

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILMAN JIM HARRITY
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

ALSO PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS

BILL: 230510
RESOLUTION: 230640

1

- - -

2

COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

3

morning, everyone. This is the

4

public hearing of the Committee on

5

Public Safety regarding Resolution

6

No. 230640 and Bill No. 230510.

7

Before we get started, I'd like to

8

recognize Mr. Anthony Glass to read

9

an important required announcement.

10

THE CLERK: Thank you,

11

Mr. Chairman.

12

I understand that state law

13

currently requires that the following

14

announcement be made at the beginning

15

of every remote public hearing as

16

follows: Due to the current public

17

health emergency, City Council

18

Committees are currently meeting

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remotely. We are using Microsoft

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Teams to make these remote hearings

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possible.

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Instructions for how the

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testimony at public hearings of

25

Council Committees are included in

1 the public hearing notices that are
2 published in The Daily News, Inquirer
3 and Legal Intelligencer prior to the
4 hearings and can also be found on
5 PHLCouncil.com.

6 Everyone who has been invited
7 to the meeting to testify should be
8 aware that this public hearing is
9 being recorded. Because the hearing
10 is public, participants and viewers
11 have no reasonable expectation of
12 privacy. By continuing to be in the
13 meeting, you are consenting to being
14 recorded.

15 Additionally, prior to
16 Councilmember Jones recognizing
17 Members for the questions or comments
18 they have for the witnesses, I will
19 note for the record at this time we
20 will use the chat feature available
21 in Microsoft Teams to allow Members
22 to signify that they wish to be
23 recognized. In order to comply with
24 the Sunshine Act, the chat feature
25 must only be used for this purpose.

1 Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
3 Mr. Glass. Now, can we take the roll
4 to establish a quorum. And will
5 Members please say a few words so
6 that your image will appear on the
7 screen.

8 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
9 Councilmember Gauthier.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
11 morning, Mr. Chair and colleagues.
12 Present.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
14 morning.

15 THE CLERK: Councilmember
16 Harrity.

17 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Good
18 morning, colleagues. I am alive so
19 far.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's good
21 to know, Member Harrity. Good to
22 know.

23 THE CLERK: Councilmember
24 Lozada.

25 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Good

1 morning, everyone. I'm present.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

3 morning.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember

5 Thomas.

6 (No response.)

7 THE CLERK: Councilmember

8 Brooks.

9 (No response.)

10 THE CLERK: Vice-Chairman

11 Johnson.

12 (No response.)

13 THE CLERK: And, Chairman

14 Jones.

15 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good

16 morning, everyone. Present.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

18 morning, Member Johnson.

19 A quorum has been established

20 so we will now proceed. Mr. Glass,

21 can you read the title of the

22 resolution to be heard today.

23 THE CLERK: Absolutely,

24 Mr. Chairman. I'd also like to note

25 for the record that Councilmember

1 Phillips is present at today's
2 hearing as well.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
4 Phillips.

5 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, the
6 resolution being heard before the
7 Committee today is Resolution No.
8 230640, authorizing the Committee on
9 Public Safety to hold a hearing to
10 explore solutions to ongoing
11 challenges facing the 911 unified
12 call center and the Philadelphia
13 Police Department's investigation
14 into the police response to a 911
15 call about the first victim in the
16 July 2023 mass shooting in
17 Kingsessing.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: I want
19 to -- before we recognize the author
20 of the resolution, I just want to
21 commend her for staying laser-focused
22 on the issues relating not only to
23 that day but to the 911 process in
24 general. I remember going on a tour
25 of the old 911 facility with now

1 Mayor-elect Cherelle Parker, who dove
2 in to take notice of what some of the
3 members of the 911 call response
4 system were working under, and I'm
5 glad that you've picked up that baton
6 and have moved this issue forward.

7 And with that, I recognize
8 Member Gauthier.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
10 you, Mr. Chair. And I was on that
11 tour as well, and it was really you
12 who enlightened me to know how this
13 system even works in the first place,
14 so thank you very much for your
15 leadership too.

