON: The next
21 department is the Human Relations
22 Commission.

23 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: We'll take
24 a five-minute break. Thank you.

25 (Short recess.)

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Good
3 afternoon. Thank you for coming. Would
4 you like to introduce yourself and begin
5 your testimony?

6 MR. TALIAFERRO: Yes, ma'am.
7 Councilwoman Tasco, thank you very much
8 for your forbearance. We appreciate
9 that. And to the other assembled
10 Councilpeople, thank you also for the
11 same.

12 My name is Nick Taliaferro. I
13 serve as Executive Director of the
14 Commission on Human Relations, which also
15 places before me the responsibility to
16 serve as Executive Director for the
17 Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission. At
18 the table with me is our Chief Human
19 Resources Person, Angela DeShields, and
20 also our Information Officer, Mr. Jack
21 Fingerman.

22 It's my pleasure to come before
23 you today to represent 35 of the finest
24 public servants that the City of
25 Philadelphia maintains in our office, and

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 our charge is to investigate and to
3 enforce the rules and laws concerning
4 civil and human rights in the City of
5 Philadelphia and also to investigate and
6 enforce matters of fair housing as it is
7 listed in the Code, The Philadelphia
8 Code. In doing so, we investigate
9 complaints about discrimination in the
10 workplace, civil complaints between
11 neighbors, civil complaints between
12 individuals. We also have educational
13 endeavors that cause us to reach out to
14 individuals for the purpose of preventing
15 strife and tension between groups, and we
16 do mediatorial intervention work as well,
17 among other activities.

18 Our budget for this year stands
19 at \$2,186,091, and that is unchanged from
20 the previous fiscal year.

21 We intend to involve ourselves
22 actively in the matter of public service
23 by proactively seeking public safety.
24 For the last 25-plus years, the
25 Commission on Human Relations took the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 tact that we should be behind the scenes,
3 sort of in the shadows, supporting
4 entities and organizations while not
5 being quite as out front and proactive.
6 At this point, we want to launch some
7 measures that we would consider to be
8 proactive for the purpose of promoting
9 peace, harmony between groups and between
10 races and between ethnicities.

11 We want to be able to help to
12 support healthy and sustainable
13 communities by fostering mediation
14 seminars and workshops that would lead
15 people to become closer to their
16 neighbors. In this world where people
17 are closer to individuals online than
18 they are to the person next door, we feel
19 that we have to encourage people to reach
20 beyond the borders and limitations that
21 they have in their own hearts and minds
22 to become true neighbors, one to the
23 other.

24 We also want to see if we can
25 create a resurgence of ethical

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 considerations. Empathy, which is a part
3 of being ethical, is at the heart of
4 creating a compassionate society. A lack
5 of empathy is at the base, Dr. Stout
6 says, of what some might call social
7 pathology, which creates the violence in
8 society in which we live. So we want to
9 proactively seek to do that. We have
10 several initiatives that we will be
11 launching to those items.

12 Finally, we wish to see an
13 increase in our services by having a 15
14 percent increase in the number of cases
15 that we close and resolve, both in our
16 Compliance Division and in our Community
17 Relations Division; a ten percent
18 increase on mediation and intervention
19 services by being more active in some of
20 our schools and some of our community
21 groups. We wish to become accountable to
22 the City by becoming involved actively in
23 the CityStat reporting program. And
24 last, but not least, to see a 20 percent
25 increase in our intake of customers.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 There's a little difficulty
3 created by that because we have moved
4 recently and people are having a
5 difficult time simply finding us in our
6 new location, but we are going to have an
7 aggressive campaign and public relations
8 outreach so that people might know who we
9 are, understand how to reach us, and one
10 of the ways we intend to do that is to
11 beef up even more our new online website
12 that allows people to file complaints
13 online without having to come into the
14 office.

15 I won't presume to read the
16 report to you, those of you who have
17 this. We would like to make available to
18 Council our recently released annual
19 report, which hasn't been given to our
20 commissioners yet, but this will help to
21 flesh out our mission and our mandate
22 even further. And we now open ourselves
23 to any questions that might be asked.

24 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Where is
25 your new location?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MR. TALIAFERRO: Our new
3 location is at the Curtis Center at 7th
4 and Walnut, third floor, south. It's a
5 relatively healthy-sized building.

6 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Let me ask
7 you a question, a couple of questions.
8 On Page 1 of your testimony you talk
9 about generating activities and you talk
10 about the possibility of a contract with
11 HUD if the Charter would provide for
12 that.

13 MR. TALIAFERRO: Yes, ma'am.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: What
15 Charter requirement would you need, have
16 you asked for it, and what would this
17 program provide?

18 MR. TALIAFERRO: Thank you for
19 asking that question. What this speaks
20 of is achieving the status of being
21 called substantially equivalent, which
22 means that we can enforce or investigate
23 charges equal to what the federal
24 government may do. Now, that will allow
25 us to enter into a contract relationship

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 with the Housing and Urban Redevelopment
3 Office of the federal government. They
4 would refer cases to us. That contract
5 comes with a flat fee, which I listed
6 here in the report, and then it comes
7 with a per case stipend. So every case
8 that we close we'll receive funding from
9 the federal government acting in their
10 behalf. Currently, we cannot do that
11 because we cannot levy the fines that
12 they require. The Charter will not allow
13 us to do so.

14 That's the main sticking point
15 right there. But we requested during the
16 previous Administration and I believe it
17 just got held up a little bit, but we are
18 renewing our request to make the
19 alterations so that we might be
20 substantially equivalent and that we
21 might be able to enter into a contract
22 relationship with HUD in that basis.

23 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Now, are
24 your caseloads -- do you handle certain
25 categories of cases within the City that

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 are not federal cases? Would the federal
3 government refer local cases to you? How
4 would they determine what cases to give
5 to the Philadelphia Commission on Human
6 Relations?

7 MR. TALIAFERRO: If I might
8 enlarge upon that just a bit, there are
9 three levels within the City that
10 function in this area. The federal
11 office typically refers cases to us that
12 occur within the jurisdiction of
13 Philadelphia. There's also a state
14 office. Now, the state office has a
15 larger staff and they levy larger fines
16 and the federal office levies larger
17 fines. Many times it's a matter as to
18 who wishes -- where the complainant may
19 wish to go.

20 It is known that the
21 Philadelphia Commission on Human
22 Relations tends to work a little bit
23 quicker, that we get on cases, we tend to
24 close them a little quicker. We manage
25 them, I think, a little bit more

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 efficiently. A case in the federal
3 government might take you three years
4 sometimes. It may take us one year.

5 And so it's according to what
6 the person wishes to do, but any matter
7 of civil rights or discrimination and any
8 of the qualified cases, any of the
9 protected classes, we can handle and we
10 do handle.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So you are
12 talking to the new Mayor and his
13 Administration about the possibility of
14 positioning yourself to qualify for this
15 contract?

16 MR. TALIAFERRO: Yes. We
17 requested a meeting, not only for that,
18 but there's a need for us to round out
19 our commissioners. We're lacking one
20 commissioner and perhaps two on the Human
21 Relations side and we're lacking three
22 commissioners on the Fair Housing side,
23 which actually puts us in a position
24 where we could be challenged legally,
25 because there are only five commissioners

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 and we're functioning actually with two.

3 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay.

4 Well, I'm pretty sure they're going to
5 move to fill those positions soon.

6 MR. TALIAFERRO: I sense that
7 they'll be filling quite a few positions.

8 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Let me
9 just go to Page 3 of your testimony where
10 you talk about the sustainable
11 communities. What outreach do you have
12 to the various communities in terms of
13 achieving this goal?

14 MR. TALIAFERRO: The Commission
15 on Human Relations is a bicameral
16 approach to trying to create justice.
17 One is our Compliance Division, which
18 allows us to handle complaints concerning
19 discrimination in the workplace, places
20 of public access, some cases which become
21 quite famous or infamous, as the word
22 might go. But the other one is our
23 Community Relations Division.

24 Now, we only have six Community
25 Relations Division representatives,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 including a deputy director and a
3 supervisor, but each of those
4 representatives is tied into each police
5 district serving on the Police District
6 Commission there, and they are also
7 connected to the vast majority -- there
8 is almost a phone book-size list of
9 agencies that these commissioners work
10 with.

11 What the intent is, the intent
12 of the agency is to foster a real strong
13 interconnectedness between groups within
14 communities so that people might be aware
15 of information and also that they might
16 be able to synergize their efforts and
17 resources that will allow them to address
18 problems more efficiently.

19 Typically, we have done that by
20 meeting with them, staying in the
21 background. But we are launching a
22 couple of initiatives, one -- and I'll
23 breathe it here first -- is our Philly
24 TACT Program, TACT being an acronym of
25 tolerance, acceptance, celebration and

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 togetherness, where the notion is to
3 foster and nurture events that will bring
4 people intentionally together to work
5 across relational lines.

6 We really believe that we're in
7 a historical time where two items that
8 used to be definitive in America, your
9 race and your gender, while they're still
10 persuasive and influence, they're not
11 definitive anymore, because clearly, you
12 can become president of the United States
13 as a woman or as an African-American, and
14 we think that this is a great time for us
15 to have the kind of dialogue that will
16 allow us to reach across lines and
17 proactively and intentionally find ways
18 to build real consanguinity and unity in
19 communities and relations. Philly TACT
20 is one of them.

21 On the 19th of April, we're
22 working with the Lutheran Theological
23 Seminary to produce a symposium called
24 Renewing the Village: Decreasing
25 Violence in Our Society and Its Impact on

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Young People. We're serving with them as
3 partners to get the faith community to
4 tie into existing City programs and other
5 neighborhood programs that work toward
6 anti-violence. The idea is to try to
7 hardwire connections between these
8 agencies.