16 911 is the bedrock of the
17 City's entire emergency apparatus and
18 the first step for our most sacred
19 and solemn responsibility of keeping
20 Philadelphians safe. It was with
21 this in mind that more than three
22 years ago this Committee zeroed in on
23 many of the challenges experienced by
24 911 call centers nationwide,
25 including here in Philadelphia,

1 understaffing, low morale, poor
2 retention and recruitment struggles.
3 City Council and the Police
4 Department have been working together
5 to tackle many of these issues, but
6 much work remains. Our ongoing gun
7 violence emergency means that 911
8 dispatch experiences an elevated call
9 volume and that residents need
10 emergency services more often than
11 ever before. Philadelphians need to
12 know that when they call 911 they
13 will receive help every single time.
14 Because when people call 911, they
15 are likely experiencing one of the
16 most traumatizing and scary moments
17 of their entire lives and we need to
18 make sure that they feel supported
19 and get the help they need.

20 When the City fails to
21 successfully respond to an emergency,
22 neighbors lose faith in the City's
23 ability to keep them safe, making it
24 harder for us to combat gun violence
25 and eroding the progress we've made

1 to rebuild the essential bond between
2 the community and the police. This
3 summer we saw how problems with 911
4 can cause catastrophic consequences.

5 On July 2nd, a Kingsessing
6 resident called 911 after hearing
7 gunshots. A 911 dispatcher
8 erroneously logged the crime scene as
9 North 56th Street rather than South
10 56th Street and deployed officers to
11 a location three miles away from
12 where Mr. Joseph Wamah, Jr. lay dead.
13 44 hours later Mr. Wamah's alleged
14 killer returned to the scene and
15 murdered four more residents,
16 including a 15-year-old boy and
17 wounded two more in the deadliest
18 shooting since the Lex Street
19 massacre. This botched 911 response
20 cost the Police Department 44 hours
21 it could have used to investigate
22 Mr. Wamah's death before the shooter
23 allegedly returned to the same spot
24 and committed four more murders.

25 In the wake of this shattering

1 mistake, then Commissioner Outlaw
2 pledged to conduct a thorough
3 investigation and take action to
4 ensure nothing like this ever happens
5 again. And I look forward to hearing
6 the results of these efforts today.
7 I went to Joseph Wamah's funeral as
8 well as the funerals of some of the
9 other mass shooting victims and it
10 broke my heart to see families
11 grieving the loss of a loved one
12 enduring even more pain, pain
13 unintentionally inflicted by the
14 City.

15 I want to make it crystal
16 clear that the goal of today's
17 hearing is not to shame our
18 hardworking 911 dispatchers, many of
19 whom are Black women, or the Police
20 Department. Rather we strive to
21 fulfill Council's obligation to give
22 our constituents the accountability
23 and service they deserve and to
24 provide the Police Department with
25 the resources they need to respond to

1 every 911 call quickly and
2 successfully.

3 I want to thank everyone
4 participating in today's hearing for
5 their partnership and collaboration,
6 especially Majority Leader Jones and
7 my fellow members of the Public
8 Safety Committee. Thank you so much.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
10 Member. I recall us sharing a room
11 with District Attorney Krasner as we
12 reviewed those audio tapes and the
13 actual tapes from the shootings, and
14 all of us were taken aback by the
15 tragedy that happened. But what I
16 remembered most is that people didn't
17 sit in that room pointing fingers.
18 Everybody wanted sincerely to point
19 to solutions. And I think that is
20 the spirit of what this hearing is
21 today, how can we avoid that ever
22 happening again and what do we need
23 to put in place so that it doesn't,
24 and that I think is always the best
25 way to approach the imperfect in an

1 effort to make it better.

2 So with that, are there any
3 other members of the Public Safety
4 Committee that wishes to comment on
5 this resolution at this time?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hearing
8 none, Mr. Glass, can you announce the
9 first panel to testify.