9 A lot of these agencies, as you
10 know, don't know that the others exist
11 and they feel that they're out on a
12 lonely island working by themselves. So
13 we're proactively partnering with people
14 to produce the kind of synergies that
15 would lead to a greater level of
16 efficiency and operation in our grassroot
17 community groups.

18 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I think
19 that sounds like a good effort, and I
20 strongly urge you to -- with the various
21 neighborhoods throughout the City that
22 are transitioning, new people are moving
23 in, there is a need for you to reach out
24 in those communities to help neighbors
25 understand each other and come together,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 particularly in my area up around behind
3 the old Sears site. There's certainly a
4 wide-ranging melting pot of different
5 groups that could -- I mean, there's not
6 a lot of strife, but it certainly would
7 be helpful to have some communication or
8 connection or meeting or group program up
9 there to help neighbors work together and
10 more effectively. Not that they don't,
11 but when a neighborhood is transitioning,
12 you need someone there to help that
13 community with that transition. And
14 without leadership, there seems to be
15 tension at times when there's no support
16 from the City to help with that whole
17 issue of transitioning.

18 MR. TALIAFERRO: Councilwoman,
19 if I might, and it has to be intentional.
20 It can't -- it's not going to happen
21 accidentally. People are prone to be
22 homogenous. We tend to flock together
23 with the birds of our own feather. And
24 it really has to be intentional.

25 We have a diverse staff. We

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 have people from as far as Moldova to
3 Puerto Rico. We have a diverse staff,
4 and we intend to intentionally try to
5 engineer within our society the type of
6 coming together that pushes us beyond
7 tolerance.

8 We're working -- one of our
9 partnerships that we're seeking to
10 achieve is with WHYY to begin a series of
11 discussions and colloquiums called Beyond
12 Tolerance. The word has been that we
13 have to have tolerance in our
14 communities, but none of us would stand
15 before a minister to be married and have
16 the minister say to our wives or
17 husbands, Do you promise to tolerate your
18 mate. We have to do more than tolerate.
19 We have to celebrate and accept and then
20 really move toward a working
21 togetherness, and that's the kind of
22 passion that we want to reengineer into
23 our agency, to lift it from waiting for
24 people to come in to complain to actually
25 proactively going out and fostering the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 things that we desire.

3 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I agree

4 with that wholeheartedly. Thank you.

5 Are there any questions?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you

8 so much for your testimony, and I will be

9 in touch with you.

10 MR. TALIAFERRO: Thank you. I

11 appreciate it.

12 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So we can

13 work something out. Thank you.

14 This Committee will be recessed

15 until today at 1:30.

16 (Short recess.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The

18 Committee of the Whole is now back in

19 session. I believe the next department

20 to testify?

21 MR. MCPHERSON: Is the

22 Community College.

23 (Witnesses approached witness

24 table.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
3 the record, welcome, and proceed with
4 your testimony.

5 MR. McELHATTON: Good
6 afternoon, Madam President. My name is
7 Daniel McElhatton.

8 DR. CURTIS: I'm Stephen
9 Curtis, President of Community College of
10 Philadelphia.

11 MR. PISCOPO: And I'm Al
12 Piscopo, President of the Community
13 College of Philadelphia Foundation.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
15 you.

16 MR. McELHATTON: Madam
17 President, I appear today on behalf of
18 the Board of Trustees of Community
19 College of Philadelphia and I would like
20 to take the opportunity to acknowledge
21 those trustees who have taken time out of
22 their day to come here today and attend.
23 The trustees who are here today to
24 support the Mayor's budget and Council's
25 review of the recommendations, our former

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 Board Chair, Rhonda Cohen, is here; Board
3 member Varsovia Fernandez; Board member
4 Al Murphy; former Secretary of Labor and
5 Industry, Board member, Johnny Butler;
6 Board member Jeremiah White; and Board
7 member Dorothy Sumners Rush, who served
8 with distinction on the Philadelphia
9 Board of Education.

10 In addition to Mr. Piscopo, who
11 is Chair of our Foundation Board, we are
12 also joined by Lorina Marshall-Blake.
13 And I thank all of those Board members
14 for joining us here today.

15 Community College is not just
16 the main campus at 17th and Spring
17 Garden. It is not the West Regional
18 Center, nor only the Northwest Regional
19 Center or the campus in the Northeast.
20 It is not just the 30,000-plus folks that
21 we serve each year. It's not only the
22 hard-working and dedicated faculty,
23 administration and support personnel who
24 keep the College running day to day, year
25 to year. It is all of those components

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 and much more. The College is all of us,
3 those of us who live and work in the
4 City, citizens and businesses alike.

5 Those of who you are elected to
6 serve this City are also an integral part
7 of the life of Community College. Those
8 of us who volunteer our time and are
9 charged with the civic responsibility of
10 ensuring a better place for education for
11 generations to come, this is our college,
12 your college.

13 The phrase that the College
14 adopted several years ago to reflect our
15 mission is that we provide the path to
16 possibilities. No other institution, no
17 other institution in this City of higher
18 education can make the claim in the same
19 way.

20 Mayor Nutter has, through his
21 budget recommendation, included a
22 substantial increase in the funding for
23 the College. This is clearly a
24 reflection of his continuing and
25 increasing commitment to Community

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 College of Philadelphia. I would hope
3 and urge that your agreement as a Council
4 and a recommendation of these budgeted
5 amounts is an acceptance by Council of
6 our collective roles in expanding and
7 widening those paths to possibilities.

8 The Board is deeply
9 appreciative of all of your prior support
10 and urges your continued support and
11 commitment to the Community College of
12 Philadelphia, our college, the college of
13 the City of Philadelphia.

14 Thank you, Madam President.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

16 You're welcome.

17 Doctor.

18 DR. CURTIS: Thank you. I'm
19 here on behalf of the College today to
20 ask specifically that City Council
21 support Mayor Nutter's proposal for an
22 increase in our allocation next year of
23 \$4 million, and I'd like to talk just
24 briefly about the significance of that
25 recommendation and what it does to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 benefit students, what it will do to
3 benefit students.

4 In at least the last five or
5 six years as I've had the opportunity to
6 speak before you and to testify, I think
7 there's been a consistent thread in what
8 I've said, and, that is, that when it
9 comes to funding and specifically the
10 City's ability to provide funds to the
11 College, the most dramatic impact has
12 been on our students, and I have pointed
13 over and over again to the increasing
14 cost of education for students
15 everywhere, but in this case for students
16 at Community College of Philadelphia.

17 Over the last six or seven
18 years, the City has been unable to
19 adequately provide major increases in
20 funding, and what has happened in that
21 time period, as our normal costs have
22 gone up and in a number of cases as we
23 take in more students in a given year,
24 that burden has been basically shifted to
25 our students.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 While we remain the most
3 affordable option into higher education
4 in the City of Philadelphia, and we're
5 supposed to be, we also have some other
6 distinctions. We have the highest
7 tuition of any community college in the
8 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and we
9 range from 20 to 40 percent higher than
10 our sister institutions. What it costs
11 to attend Community College full time for
12 a year is 50 percent higher than the
13 national average for community college
14 students across the country. And as
15 we've indicated in prior testimony, we
16 are often serving those students that can
17 least afford some of those increases.

18 I've been very gratified that
19 in the last two years City Council has
20 taken specific action along those lines
21 and both last year and this year City
22 Council approved an additional \$1 million
23 for our budget, most of which we passed
24 on directly to students to try to address
25 that cost of education issue. And I

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 think you all know that we provided to
3 students a tuition credit on their bills,
4 and it at least helped dampen a little
5 bit the increases that they were
6 experiencing, particularly over the last
7 five or six years.

8 Mayor Nutter's proposal for
9 next year takes that one more step
10 forward. In essence, his proposal would
11 allow the City's increase to cover not
12 only its share of the normal increases
13 that we experience in our budget, but
14 also the students' share of those normal
15 increases, which is a fancy way of saying
16 we will not have to raise any tuition or
17 fee for students in the coming year.

18 That couldn't come, in my mind,
19 at a better time. Nationally, as well as
20 locally, there has been tremendous
21 concern about the impact of rising
22 tuition costs, the rising costs of going
23 to college, and we happen to be at a
24 moment in time when the state of the
25 economy, I believe, has put even more

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 pressure on students, on parents, on
3 families when it comes to starting
4 college or continuing in college,
5 particularly in light of the increases
6 that are out there in tuition and fees.

7 So that major change for us, it
8 will be the first time in almost 20 years
9 that we will not have raised tuition and
10 fees, and we are very grateful that this
11 kind of investment on the part of the
12 City is going to be able to attend to
13 what has been our number one priority,
14 reducing the impact on students of the
15 cost of going to college.

16 There are several other steps
17 that we also think will allow both the
18 College and the City to build a more
19 comprehensive partnership as we try to
20 benefit the City's residents, and I'll
21 give you several examples.

22 We're already in talks with the
23 Mayor's Office. We would like to take a
24 small portion of this money at least and
25 turn it into free training for City

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 employees in departments with whom we do
3 not currently have a relationship. Over
4 the years, there are probably several
5 City departments that we regularly work
6 with to train their employees, technical
7 training, soft skills training,
8 management/supervisory training, but the
9 majority of departments, for a variety of
10 reasons, including cost, we've not been
11 able to work with.

12 This is a chance, from our
13 point of view and I think from the City's
14 point of view, to expand that
15 relationship, and we intend to have the
16 City identify some departments with whom
17 we are not currently working and we will
18 provide training based on what the
19 departments indicate they need up to a
20 certain dollar amount for free.

21 I am hopeful that that's going
22 to lead us to a different kind of
23 relationship in which the College can be
24 much more of a principal trainer for City
25 employees, and it doesn't work that way

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 currently.

3 We're also entering into
4 discussions with the City about ways that
5 we can support the City's efforts to
6 attract and retain businesses. And,
7 again, I think I've said this in this
8 forum in the past as well. Those cities,
9 regions, states that are viewed as models
10 of workforce and economic development as
11 a matter of course bring their local
12 community or technical college to the
13 table when they're talking with a company
14 they want to attract, for example,
15 because the local community college is
16 the source of training for the potential
17 employees.