10 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
11 Our first witness will be Teresa
12 Armstrong.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES:
14 Ms. Armstrong, are you there?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN JONES:
17 Ms. Armstrong?

18 MS. ARMSTRONG: Yes, I'm here.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.

20 MS. ARMSTRONG: Good morning.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
22 morning. Please state your name for
23 the record and begin your testimony.

24 MS. ARMSTRONG: Okay. My name
25 is Teresa Armstrong and what I have

1 to present is actually an incident
2 that occurred just yesterday, last
3 night actually where my son's car was
4 hit and the same car that hit his car
5 crashed into a building and we called
6 911. The problem with that is that
7 we sat and we waited for the police
8 because they said the police will be
9 there. So we waited and we waited.

10 After 20 minutes, we called
11 again and we were able to speak to a
12 dispatcher. And the dispatcher was
13 kind of cold, like when my son
14 explained the situation, what had
15 occurred, it was a male, he seemed
16 kind of disinterested. So after that
17 call, we waited yet another 20, 30
18 minutes waiting outside in
19 30-something degree weather, we
20 waited. So my son called again.

21 He called the 18th District.
22 That's what he was recommended to do,
23 so he called the 18th District. The
24 person seemed like they were
25 interested, at least writing a report

1 or something, so they put him on hold
2 for a very long period of time. And
3 then when they reconnected with my
4 son, they stated for him to either --
5 and this was after 9:00. It had to
6 be about 10:00 -- after 10:00, close
7 to 11 o'clock last night, that he can
8 come to the police station and, you
9 know, it was already late.

10 And the person presented
11 themselves like they were going to do
12 the report, but after they put him on
13 hold and came back, they like changed
14 their mind and they just wanted to
15 get him off the phone. And they said
16 call 911 again. But when my son
17 called 911 again, they stated that
18 someone was dispatched. We sat in
19 the car for over an hour in the cold.
20 No one ever showed up at all, no one.
21 So we ended up giving up, you know,
22 in dealing with the situation which
23 we're dealing with right now, but
24 also in recent past because I have
25 had neighbors that tend to be a

1 nuisance blasting music and things of
2 that sort and I had called 911 where
3 no one had showed up.

4 And not only that, when I
5 would call 911 it would take -- I
6 don't know, it would take so much
7 time for someone to answer. I mean
8 that's a problem. That's still a
9 problem. And when they say, well,
10 we'll send someone out there, and a
11 lot of times they're like it's no big
12 deal like, okay, we'll send someone
13 out, kind of cold, you know, and that
14 also is an issue.

15 And then when the police would
16 come -- this was recent, I have a
17 Ring camera where I recorded when the
18 police would show up -- they would
19 pull out in front of the address and
20 just drive off, don't even get out of
21 the car. It was clear on the video
22 that I have that the noise, you can
23 hear it all outside. They never got
24 out the car. They just drove off.
25 It's gotten to the point where I

1 don't feel that I'm going to have any
2 help when I call 911. Will they
3 come, won't they come? Does someone
4 have to be murdered which did occur
5 next door to me, someone was
6 murdered. Police did come. It took
7 a little bit of time, but police did
8 come. It was a murder right next to
9 where I was sitting in the house
10 right next door.

11 So it's like I have no faith
12 that the police are going to show up.
13 The dispatchers seem to be like it's
14 no big deal, like it's just okay,
15 hurry up, get off the phone, you
16 know, type of attitude, type of tone.
17 Yet there are a few that are
18 concerned, and I'm sure they dispatch
19 to whoever that's nearby. But the
20 police don't seem to show up.

21 I mean, I don't know if
22 there's another crime going on. I
23 don't hear any police sirens racing
24 to anything so I don't know what is
25 going on. And I don't feel safe. I

1 don't feel safe because what if I was
2 in a predicament with someone who's
3 about to harm me, shoot me or stab me
4 and I'm calling 911 and no one shows
5 up. No one answers the phone.