18 We're setting up now a series
19 of meetings with the appropriate members
20 of the Administration to have just that
21 kind of discussion so that we can be much
22 more of an asset that the City can call
23 on as it's seeking to attract or retain
24 businesses.

25 And then the last concrete

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 example I'll give you, Mayor Nutter has
3 called for a doubling of the number of
4 residents in Philadelphia who have a
5 college degree, and we think we have a
6 role to play in that as well. And this
7 investment is going to permit us to
8 really move forward with some efforts
9 that we've had underway for a while.
10 We're going to try, over the next three
11 to four years, to produce another
12 thousand degree-holders on top of the
13 numbers that we're generating right now.
14 We're going to do this in several ways.
15 One example, there's been a
16 group in the City identified by a number
17 of organizations, the Workforce
18 Investment Board and others, that do not
19 have college degrees but already have
20 some college credits. We're going to try
21 to build an incentive program for those
22 that are at least halfway toward an
23 Associate degree; in other words, have
24 about 30 credits that they could transfer
25 into our institution.

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2 We're going to provide some
3 incentives, with the goal of having them
4 enrolled part time or full time, but
5 every semester -- it probably won't take
6 longer than two years -- until they have
7 that Associate degree. We think that's
8 one very tangible way of starting to move
9 some of the City's residents toward that
10 credentialed status, something that will
11 help their own possibilities in terms of
12 employment and the like.

13 So those are some of the
14 specific ways we think that the
15 investment of the City is going to be
16 very tangible and very real for us going
17 forward.

18 Again, we appreciate the
19 support City Council has provided in the
20 past. We ask your support of the Mayor's
21 recommendations for the coming year, and
22 would be glad to answer any questions
23 that we can about this or other items.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
25 you very much.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 The Chair recognizes Councilman
3 Jones.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes. Thank
5 you.

6 Mr. President, it's good to see
7 you again, and I want to thank you and
8 your staff, particularly Lynnette, for
9 the recent tour of a rookie Councilman
10 and seeing the treasure, the Philadelphia
11 treasure, that is Community College.

12 It is heartening to know that
13 you're an integral part of the Mayor's
14 plan. We talked about it briefly, but
15 the Mayor put his money where his mouth
16 was, which was to increase the
17 appropriation to Community College,
18 weaving that into his plan to increase
19 the number of Philadelphians with college
20 degrees and to reduce the number of
21 dropouts in Philadelphia.

22 But I am encouraged by some of
23 your workforce development plans,
24 particularly training of staff.

25 I understand and I want to put

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 on the record that you defer tuition
3 payment for people who are recently
4 unemployed and allowing them to make a
5 career change or sharpen their skills,
6 and I just wanted you to elaborate on
7 that for a moment.

8 DR. CURTIS: Yes, sir. I'll be
9 happy to. For about five or six years
10 now, we've offered a program for
11 displaced workers, as you've suggested.
12 We call it Opportunity Now. We will give
13 any resident of the City of Philadelphia
14 who is laid off from full-time employment
15 and can document that with a letter from
16 their company, we will give that resident
17 a free first semester in terms of
18 tuition. You still have to pay for your
19 books and pay for some fees, but we do
20 waive -- it's not deferred, that they
21 have to do it later. We simply waive the
22 tuition for any number of courses up to
23 12 credits, which is our definition of
24 full time.

25 It's our intention there to try

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 to fill what we perceive as a gap. That
3 person in many cases was not considering
4 going to college at that moment. In
5 fact, many more of this particular group
6 of students already have a college degree
7 than is usually the case for students
8 that come to us. We always have ten to
9 15 percent that come with a Bachelor's
10 degree, but this group has an even more
11 credentialed background. But they also
12 don't qualify for financial aid at that
13 moment, because they had an income coming
14 in and their last tax return will show
15 that.

16 So we're trying to bridge that
17 gap and give them an opportunity to
18 either acquire some new skills or, as you
19 suggested, to actually change direction
20 completely. We think it's been a
21 successful program. In many cases, they
22 turn around very quickly and move back
23 into the workplace or, in some instances,
24 transfer to another institution. They
25 may wish a Bachelor's degree or a

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 different Bachelor's degree, but about a
3 quarter of those students stay with us
4 and actually move on a different career
5 path.

6 So we think that's part of our
7 responsibility as the only public
8 institution of higher learning in the
9 City, and it's a program that we have
10 felt strongly enough about to maintain it
11 during this period.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: I would
13 encourage you also to keep a working
14 relationship with -- and I know you do --
15 with the public schools in designing real
16 curriculums that lead to real jobs
17 through an educational pathway. One of
18 the things that we tend not to do is, we
19 create an environment for academics and
20 then create an environment for real jobs,
21 and sometimes the two don't meet. The
22 more closely we design curriculum to
23 match and meet the skill-sets needed by
24 employers, the better for real jobs at
25 the end of the educational experience,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 and I want that kind of interaction to
3 continue.

4 My final question before my
5 time runs out is that I'd like to know
6 about whatever physical expansion plans
7 you might have, particularly in the 4th
8 Councilmanic District, even though you
9 may not or may have one. We're
10 recruiting you to have an outlet there,
11 but if not, I'd like to hear about the
12 other plans around the City so that
13 average Philadelphians can actually
14 access your university, your college.

15 DR. CURTIS: Well, the
16 principal expansion plans at the moment
17 are focused on the main campus on Spring
18 Garden and the Regional Center up in the
19 Northeast. We've been able to get
20 permission from the state and, with that,
21 an approval for funding, because they
22 will provide 50 percent of the funding,
23 for an expansion in both places.

24 At the Spring Garden site, it
25 will allow us, in addition to a whole

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 range of things that I won't mention
3 here, to redo some significant space, and
4 I'll give you a workforce example since
5 you mentioned that earlier in your
6 previous question. We'll be completely
7 redoing our Culinary Arts Program.
8 They'll have brand new kitchens, brand
9 new capacity. We'll be able to take more
10 students. They'll have a demonstration
11 kitchen for more public kinds of lectures
12 and meetings, things that we don't have
13 in place right now. We'll be able to
14 renovate space for at least six to eight
15 other academic programs and curricula.

16 At the Northeast Regional
17 Center, we'll be doubling the size,
18 approximately doubling the size, of the
19 campus. It is our most crowded site, but
20 we already plan to open a center for
21 small business development there and
22 we'll be adding several new programs, and
23 my recollection is biotechnology, health
24 services management and computer
25 forensics, I believe. These are things

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 that we already have, but we don't offer
3 at that campus.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: I would be
5 interested if they're the top five career
6 paths that Philadelphians have. One
7 would be healthcare. I hear a lot about
8 the green jobs and wanted to know if in
9 fact your engineering curriculums and
10 career paths for Philadelphians to be
11 able to take advantage of those types of
12 jobs of the future, life sciences and the
13 like.

14 DR. CURTIS: We do. We
15 constantly keep track of where the
16 principal industry pathways are. You are
17 absolutely correct, life sciences is the
18 number one sector, and we have a number
19 of healthcare -- programs for healthcare
20 professionals, biotech program,
21 biomedical technician training program
22 and so on. So we do try to match up in
23 the other sectors as well.

24 We also have introduced, as an
25 example, a new program that is a program

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 of the future in GIS, geographic
3 information systems. We're looking at
4 the technologies that will be used going
5 forward and what can we do to prepare our
6 students for those kinds of pathways. So
7 we try to attend to that very carefully.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: I don't know
9 if I can put my arms around this one, but
10 the whole notion of the creative class.
11 Is there any curriculum designed for
12 anything -- it's a curriculum that I
13 think is a little more broad than
14 specific green jobs, but is there any
15 thought given to that?

16 DR. CURTIS: We have programs
17 that would fall into that. I think
18 that's an area that we're going to keep
19 looking at going forward. Even in -- oh,
20 let's go back to the life sciences
21 example for a moment. There we've tended
22 to look at programs that lead to
23 developing practitioners, but now we have
24 gone the management route, health
25 services management. We'll try to do

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 that in some other areas, like arts.

3 We're strong in some of the
4 arts areas, but I think there are some --
5 music and sound technology, as an
6 example. That's a relatively new
7 curriculum.

8 So, again, I think we're
9 matching up in the way that you want, but
10 I do think there is some room for growth
11 there.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: I just want
13 to thank you again. You and your staff
14 have been value added to the City of
15 Philadelphia, and want to continue along
16 that path in going into the future.

17 Thank you, Madam President.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

19 You're welcome.

20 The Chair recognizes
21 Councilwoman Tasco.

22 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you.

23 Good afternoon and welcome.

24 It's good to see you here, and I'm
25 certainly sure that this environment is

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 better than you've experienced in the
3 past years you've been here and certainly
4 having the Administration sort of call
5 the shot before you have to ask. So I
6 think that's great. And certainly having
7 worked in higher education with Bennett
8 College, certainly what we give is truly
9 not enough, because it requires much
10 more, but I think this increase in your
11 budget without a hassle sends a signal
12 that certainly -- Council, we have always
13 been supportive of you.

14 DR. CURTIS: You have.

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: But having
16 the Administration look at you in a
17 different light and be supportive is
18 encouraging to us, too.

19 I just have probably two
20 questions. One, how are we doing at
21 Godfrey and Stenton, which is in my
22 district?

23 DR. CURTIS: We're doing very
24 well. Going back to the previous
25 question, we have permission right now

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 for the two new construction projects I
3 mentioned, but in the next several years,
4 we expect to move forward with requests
5 to the state for that campus. We still
6 have one floor to build out in one of the
7 buildings and we need additional parking.
8 So we have our facility plan in motion
9 and we'll be moving forward in all of
10 these venues.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay. And
12 you'll certainly share that with us?

13 DR. CURTIS: Yes, ma'am.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Because
15 you'll probably have to go to Zoning.

16 DR. CURTIS: You bet.

17 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Marion
18 Johnson certainly has to know.

19 The other question is, do you
20 track your graduates of Community College
21 who advance to four-year institutions?
22 Do you track the rate of graduation for
23 those students? Do you have the ability
24 to do that?

25 DR. CURTIS: In some cases,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 yes. An institution like Temple
3 University will share with us regularly
4 in the aggregate, not individual names
5 but in the aggregate, how our students
6 are doing. And I'll come back to that
7 example in just a moment. There are some
8 other institutions that will do the same.
9 Not every institution at the moment will
10 give us those data, so I can't answer the
11 question in some cases.

12 But using Temple as an example,
13 Temple is committed to transfer. About
14 45 percent of its undergraduates are
15 transferred students. We are certainly
16 the largest source, but, in fact, they
17 come from other area community colleges
18 and so on.

19 Each of us knows, based on the
20 data we get from Temple, what the average
21 GPA is for our transfer group -- we'll
22 talk about Community College of
23 Philadelphia for a minute -- the
24 persistence rates, how many graduate and
25 that sort of thing, and we know it in

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 comparison to the other groups. So that
3 to be candid, seven or eight years ago if
4 you looked at the GPAs, our students
5 wouldn't have had the highest GPA when
6 you looked at the transfer groups. When
7 you look now, our students have the
8 highest GPA of any transfer group. It
9 may be that much more (indicating). I'm
10 not saying it's all A's versus all B's.
11 But that's important to us, to know how
12 we stack up, are we actually providing
13 the kind of preparation that will allow
14 them to achieve what you're asking about,
15 the baccalaureate.

16 The last data I saw -- I have
17 not seen this one for a couple of years
18 now, but the last time I saw a percentage
19 for graduation, 12 percent of the
20 graduating class at Temple came from
21 Community College of Philadelphia.

22 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay. I
23 guess it sounds good. Thank you.

24 Thank you very much, Madam
25 President.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

3 You're welcome.

4 The Chair recognizes Councilman
5 Clarke.

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
7 Madam President.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

9 You're welcome.

10 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Good
11 afternoon.

12 DR. CURTIS: Good afternoon.

13 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: A couple of
14 quick questions. I've actually had some
15 preliminary conversations with my good
16 friend, Lynnette, about some issues that
17 I wanted to talk to you all about at some
18 level of specificity on curriculum. I
19 want to ask you a question.

20 Because of the, I guess,
21 flexibility of Community College, because
22 it's essentially a local college that
23 gets primarily local students, when you
24 talk about crafting or you think about
25 crafting your curriculum, do you take

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 into account the forecasts of potential
3 job opportunities or job growth in the
4 City or the region?

5 I actually heard you when I
6 walked back in the room. You were
7 talking about life sciences, and that was
8 kind of the conversation I had with
9 Lynnette, about the fact that there's a
10 significant increase in building,
11 particularly in the West Philadelphia
12 area, providing life science job
13 opportunities once that whole West
14 Philadelphia campus gets built out, and
15 I've always been concerned that we were
16 not necessarily targeting our strategies
17 for our graduates from high schools and
18 from junior colleges to take advantage of
19 that job growth on a local basis.

20 Temple University and others to
21 some degree, because it is a relatively
22 high residential population college, but
23 they're kind of getting away from that,
24 and University of Penn primarily draws
25 people from all over, so they don't

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 really target their curriculum for the
3 local.

4 Do you give that any thought
5 about -- and I actually in a further
6 conversation, I want to come up with a
7 strategy to talk about what's the
8 likelihood of the job growth or job
9 opportunities locally and will we be
10 prepared to make sure that our folks in
11 the City of Philadelphia take advantage
12 of that.

13 DR. CURTIS: I think the answer
14 is absolutely yes, and I think it aligns
15 with what I was trying to say to the
16 earlier question. I think by definition
17 community colleges, not just ours, but
18 community colleges in general are just as
19 you described it, they have to respond to
20 the local conditions. Everything you
21 said is correct. Ninety-eight percent,
22 or whatever the figure is, of our
23 students are from Philadelphia. When
24 they graduate, it's 80-some percent that
25 stay in Philadelphia and 90-some percent

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 that stay in the Philadelphia region.
3 They're not leaving. It is one of the
4 strengths of a college like ours. We're
5 not part of the brain drain. We're just
6 the opposite. So that means, by
7 definition, whatever programs we're
8 offering have to relate to the
9 opportunities that exist in the
10 community.

11 So my answer is a resounding
12 yes, we do take that into account. We do
13 look ahead. You can't always figure
14 everything. In the time that I've been
15 here, we incorporated a new program,
16 Printing Arts, and then the industry
17 changed within about three years. I
18 mean, we couldn't anticipate that. And
19 it became so computerized and so many
20 other things, they simply didn't have the
21 number of jobs anymore, and we actually
22 had to retreat on that one.

23 So it's not that once in a
24 while you don't have as much information
25 as you'd like, but in general,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 absolutely. Particularly in the key
3 areas -- we keep mentioning life
4 sciences, but it's because it is such a
5 huge area when it comes to this region,
6 and that goes beyond just Philadelphia or
7 Pennsylvania, the tristate region.

8 We track the percentage of
9 vacancies that our graduates fill. We
10 track the salaries that our graduates
11 get. We try to anticipate the number of
12 openings we think will be required. Even
13 with that kind of matching of data,
14 though, again, there is limitations. In
15 the allied health areas, for example, one
16 of the limitations is the availability of
17 faculty. So many of them can make more
18 in the workplace than they can teaching,
19 by far.

20 Another is the availability of
21 clinical sites. For all of the allied
22 health programs, part of the curriculum
23 is the field work that takes place in a
24 hospital or in a healthcare setting.
25 Well, everybody is looking for those.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 It's not just us. It's every other
3 community college, it's University of
4 Pennsylvania, it's Jefferson University
5 or whatever. So that becomes another
6 element.

7 So the answer to your question
8 is yes, but I'm also trying to say there
9 are other factors that may or may not
10 make it easy to expand, for example, what
11 your capacity is. It's not automatically
12 because you know there's an even greater
13 need, that you can immediately generate
14 more seats.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.

16 MR. McELHATTON: Councilman, if
17 I could also add, at the Board level,
18 this is an issue that is very, very
19 important to the Board and that we
20 constantly are in discussions with the
21 Administration about how do we make sure
22 that we are posturing the College in the
23 best possible position to take advantage
24 of those opportunities, and we have heard
25 and we have encouraged the dialogue from

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 the Administration through Steve and
3 others, through the School District of
4 Philadelphia and now we've also expanded
5 to the Archdiocese to have a dialogue so
6 that we see what the skill-sets are that
7 might be coming up through the system,
8 and in the dialogue with the workforce
9 community, we know what is expected to be
10 out there.

11 So we are very concerned at the
12 Board level on that precise issue and I
13 think we monitor it and we encourage it.

14 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You must
15 have been a Councilman before, because
16 you kind of answered my next question
17 before I got to it

18 DR. CURTIS: May I add just one
19 other comment, though?

20 MR. McELHATTON: Different
21 century, Councilman.

22 DR. CURTIS: We also keep in
23 touch with what's going on in the
24 industry in other ways. Every one of our
25 career and technical programs has an

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 advisory committee made up of people from
3 the field. We want to know ahead of time
4 where the field is going, and, again,
5 part of it has to do with -- part of your
6 question has to do with the number of
7 jobs and so on, but another part is
8 what's the level of expertise that's
9 going to be required as technology
10 evolves and so on and so forth.

11 We also have relationships with
12 the Workforce Investment Board, other
13 organizations throughout the region. We
14 work cooperatively in some cases around
15 specific initiatives. But I'm back to
16 your data question. It also means we
17 have sources of data that we can get on a
18 regular basis as well.

19 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay. All
20 right. Thank you. Thank you very much.
21 I'll look forward to having that further
22 discussion, because I've actually talked
23 to a couple of CEOs from some of the
24 hospital-related institutions and they
25 talked about making sure that we can

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 provide opportunities on an entry-level
3 basis, and they thought that it may best
4 be addressed in Community College.

5 DR. CURTIS: Good.

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So I'll
7 talk to you about.

8 DR. CURTIS: Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
10 Madam President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
12 You're welcome.

13 I would just like to make a
14 statement, that as long as I've been
15 here, which is a long time, this Council
16 certainly has been very, very
17 supportive --

18 DR. CURTIS: Yes, you have.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- of
20 Community College and truly appreciate
21 the work that you do. We have often led
22 the charge to restore --

23 DR. CURTIS: Yes, you have.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: --
25 monies into the budget, and I am

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 delighted that the Mayor has given
3 Community College -- I'm not going to say
4 what it is -- the appropriation he has
5 for this year, and I think that hopefully
6 we'll be able to do that increasingly
7 year to year, if it's at all possible.

8 But we truly, truly appreciate
9 the wonderful work that you do at the
10 College.

11 And I see that Councilman Rizzo
12 is trying to cut me short, so I'll
13 acknowledge him.

14 Okay. You're up.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I could
16 never do that, Madam Chair.

17 In just following up on your
18 conversation with Councilman Clarke, do
19 we have any relationship with the
20 corporate sector where we do in-service
21 training, like PECO Energy, what I'm
22 familiar with? Is there any services you
23 could provide to train some employees in
24 areas that they may have need for
25 training?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 DR. CURTIS: Absolutely, and we
3 do that all the time. The Workforce
4 Development Division of our college is
5 called Corporate Solutions and they
6 engage the business sector in a variety
7 of ways. One, we do customize job
8 training, and we -- and it doesn't have
9 to be a big company like the one you just
10 mentioned. It can be a smaller company
11 as well. But we provide that kind of
12 training across the City for a variety of
13 types of companies. We also provide
14 access for companies, with some
15 exceptions. It's not in the service
16 arena, but beyond that, we can provide
17 access to guaranteed free training monies
18 from the state, and we can facilitate a
19 company's getting that money to help with
20 their training needs.