6 But what I would like to see
7 happen, you know, for things to kind
8 of return back to how it was, when
9 you dial 911, someone immediately
10 picked up the phone and they would
11 ask, they would dispatch someone, the
12 police would be there, but that has
13 not been the case. That has not been
14 the case. I don't feel safe. I
15 really don't. It could be daytime.
16 I don't feel safe in my own community
17 because the police are just not
18 there.

19 You call 911, it's like wow.
20 No action, no anything. And I'm
21 very, very concerned about that. So
22 I mean I have different instances
23 that have occurred, but these are the
24 main ones. Just with the fact that
25 no one's answering the phone, at one

1 time I had to call like three or four
2 times just to get someone to pick up.
3 And I'm like, this is crazy. I live
4 in West Philly where it's shootings
5 and crime occurs on a regular basis
6 around here.

7 And I know there's usually
8 police over at Sayre High School.
9 They be sometimes in the parking lot.
10 I know there's usually a police
11 officer in the vehicle up on 60th and
12 Market Street and I know they have
13 their hands full. But stuff happens
14 not only there, it happens all around
15 this whole area, stuff is going on.
16 And people dialing 911 and the police
17 don't show up. I don't know what is
18 going on. I have no idea, but I have
19 a sense that I'm not safe because
20 someone -- the police may not show up
21 or maybe they don't -- it feels like
22 there's no care for the citizens.

23 For me as an individual, but I
24 believe in citizens as a whole in
25 this community, the police should be

1 an entity that you can count on for
2 emergencies, for safety.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.
4 Does that conclude your comments?

5 MS. ARMSTRONG: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Let me
7 first say that we are sorry on behalf
8 of the City of Philadelphia for your
9 experience, and that a part of why
10 we're having this hearing is to try
11 to get clarification on how 911, how
12 police respond to various levels of
13 calls that might require different
14 levels of intensity.

15 But I can tell you from the
16 tour that we had over with the 911
17 dispatchers is that they do care.
18 They care enough to come to work,
19 they care enough to do so during
20 COVID. But what we have to do is
21 figure out where in this system that
22 we can be more responsive to your
23 calls and your needs. So I just want
24 to thank you for your testimony.

25 MS. ARMSTRONG: Right.

1 Thank --

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
3 so much.

4 MS. ARMSTRONG: You're
5 welcome.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Glass.

7 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
8 next witness is Maria Rodriguez.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES:
10 Ms. Rodriguez, are you there, are you
11 connected?

12 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Am I
13 connected? Maria Rodriguez here.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, we
15 can hear.

16 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can you hear
17 me?

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, we
19 can hear you. Good morning.

20 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning.
21 Can you state your name again for the
22 record and please begin your
23 testimony.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. My
25 name is Maria Rodriguez. I'm the

1 daughter of Wilfredo Rodriguez and my
2 predicament occurred on July 16,
3 2023. Apparently my dad lives alone.
4 He is a hard-working man and needed
5 help. Apparently he was going
6 through a stroke and in a span of
7 three days for the grace of God, he
8 kept on trying to call 911 with no
9 response. Since he was having a
10 stroke, he wasn't able to talk or
11 communicate. But on his cell phone
12 record, I have an indication of 28
13 calls done by him to 911 and there
14 was never a callback or at least a
15 wellness check done in his behalf.

16 By the graces of God and a
17 miracle we actually still have him
18 here with us severely brain damaged
19 due to his stroke and the lack of
20 attention and not having medical care
21 as he needed on time, but he is here.
22 It's just so stressful thinking and
23 knowing that, okay, he's calling
24 asking for help living in this house
25 alone and not being able to get any

1 type of response, no one knocking on
2 his door.

3 I mean, I know and I
4 understand it wasn't a landline. It
5 was a cell phone he was calling from.
6 But on top of that, it wasn't -- I
7 mean it's registered to him and to
8 the home. I don't know if there's a
9 possibility that it can be traced and
10 that you could have done a wellness
11 check on him or anything on that
12 behalf. But it's sad to say he's a
13 63-year-old man and disabled right
14 now due to that. And now, he's in
15 the care of his loving family.