21 We have found that more and
22 more companies are looking not only for
23 the short-term customized training of the
24 kind that you referenced, but want their
25 employees in general to be more highly

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: That's good
18 to hear. How about a very basic service
19 that I'm thinking of? Many people that
20 come into the workforce change from one
21 career to another and they have a
22 blue-collar job for many, many years and
23 they want to transition. And a perfect
24 example, I just had a person after many
25 years of working for a repair facility,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 she was a technician, wanted to -- it was
3 getting kind of tough out there and she
4 wanted to transition into office work,
5 and she asked me where could she go to
6 learn computer skills, which today if you
7 don't have them is a killer.

8 Is there a way -- what do you
9 offer over there to have some computer
10 training?

11 DR. CURTIS: Everything that
12 person needs. Absolutely. Again --

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: What's the
14 commitment? In other words, describe the
15 curriculum. How many days a week or
16 nights, or how does it work?

17 DR. CURTIS: Well, we have to
18 see exactly what that person is looking
19 for. There are individual courses.
20 There are courses for credit that you can
21 apply toward a degree. There are
22 non-credit courses that are just teaching
23 you the skills. Again, we customize
24 that.

25 Individuals come to us with all

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 kinds of goals in mind. It may be the
3 next Microsoft Office Suite comes out and
4 they simply want to become more fluent in
5 that. We'll do a short-term course for
6 that. It may be that, as you've
7 described, there's a real change that's
8 desired. That may involve, honestly,
9 getting on to a degree pathway in order
10 to get a much larger set of skills in
11 order to change careers.

12 But that is exactly what a
13 community college is all about. We offer
14 a whole variety of paths. We have
15 people, counselors, advisors and others,
16 that work with the students. In our
17 Career Services area, we have the ability
18 to test the strengths, the interests, the
19 expertise of an individual to see what
20 other careers might be a good match. I
21 mean, there are all kinds of services we
22 provide in that way.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Let me just
24 say it again. This person just wants to
25 come from having no computer skills to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 the ability to function in an office to
3 prepare a letter, to send an e-mail, to
4 do those things. Is there a course where
5 the people watching this that might say,
6 You know, I'd really like to learn to
7 have some additional computer skills. If
8 they contact the College, there is most
9 likely a program where they can go from
10 no skill to a little bit and then develop
11 their own or continue education at
12 Community College?

13 DR. CURTIS: The answer is yes.
14 But if that person were sitting here next
15 to me, I'd also say, You need to
16 understand that in the workplace, the
17 expectations these days are more than
18 just putting a letter on the computer and
19 doing the things that you described.
20 You're expected to know databases, you're
21 expected to know desktop publishing.
22 There are other things -- the world has
23 changed, and I think we try to provide
24 the bigger view of that and a whole array
25 of skills that will help that person.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 It's not just typing the letter.

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's good.

4 It took me six months to figure out my
5 BlackBerry, so I have compassion.

6 Thank you, Madam Chair.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
8 you.

9 The Chair recognizes
10 Councilwoman Tasco.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Yes. I
12 just happened to look at the testimony
13 and your PowerPoint. I noticed that your
14 minority-owned businesses, your contracts
15 for professional services, supplies --
16 professional services and supplies and
17 other services decreased in
18 minority-owned participation from '06 to
19 '07. Could you give me an explanation
20 for that, and also why is the percentage
21 so low?

22 DR. CURTIS: Well, first, when
23 it decreases, sometimes that's simply a
24 matter of what contracts are available in
25 a given year. You don't have the next

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 year, which is the current one. It's not
3 completed. We've doubled that number and
4 that percentage this year, and one reason
5 was that a long-term contract was up for
6 renewal and when it was bid out, a
7 minority vendor got the contract for our
8 copiers across the campus. That's a
9 four-year commitment that that person
10 will have.

11 So sometimes it depends upon
12 when contracts are up or renewed. I
13 agree with you, the number is lower than
14 we want it to be. We have in place a set
15 of strategies to increase that. Every
16 other year we hold a minority vendors
17 fair, and that is a source for finding
18 other vendors that may not be on our
19 radar right now. In fact, in this
20 doubling that's taken place this year,
21 one of the referrals came from the
22 African-American Chamber of Commerce. So
23 we're looking for that kind of
24 opportunity.

25 We do require our buyers to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 investigate for every bid what potential
3 sources there might be for minority
4 vendors. We ask typically that there be
5 at least three bids for a contract and at
6 least one of them be a minority vendor.
7 So we put in place procedures and
8 strategies that we hope are going to move
9 that forward and, in many cases, do. And
10 this year is a case where it has moved
11 forward.

12 The women-owned has been
13 consistently moving up as it turned out,
14 as you look at that. Some of the
15 opportunities that exist with us are also
16 really construction related. We don't do
17 that all the time, but you heard me say
18 earlier that we're about to enter in the
19 next few years a period of construction.
20 There's been five or six years where we
21 didn't have any construction like that.
22 And as an example, our Board -- and this
23 is an area -- Mr. McElhatton can tell you
24 this, too, but the Board is also asking
25 us to report on this kind of information

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 as well.

3 But we've just chosen by bid
4 the underwriter for the bonding, and one
5 of our conditions was that we wanted the
6 opportunity to give some significant
7 portion of the bonds through a minority
8 underwriter, and the winning bid -- it
9 was by far the lowest bid, and we are
10 bound to take the lowest responsible
11 bid -- committed to 40 percent of the
12 bonds being done through a minority
13 underwriter, committed to using minority
14 counsel for the underwriting.

15 So we try to incorporate a
16 variety of opportunities. That will not
17 show up this year. That will show up in
18 another year.

19 So either now or further I can
20 go through with you in more detail what
21 we do, but we're trying to increase the
22 opportunity for minority vendors and
23 women-owned vendors to have access to
24 what we have.

25 MR. McELHATTON: Councilwoman,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 if I could also respond, almost every
3 time -- and I say "almost" because we may
4 have missed one or two -- that a contract
5 for services or a construction management
6 contract comes up, our Business Affairs
7 Committee in their reports will detail to
8 the Board the minority participation
9 recommendations and the representations
10 of those contractors. That is an issue
11 that is discussed every time the Board
12 has that issue, and we constantly are
13 encouraging the administration to expand
14 the opportunities for that.

15 For example, in a construction
16 management contract that was just
17 approved last week or the week before by
18 the Board, the construction manager made
19 a recommendation that there be a series
20 of prime contractors, not one prime
21 contractor, so that the bonding
22 requirements would be significantly less
23 for minority or women-owned enterprises,
24 and that expands the pool of
25 opportunity -- the pool of applicants for

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 the opportunities. And it's that kind of
3 aggressive action by the administration
4 and I think prodding by the Board that
5 will push those numbers along.

6 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you,
7 Madam President.

8 Thank you.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you.

11 Are there any other questions
12 or comments from members of the
13 Committee?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
16 Seeing none, I thank you all for coming
17 in.

18 DR. CURTIS: We thank you.

19 MR. McELHATTON: Thank you,
20 Madam President.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
22 you.

23 MR. McPHERSON: SEPTA is next.

24 (Witnesses approached witness
25 table.)

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
3 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
4 the record and proceed with your
5 testimony.

6 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon. My
7 name is Joseph Casey. I'm General
8 Manager for SEPTA.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
10 Mr. Casey, we do have a copy of your
11 testimony, so if you would like to
12 abbreviate it, we will make certain that
13 the stenographer has a copy, and that
14 will be transcribed in full.

15 MR. CASEY: Okay. Thank you
16 very much.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
18 you.

19 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon,
20 Council President Verna and members of
21 the City Council. Again, my name is
22 Joseph Casey, General Manager of SEPTA.
23 With me is Frances Jones from our
24 Government Affairs Office and Richard
25 Burnfield, our Chief Financial Officer.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 I'm pleased to have the
3 opportunity to speak about our \$63
4 million 2009 Operating Budget request and
5 to provide highlights of the Authority's
6 initiatives and milestones achieved over
7 the past year.

8 With the passage of Act 44 of
9 2007 and the creation of the Public
10 Transportation Trust Fund, SEPTA now has
11 dedicated and predictable funding
12 sources. This legislation immediately
13 stabilized our budget for 2008 and
14 provides financial stability needed to
15 build and enhance service for our
16 customers and the region.

17 Responding to customer demand
18 is very important, given our steady
19 ridership increases over several years
20 and the strong growth trends we continue
21 to see. Since the beginning of this
22 fiscal year, transit ridership has
23 increased four percent and 12 percent on
24 the regional rail. This is positive
25 news, but we are seeing an increased

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 overcrowding on some of SEPTA routes as a
3 result.

4 Now with the ability to address
5 these issues, we can now take action to
6 enhance service. For example, in
7 February, service was increased on the
8 Market-Frankford line, one of our busiest
9 routes, by 12 percent, with more rush
10 hour and mid-day trains. This fall, 65
11 additional bus and rail service changes
12 are planned to address overcrowding and
13 meet the needs of growing employment,
14 retail and residential markets. And by
15 building early morning, mid-day, evening
16 and late-night service improvements, we
17 can make SEPTA more accessible and
18 convenient for customers and riders.

19 After years of seeking the
20 solution for transportation service for
21 school children, working cooperatively
22 with the School District of Philadelphia
23 and the State of Pennsylvania, SEPTA
24 introduced a weekly transit pass program
25 for 50,000 of the students in the City of

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 Philadelphia. This represents about a
3 six percent increase of the prior year.
4 Feedback from school officials indicate a
5 four to six percent increase in
6 attendance since the start of the
7 program.

8 With the organization on solid
9 footing, now is the time to begin a new
10 chapter for SEPTA. I am committed to
11 focus on the fundamentals of our
12 business, providing safe, reliable,
13 convenient and comfortable services for
14 our passengers. I believe we can improve
15 the value of public transit services to
16 the City by making customer service and
17 courtesy, cleanliness, communication and
18 convenience our first priorities.

19 Thank you, President Verna and
20 members of Council, for the opportunity
21 to provide testimony today. I look
22 forward to working with you, Mayor Nutter
23 and his Administration, including Rina
24 Cutler, Deputy Mayor for Transportation,
25 to address SEPTA transportation issues.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 I understand Council has proposed a
3 resolution to hold separate public
4 hearings on the safety of public
5 transportation. SEPTA looks forward to
6 attending and testifying at this hearing.

7 At this point, I'll be happy to
8 answer any questions Council may have.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you very much.

11 I would ask members of the
12 Committee to refrain from asking
13 questions regarding the safety issue,
14 because tomorrow a resolution will be
15 introduced calling for public hearings.

16 So with that, the Chair now
17 recognizes Councilman Greenlee.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
19 you, Madam President.

20 Just generally, Mr. Casey, I
21 want to say I appreciate all of the quick
22 responses you and certainly Ms. Jones.
23 She and I have talked to each other for
24 many, many years. She obviously has aged
25 much, much better than me, but I just

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 generally appreciate the responsiveness,
3 and particularly as the President
4 alluded, with the resolution that
5 Councilman Jones is going to introduce
6 tomorrow and a number of us are
7 co-sponsoring, I appreciate the
8 information you got back to us right away
9 on that and we look forward to that
10 hearing.

11 Just one general question. I'm
12 glad to see your plans to expand service
13 starting in the fall of '08, and
14 particularly you talk about the off-peak
15 hours, if you will.

16 MR. CASEY: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I was
18 wondering the general criteria you use in
19 determining those changes. Obviously the
20 overcrowding thing, I guess, is kind of
21 an obvious one, but I'm thinking in a
22 certain -- in another direction, every
23 once in a while I hear from folks in, I
24 guess you would generally call it, the
25 Northeast part of the City.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MR. CASEY: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That they
4 almost don't even think about using SEPTA
5 because they just don't think it meets
6 their needs enough, particularly in that
7 off-peak hours. Northeast has changed a
8 little bit and some of the residents,
9 some jobs are up there along the
10 Boulevard, whatever, but because they
11 don't think there's enough service. So
12 there wouldn't be the overcrowding
13 problem, I guess, but there would be --
14 there will probably be the need if there
15 was additional service. I know that's a
16 little harder to sort of get a handle on,
17 but I don't know if maybe you talked to
18 some of the employers up there.

19 You know where I'm going with
20 this?

21 MR. CASEY: We do. Part of the
22 criteria is to look at people complaints
23 or suggestions for additional service.
24 That has happened in the last two years.
25 Again, this is just our proposal. We

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 will have public hearings on these
3 services, and if people have alternatives
4 for additional services, we'll be glad to
5 listen.

6 But a lot of the services we
7 have, if they cut off at 7 o'clock at
8 night, people have complained because it
9 wasn't convenient for them, because they
10 work later, et cetera. So we added
11 late-night services. And the same thing
12 for the weekends. It wasn't convenient
13 for them to the weekends, so we added
14 weekend services. But we're willing to
15 listen to any public suggestion for
16 increased service.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Because
18 I'm thinking sometimes that's -- again,
19 some of the people that work up there,
20 some of them live up there, some don't.
21 Some of them come from somewhere else.
22 But often times they don't have a lot of
23 money. We all know what gas is and cars
24 are these days.

25 MR. CASEY: Most of the times

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 the employers call us because they know
3 it's an issue for their employees and
4 they approach us to revising a service to
5 serve their business.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
7 Well, it certainly seems like you're on
8 top of that. So thank you. Thank you
9 all again very much.

10 Thank you, Madam President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
12 You're welcome.

13 The Chair recognizes Councilman
14 Jones.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
16 afternoon and welcome, Mr. Casey, to the
17 City of Philadelphia.

18 MR. CASEY: Thank you very
19 much, Councilman.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: We are going
21 to introduce a resolution tomorrow to
22 talk about the specific issue of safety,
23 which will give us enough time and you
24 enough time to prepare and for us to
25 focus specifically on the mutual concern

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 that the City has along with SEPTA.

3 I want to focus my questions on
4 a couple of things that you mentioned in
5 your testimony by way of increased
6 ridership and crowding and, therefore,
7 the allocation of new and additional cars
8 and/or buses to those routes, and wanted
9 to know what your methodology was for the
10 selection and also which ones were
11 selected.

12 MR. CASEY: Councilman, a lot
13 of the overcrowding is based from our
14 operations people, from our operators
15 that are riding the buses where they're
16 informing us that there's overcrowding.
17 One of the criteria that we use, in
18 addition to complaints we're receiving
19 from our customers, one of the things
20 that we're faced with at this point is
21 capacity issues. I wish I could allieve
22 some of the overcrowding now, but we
23 simply don't have enough buses during the
24 peak period.

25 Now, we have a current bus

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 order on place. Buses will start being
3 delivered in August, and at that time,
4 between that and mid September we'll have
5 sufficient buses to expand the service at
6 that time. Rather than retiring some of
7 the old buses, we'll keep them in
8 service. So that's why we're not doing
9 it now and doing it in September.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: So at the
11 point that you make those determinations,
12 will Council be made aware and the
13 respective districts?

14 MR. CASEY: As far as the
15 services?

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

17 MR. CASEY: I have a list of
18 proposed services now. We have public
19 hearings in the first week in June on all
20 service enhancements. But I have a whole
21 list, and they're pretty much throughout
22 the City.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. A
24 couple of things. One, in the Great
25 Expectations meetings that were

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 performed, they went around the City,
3 different sections of the City, talked
4 about specific topics. One of the topics
5 obviously was mass transportation and,
6 ergo, SEPTA. Within that, a couple of
7 interesting observations I made as a new
8 Councilperson.

9 One, people use the analogy and
10 use the examples of Washington, DC and
11 New York as transit-oriented cities, and
12 when it came to Philadelphia, it was kind
13 of felt that there was -- we don't engage
14 transportation, we just use it. And that
15 was a comment that if you could put your
16 arms around that comment, that somehow
17 transportation just overlapped their
18 lives as opposed to being a part of their
19 lives.

20 How do we make it more user
21 friendly in general, one; and, two,
22 engrain it into -- as opposed to getting
23 in the car and going shopping, how do I
24 get on the bus and take that to go
25 shopping?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MR. CASEY: Well, again, I was
3 looking for the future and I mention the
4 school passes, and I thought that was a
5 great way to introduce the new kids
6 rather than taking -- using the token and
7 using it periodically, to have a pass
8 that you would have unlimited uses
9 forever. So my way of thinking, we have
10 a new generation of people that will be
11 accustomed to using transit for all
12 purposes.

13 But you mentioned convenience,
14 and, again, part of the thing that we're
15 looking at, it wasn't simply convenient
16 for everyone to take transit to do
17 shopping during the weekends, et cetera.
18 And that's part of our proposal, to
19 increase the convenience to make it more
20 acceptable for people and make it more
21 easy for people to use transit to do
22 their chores during the weekends, et
23 cetera.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: The use of
25 shelters and signage is one of the issues

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 that came up in those Great Expectations,
3 making -- and I know -- before Frances
4 tells me that Public Property owns the
5 shelters, I do know that, for the record.
6 But when we start talking about the
7 integration of signage, if we have
8 technology that can tell us where an
9 automobile is at any particular time, why
10 can't we use that same technology to tell
11 commuters how far a bus is away and what
12 time it will arrive? And why can't that
13 be integrated into a signage system that
14 kind of let's people know, hey, there's
15 traffic, there might be a five-minute
16 delay on this route, or even better, you
17 might want to consider taking the
18 alternate route which is over here. And
19 that technology exists. That signage
20 also, which we will talk about maybe
21 tomorrow, can be used almost in an AMBER
22 Alert style to let commuters also know
23 about dangers.

24 So I want to know what our plan
25 strategically is to take the signage that

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 we take for granted in our subways and
3 kind of modernize it to make it an
4 integrated part of our information
5 systems.

6 MR. CASEY: That's a good
7 point. Currently, we have GPS on all our
8 buses. We monitor their on-time
9 performance. In the future we have a
10 plan, so someone can go on the Internet
11 to check where the bus or train, the next
12 train is.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Not --

14 MR. CASEY: And the following
15 step is to put that out in the stations
16 and potentially the shelters.

17 (Bell rung.)

18 MR. CASEY: But I will tell
19 you, some of the other bus companies
20 around the nation that have done that
21 have turned it off, for a variety of
22 reasons. It wasn't working. But we will
23 still investigate that, because we think
24 that's critical for our customers.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 Madam President.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna:

4 You're welcome.

5 The Chair recognizes

6 Councilwoman Tasco.

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.

8 Good afternoon and welcome.

9 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon.

10 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Welcome to
11 your new position as General Manager, and
12 I appreciate your coming to Council to
13 meet with us as soon as you came on
14 board.

15 MR. CASEY: Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I do agree
17 with Councilman Jones that it seems that
18 our transit system has not been promoted
19 as user friendly, but we got to have a
20 bus, so let's just put it out there,
21 let's put some transportation on the
22 street, but to integrate it into the life
23 of our citizens, I'm encouraged that you
24 want to do that.

25 Just a point of information. I

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 hope on that list, Frances Jones, is the
3 transportation from the Lower Northeast
4 to Cheltenham Mall, because that was the
5 question we got. You got it on that
6 list?

7 MS. JONES: For new service?

8 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: For new
9 service. We asked about that some years
10 ago.