16 But it's a little hard to
17 understand that so many calls were
18 made out and he never received a call
19 back or at least a wellness check to
20 check on the home or to see his
21 status. You know, ever since then
22 it's in and out of rehabs. It's sad.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm so
24 sorry. I'm so sorry for what you
25 went through and what he went

1 through. And I guess one of the
2 questions we will ask is what is the
3 procedure for people who might be
4 under duress that cannot verbally
5 respond and what does that trigger by
6 way of a response by 911 and by the
7 Philadelphia police? And we will ask
8 that question on your behalf.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so
10 much. I mean anything would have
11 just helped if he would have got
12 medical attention on time, so I
13 appreciate it.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.
15 Thank you for your testimony.
16 Mr. Glass.

17 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
18 Councilmember Gauthier would like to
19 be recognized.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
21 Gauthier.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I just
23 wanted to thank Ms. Rodriguez for
24 coming to share her testimony. I'm
25 so sorry that happened to your

1 father, and I can only imagine how
2 painful it must be to think about
3 your loved one there for three days
4 calling for help and not getting
5 help. I'm really sorry that happened
6 and I appreciate you coming to share
7 that testimony even though it must be
8 quite painful.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: It is. Thank
10 you so much, the (inaudible).

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
12 Member Gauthier. Yeah, can't
13 imagine.

14 Mr. Glass.

15 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
16 next witness is Nyesha Chapman.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES:
18 Ms. Chapman, are you connected?

19 MS. CHAPMAN: Yes. Good
20 morning. I'm here.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
22 morning, Ms. Chapman. Can you state
23 your name for the record and please
24 begin your testimony.

25 MS. CHAPMAN: Sure. My name

1 is Nyasha Chapman. Just wanted to
2 just recognize and say good morning
3 to Councilmembers Jones, Gauthier,
4 Harrity, Phillips, Lozada and
5 Johnson. I work with many of you on
6 a different level. So I'm glad to be
7 here just to testify. So thank you,
8 Councilmember Gauthier, for inviting
9 me to this Committee hearing today.

10 So I just wanted to, one,
11 start off by saying I'm also a public
12 servant within the City of
13 Philadelphia so I do understand the
14 roles and responsibilities of the
15 police and 911 and dispatch. And I
16 just want to say that on my behalf I
17 thank them for their service and what
18 they do every single day because we
19 know it's not an easy job and an easy
20 task.

21 So for me, my testimony just
22 involves basically I've called 911
23 several times. I have a special
24 needs daughter. I have a daughter
25 with diabetes, so I've dealt with

1 911. They've been very responsive in
2 the past as far as coming out, making
3 sure that they answer the phone. But
4 in July of 2021, I actually
5 witnessed -- we were sitting outside
6 of my home. It was right around July
7 the 4th, maybe the day after. And we
8 were all sitting outside and we
9 witnessed a shooting that happened,
10 literally occurred right across the
11 street from my home.

12 Someone was shot and I called
13 911. Everybody kind of went in the
14 house. Don't know who called 911
15 either, but I know I called 911 and
16 literally the phone just rang. And
17 that's never happened to me, to the
18 point that I had to actually look at
19 my phone to make sure that I did call
20 911 because I was not familiar with
21 911 not answering the phone within
22 the first or second ring. So I did
23 let the phone ring for about possibly
24 45 seconds to a minute, and then I
25 ended up hanging up because no one

1 was answering the phone.

2 So I did call back again and
3 after another about 30 to 45 seconds,
4 someone did answer the phone and I
5 was able to report the shooting. The
6 problem with that is I was told, oh,
7 you shouldn't have hung up because
8 then you get put to the back of the
9 queue. Well, as a resident and a
10 citizen I don't know that
11 information. I just know that I'm
12 calling 911 and I'm calling because
13 there's an incident that literally
14 just occurred in front of my door and
15 I'm trying to be as helpful as I can
16 to the person who got shot.