11 MS. JONES: Currently, it's not
12 on the list, but it is one that is under
13 discussion.

14 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay. We
15 have the Lower Northeast, Rising Sun,
16 Adams Avenue and East Oak Lane, and those
17 people, those individuals want
18 transportation over Cheltenham Avenue to
19 two malls, the Cedarbrook Mall and the
20 Cheltenham Mall, and then that will save
21 them on gas, but there's no public
22 transportation to get from one side to
23 the other. It would be -- because
24 there's a whole -- and I think we may be
25 in discussion with Cheltenham, because

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 they're working on a trend, and I think
3 that's in the discussion stages, too.

4 MS. JONES: The business
5 improvement district?

6 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Right.

7 MS. JONES: Yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: All right.
9 Thank you. Don't forget it.

10 The other thing, I want to just
11 go back to your testimony where you talk
12 about the passage of Act 44. Could you
13 give us a little more detail in terms of
14 that Act and what it really does and how
15 does it sustain you for years to come?

16 MR. CASEY: Well, Act 44, in
17 the past we used to be a line item in the
18 state budget, and year to year we were
19 relying on the Pennsylvania Legislature
20 to give us an increase in funds. Act 44
21 provided where most of the funds come
22 from the state sales tax and there's a
23 built-in growth to those funds, and
24 that's one of the reasons it has built-in
25 growth. Number one, it gave us what we

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 needed, but it also built in growth for
3 the system.

4 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay.

5 That was a good thing. Thank you.

6 That's all I wanted for the record.

7 Thank you very much.

8 MR. CASEY: Thank you.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you.

11 The Chair recognizes Councilman
12 Goode.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
14 Madam President.

15 Good afternoon, Mr. Casey,
16 Ms. Jones and the other gentleman at the
17 table.

18 Can you tell me what the status
19 of the lease/leaseback agreement is?

20 MR. CASEY: Recently, we
21 reinstituted conversations with the City
22 Solicitor's Office and had preliminary
23 discussions on that, but that's as far as
24 it is right now.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Not to be

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 funny, but I wasn't interested in the
3 conversation. I'm interested in whether
4 there is an agreement, because there was
5 an agreement that expired December 31,
6 2005. Then there was a two-year
7 agreement that extended that, which
8 expired December 31, 2007. So are we
9 actually under agreement or not?

10 MR. CASEY: My understanding,
11 it was extended to the end of this year,
12 2008.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: And when was
14 that done?

15 MR. CASEY: I don't know, but I
16 can get you that information.

17 COUNCILMAN GOODE: And who made
18 the decision?

19 MR. CASEY: For SEPTA I know
20 who made the decision. I'm not sure. I
21 assume it was the City Solicitor's
22 Office.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The original
24 lease/leaseback agreement had to be
25 approved by Council; is that correct?

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 MR. CASEY: I believe so, yes.

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: So at what
4 point do you expect that Council should
5 be involved in discussions or negotiation
6 with the lease/leaseback agreement?

7 I mean, at the end of the day,
8 there are different branches of
9 government. This is the legislative
10 branch of government, and we essentially
11 own, I'll use the term, roughly half of
12 the infrastructure, which technically is
13 not under agreement at this point. It
14 really doesn't make a whole lot of sense.
15 For instance, when we talk about any
16 number of different things, we own the
17 franchise rights, we own the Broad Street
18 Subway, I believe, but we own half of the
19 El. We own any number of different
20 things that could be revenue generators
21 for the City if we choose to change the
22 agreement in some way.

23 I don't see how we move forward
24 into the future under a new
25 Administration. I became fully aware of

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 the fact that the last Administration did
3 not want a new agreement. They didn't
4 want to take on that responsibility. And
5 if this Administration doesn't want to
6 take on that responsibility, at some
7 point Council has to, I think, intervene
8 in the process. Because we approved an
9 agreement in 1968. It expired three
10 years ago. We are not in agreement, yet
11 we own half the infrastructure. That
12 doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

13 MR. CASEY: If I can ask --
14 Rina Cutler is in the audience, if I
15 could ask her to follow up on that and
16 give you the status of where it is.

17 SEPTA has their own Board to
18 report to, and after we reach an
19 agreement, we'll have to have that
20 agreement approved by our Board, and
21 similar to the Administration, I assume
22 they have to bring that to Council.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay. Thank
24 you.

25 Thank you, Madam President.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

3 You're welcome.

4 The Chair recognizes Councilman
5 Clarke.

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
7 Madam President.

8 Good afternoon.

9 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon.

10 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I want to
11 ask you a question about contractual
12 discussions between Unisys, SEPTA/the
13 City and where we are as it relates to
14 our ability to use SEPTA's infrastructure
15 for the City's video surveillance
16 program, because I'm getting conflicting
17 reports.

18 MR. CASEY: SEPTA is more than
19 willing to deal with Unisys as far as
20 using our infrastructure. They have not
21 yet told us exactly where they want to
22 put it. My understanding is, there's a
23 site meeting next week to visit where
24 they and to identify where they want to
25 put the cameras, and based on that,

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 they'll design -- they'll put together a
3 design and we'll accept that approval.

4 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Is that the
5 information you're getting from your
6 people?

7 MR. CASEY: That's the
8 information I'm getting. There's a
9 meeting next week.

10 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: There's
11 actually a meeting today.

12 MR. CASEY: There's a site
13 meeting. The engineers are actually
14 going out with our engineers and visiting
15 the site and determining the actual
16 location where they're going to put the
17 cameras.

18 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So the
19 issue is relating to our contractual
20 relationship -- and I say "our" because
21 SEPTA is an agent for us in that
22 respect -- relating to the size of the
23 cameras, the interference with SEPTA
24 signals and all that involves.

25 MR. CASEY: Or even where

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 they're going, yes.

3 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Is all that
4 resolved?

5 MR. CASEY: Well, that's what
6 they're making the site visit for.
7 They're going to determine exactly where
8 the cameras will go.

9 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And you
10 anticipate that this should be done --
11 because SEPTA is the last agency. We got
12 an agreement with PECO. We're finalizing
13 our agreement with the Housing Authority,
14 and SEPTA has been the hold-out in
15 finalizing this agreement, and we really
16 need to be able to --

17 MR. CASEY: Yeah. We didn't
18 know where they wanted to put the
19 cameras, and I think that was the
20 problem. And, again, they came to us,
21 and we're going to have a site visit next
22 week with our engineers.

23 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.

24 MR. CASEY: That's the
25 information I'm --

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I'm going
3 to accept that answer from you because
4 I'm sure that's what you were told, but
5 Councilmembers, particularly in our
6 respective districts, were given
7 briefings on where the cameras were to go
8 quite some time ago, and if Unisys hasn't
9 shared that information with you, then
10 that's quite amazing.

11 MR. CASEY: Okay.

12 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I'll have
13 to find out why they didn't do that.

14 MR. CASEY: Okay. Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you.

16 Thank you, Madam President.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

18 You're welcome.

19 The Chair recognizes Councilman
20 Jones.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Someone that
22 you will know, Councilwoman Tasco, Gordon
23 Linton, was in my office today and gave
24 me a quote, which I wanted to share, and
25 it is that, Public transportation is the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 invisible resource that only becomes
3 visible when it doesn't occur, and I
4 agree with that. It's the thing we kind
5 of take for granted.

6 SEPTA is requesting a \$63
7 million allocation from the City of
8 Philadelphia; is that true?

9 MR. CASEY: That's correct.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Has there
11 been a strategic plan done that you can
12 share with us on how you're going to
13 spend that?

14 MR. CASEY: Well, it's part of
15 the operating -- it supports our
16 operating budget. Our operating budget
17 is \$1.0 billion. The \$63 million matches
18 state funds, and state funds have to be
19 matched on a 15 percent basis.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, I got
21 that part, but I'm talking about a
22 strategic plan. As we start talking
23 about issues of safety, as we start
24 talking about capital improvements, as we
25 start talking about replacement of

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 vehicles, I kind of want to put my arms
3 around or heads around a strategic plan
4 that talks about what I previously
5 mentioned, transforming our city into a
6 commuter town. That incorporates green
7 plan, that incorporates a whole wide view
8 of what we should be doing.

9 MR. CASEY: Okay. The \$63
10 million contributes to our operating
11 budget. That provides the day-to-day
12 services. It also provides the --
13 anything involved in running SEPTA on a
14 day-to-day basis. We also have a capital
15 budget plan that has the current -- the
16 2009 budget expenditure for capital
17 projects, but also has a projection in
18 future years, and that details the
19 projects that we will embark upon and
20 also vehicle procurement and other
21 issues, and that's subject to separate
22 budget hearings.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. In
24 your testimony, Page 1, Paragraph 6, you
25 talk about a \$710 million initiative to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 reconstruct six stations, guideways and
3 signals and communication systems. As of
4 today, is that project still on budget?

5 MR. CASEY: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: And --

7 MR. CASEY: As of today, yes.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are they on
9 schedule for completion?

10 MR. CASEY: We believe the
11 guideway will be completed by this
12 calendar year, and the only thing
13 remaining will be 63rd Street Station.
14 But after the guideway is completed,
15 there will be no more shutdowns per se,
16 and, again, we expect 63rd Street to be
17 completed by next spring.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Could you
19 say that again? Because the 153,000
20 people that are in my district are very
21 concerned about that completion date.

22 MR. CASEY: It is on schedule
23 and we're looking at next spring for 63rd
24 Street Station.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: I wanted to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 have that on the record.

3 One of the questions that I got
4 from one of my constituents was that you
5 guys issue a day pass, and as we start
6 talking about making mass transit a part
7 of our lives, he asked me to illustrate
8 this day pass and ask the question, why
9 is there a limit of eight rides as
10 opposed to unlimited rides as other
11 cities do?

12 MR. CASEY: Rich, you want to
13 answer that?

14 MR. BURNFIELD: As part of the
15 fair collection system, we have just
16 recently issued a request for interest
17 for a new fair collection system. As
18 part of that we will look at all fair
19 instruments, including the day pass, but
20 that's certainly a good point about the
21 limitation on the number of rides per day
22 and we will take a look at that,
23 Councilman.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: You issue
25 TransPasses to, I think, 50,000 public

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 school students?

3 MR. CASEY: Yes.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are they
5 available to all students or a portion
6 and are they also available to private
7 school students?

8 MR. CASEY: We sell them to the
9 School District. They distribute to the
10 people that qualify for them under the
11 Pennsylvania guidelines, and that
12 includes both public and private schools.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. The
14 Concourses, I understand that you, PATCO,
15 Center City District have entered into a
16 new agreement. Could you define for this
17 Council that agreement and what plans are
18 for the Concourse?

19 MR. CASEY: The agreement
20 provides for the day-to-day cleaning of
21 the Concourses from 8th Street to 18th
22 Street. The City of Philadelphia and
23 SEPTA pulled our resources to enter into
24 a contract with CCD. I believe PATCO was
25 part of that also, and CCD now does the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 day-to-day cleaning of the Concourse.
3 And if anyone has been there recently
4 versus last year, there's a marked
5 difference in the way that that Concourse
6 is maintained. It's quite an
7 improvement.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: We'll
9 reserve further questions about the
10 Concourse under the public safety portion
11 of review.

12 Thank you, Madam President.

13 MR. CASEY: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

15 You're welcome.

16 The Chair recognizes Councilman
17 Rizzo.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair.

20 First, an observation. I like
21 cars, I like trucks and buses, and I'm
22 kind of a person that pays a lot of
23 attention. I think the fleet is really
24 impressive. It's hard for me to believe
25 that a big city bus system can have the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 cleanliness. You always used to look at
3 the UPS trucks and say, boy, I've never
4 seen a dirty one, even in a snowstorm,
5 but I think you guys really need a
6 compliment on the appearance of our
7 fleet.

8 MR. CASEY: Thank you very
9 much.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It really
11 does look nice.

12 MR. CASEY: Thank you very
13 much.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The other
15 issue -- and, Madam Chair, this isn't
16 about security. This is just a point
17 that I'd like to make.

18 Is there anything you think you
19 could do to help the Philadelphia Police
20 Department? Our police officers, from
21 what I understand, are dispatched when
22 there is the need for a ticket or a
23 vehicle to be relocated in a bus stop.
24 Why couldn't our radio communication
25 center transfer that call to SEPTA police

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 and since it's your bus stop and it's
3 impeding the flow of a bus making a turn
4 in Center City, that SEPTA police be
5 deployed to deal with that rather than
6 tying up a Philadelphia police officer?
7 As you know, in some cases at different
8 times of the day, they're very limited,
9 and if you guys -- if SEPTA could help
10 out with that to take a little bit of
11 that away from the Philadelphia police,
12 it would be appreciated.

13 MR. CASEY: We'll look into
14 that. Jim Jordan from our Police
15 Department and Safety and Security
16 Department is here.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: SEPTA police
18 officers can issue --

19 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: (Witness
20 talking without microphone.)

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: You need to
22 come up here and identify yourself for
23 the record.

24 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: Pat Nowakowski
25 with SEPTA. I'm in charge of operations

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 at SEPTA.

3 One of the things that we have
4 done in conjunction with the City is our
5 street supervisors. We don't even have
6 to tie up our police officers. Our
7 street supervisors are authorized to
8 ticket vehicles that are parked in bus
9 stops.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They can
11 write a parking ticket?

12 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Wow, that's
14 interesting. A street supervisor, like a
15 Parking Authority employee?

16 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: Yeah, but
17 they're SEPTA supervisors.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But
19 sometimes, honestly, it gets a little
20 ugly and the presence of a police officer
21 is sometimes, I think, better for some
22 situations where you --

23 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: The
24 dispatchers for both our police and for
25 our street supervisors are co-existent up

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 in our control center right next to each
3 other. So if a street supervisor runs
4 into a problem, he can radio the command
5 center. The command center can dispatch
6 an officer there to assist.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But my point
8 is, when the complaint comes in, it
9 normally comes in to Philadelphia Police
10 9-1-1, and I don't think the policy
11 exists where when they receive that call,
12 that they say, Okay, this is a complaint
13 about a vehicle parked in a SEPTA bus
14 stop, that that call is dispatched
15 normally to a Center City police car.
16 Could you consider having Philadelphia
17 Police like they do now with the state
18 police, if you call 9-1-1 and there's a
19 disabled auto on the Expressway, they
20 hand it right to the Pennsylvania State
21 Police. Why couldn't that call be handed
22 right to your Police Department and dealt
23 with?

24 MR. NOWAKOWSKI: I think that
25 could.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 And Jim, you --

3 MR. CASEY: This is a tag team
4 operation. I'm sorry.

5 MR. JORDAN: Good afternoon,
6 Madam President. My name is Jim Jordan.
7 I'm the head of Public Safety for SEPTA.

8 Councilman, we are working with
9 Philadelphia Police. Both of us have
10 within the last year purchased a new but
11 corollary computer-assisted dispatch
12 system. We are now trying to
13 interconnect the two so that exactly what
14 you're talking about will happen
15 seamlessly, that anything, not simply
16 parking problems, but any 9-1-1 call or
17 any Philadelphia police dispatch that
18 affects our system, we will have realtime
19 simultaneous knowledge and we'll be
20 better able to work with them.

21 Right now that hasn't happened
22 in the past, but I am hoping within the
23 next few months we will have that
24 technology up and running so that -- and
25 likewise, Philadelphia Police Department

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 will be able to track our police
3 officers, and that way, we can further,
4 among other things, assist in supporting
5 each other in any need.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, thank
7 you for that. The reason I bring the
8 question is that a police officer
9 notified me that he works here in Center
10 City, that the majority of his day on
11 some days is the fact that he's
12 responding -- and I know that SEPTA must
13 have a policy, because I was walking down
14 15th Street and a bus was trying to make
15 a turn and there was a car parked at the
16 Academy House. It's a spot where there's
17 a lot of -- that bus driver would not
18 back that bus up until a supervisor
19 showed up, and the place was gridlocked
20 and the officer said to me, This is what
21 I deal all day, and he said, Who just
22 rode by? The SEPTA police, and here I am
23 dealing with a SEPTA bus.

24 So if you could fix that, that
25 would be appreciated, because I'd rather

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 see our people dealing with things that
3 your people don't deal with and your
4 folks dealing with the things that they
5 are to deal with.

6 MR. JORDAN: Certainly.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The
9 Chair recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you, Madam President.

12 Good afternoon.

13 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I have
15 a photo that I received from our clean-up
16 last Saturday. I will tell you that Joe
17 Casey was on 52nd Street, along with
18 myself -- Frances was the photographer --
19 picking up mounds of trash. And that
20 takes a lot, because, as you know, we
21 have our challenges. It's the longest
22 strip in West Philadelphia, but it's
23 certainly fraught with problems, and this
24 Market Street Elevated Project has just
25 kind of helped to exacerbate the myriad

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 problems we have.

3 But we say thank you, and I
4 told him he's the first head of SEPTA who
5 has ever been hands-on, and we thank him.

6 Thank you all in that regard.

7 MR. CASEY: Thank you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We
9 look forward to working with you. We
10 have a two-page outline by list of
11 departments that need to be involved, and
12 we've already started our plans for the
13 ending of this project and what happens,
14 from vending carts to facades to new
15 businesses. We've had over 40 businesses
16 close as a result of this. So we've got
17 many, many issues to deal with.

18 But certainly we want to -- I
19 mentioned it to Frances in passing, but
20 we really will be in touch with you about
21 a series of meetings dealing with lots,
22 dealing with parking, with vendors, store
23 owners, patrons and all that that entails
24 and involves. So we'll be in touch with
25 regarding having a series of meetings to

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 deal with how we get from here to the end
3 of that program.

4 But we do thank you for
5 choosing 52nd Street as the site and for
6 your hard work. Frances wouldn't get in
7 the picture, though, on Saturday.

8 Thank you, Madam President.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
10 You're welcome.

11 MR. CASEY: Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you, Mr. Casey. Thank you all.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
15 Ms. Jones, I'm going to ask you a
16 question because I think you're familiar
17 with Woodland Avenue Trolley Track
18 Renewal Project from 60th to 68th. When
19 will that project commence and when do
20 you anticipate that it will be completed?

21 MS. JONES: Frances Jones,
22 Assistant General Manager of Government
23 Affairs at SEPTA.

24 We expect the project to begin
25 preliminarily in May, and that is the

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.
2 prep work where we will be immobilizing
3 equipment, and we expect it to be
4 completed, it's my understanding,
5 sometime before the beginning of
6 September. So the end of the summer,
7 September, beginning of September. It's
8 approximately an 11-week project.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.
10 I am hoping that we would be able to
11 either expedite or complete the project
12 within the time frame that you're telling
13 me, because I certainly don't want the
14 businessmen in that community or myself
15 to experience what Councilwoman Blackwell
16 has experienced in her district. And I
17 know that, Ms. Jones, I believe it was on
18 May 27th, I did forward you a letter,
19 along with petitions signed by the
20 businesspeople along the corridor that I
21 mentioned.

22 MS. JONES: That is correct,
23 and, in fact, we have another community
24 meeting set up for April 24th where we
25 will again talk to the community about

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 the very specific areas, how we're going
3 to phase in a two-block area, and that
4 meeting will be at the police district at
5 65th and Woodland.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And
7 when is that?

8 MS. JONES: April 24th.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you very much.

11 MS. JONES: You're very
12 welcome.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Are
14 there any questions or comments from
15 members of the Committee?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: None?
18 Therefore, I thank you.

19 MR. CASEY: Thank you very
20 much.

21 MS. JONES: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And
23 this Committee will stand in recess until
24 Tuesday, April the 15th at 10:00 a.m.

25 Thank you.

1 4/9/08 - WHOLE - BILL 080022, etc.

2 (Committee of the Whole

3 adjourned at 3:00 p.m.)

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