17 Now, the police did show up
18 within the next couple of minutes.
19 They did get the gentleman, they did
20 the scoop and run technique. But
21 unfortunately, that person they
22 passed away from their injuries. So
23 my testimony is just basically to
24 state that as a citizen that's called
25 911, like I said many times I am used

1 to someone picking up the phone again
2 on the first and second ring. And if
3 you're not familiar with that
4 situation when you're dealing with
5 someone who's literally shot and
6 bleeding in front of you and you want
7 to try to make sure you're trying to
8 save their life, it's already a
9 stressful situation. You're already
10 upset.

11 You don't want to be on the
12 phone and literally trying to figure
13 out did I call the right number.
14 That is not the instance that you
15 want to be in. So I just want to
16 make sure that I am in support of
17 whatever Council is going to do to
18 try to rectify the situation, whether
19 it's additional training, additional
20 support, but making sure that no one
21 is in that situation again with their
22 loved one if they're in an emergency
23 situation.

24 As a mother and calling 911
25 for my daughter, time is of the

1 essence and you want to make sure
2 that you are getting a response as
3 quickly as possible. So anything
4 that I can do to assist, anything
5 that I can do to help out. But
6 again, my support is with Council to
7 make sure that this bill, this
8 resolution goes through and that we
9 again have direct response when
10 anyone that's calling 911 for
11 whatever reason.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
13 so much for your testimony and thank
14 you for your advocacy in other areas
15 through --

16 MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- our
18 government. We appreciate you. And
19 thank you for taking the time to
20 share those experiences.

21 MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Glass.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
24 Councilmember Lozada would like to be
25 recognized.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member

2 Lozada, please begin.

3 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes,

4 Councilman. Thank you so much.

5 Thank you, Nyesha, for your
6 testimony. I've also been on the
7 receiving end of calling 911 and not
8 receiving a response as well. And
9 so, I think that part of our line of
10 questioning as we get through this
11 process today should be the education
12 around the process of 911 and what
13 people should do and expect in
14 situations like this.

15 When they are confronted with
16 sometimes really scary situations
17 where they don't know what is
18 happening not just to their loved one
19 but to a neighbor and, you know, how
20 do they respond to a system that is
21 just ringing, I think that we need to
22 note, right, that if -- because I
23 wasn't aware either until just now
24 that if I hang up, I'm going to get
25 pushed to the end of the line

1 regardless of what my emergency
2 situation is. And if that's the
3 case, right, is it the case where you
4 feel like your situation should be
5 elevated. And if you drop on the
6 call, you're actually sent to the
7 bottom of the line. Is that a fact,
8 and if it is not, then can we make
9 sure that we clear that as well as
10 what do we do moving forward to
11 educate community residents about
12 situations like that.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Those are
14 good questions that we will have for
15 the Police Department. I concur that
16 what happens if you have to hang up
17 because you're under duress in a
18 domestic situation or someone has you
19 hostage and you have to hang up, what
20 is the response to inquire as to your
21 well-being after you hang up? And
22 so, those are systems, analysis that
23 we want to take a look at. So thank
24 you for that, Member Lozada.

25 Mr. Glass.

1 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
2 next witness is Walt Webber.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Webber,
4 are you connected?

5 MR. WEBBER: Yes, I am.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
7 so very much for your patience.
8 Please state your name for the record
9 and begin your testimony.

10 MR. WEBBER: My name is Walter
11 Webber and I'm a resident of West
12 Philadelphia. And I'd like to say
13 thank you very much for the
14 invitation to testify today,
15 Councilman Jones. We've met several
16 times. Thank you to Councilmember
17 Gauthier for your work on this issue
18 and you are my Councilperson, so
19 thank you for my invitation. Thank
20 you to the Committee for addressing
21 this important issue.

22 I'm a resident of West
23 Philadelphia, and on my block
24 particularly we have been affected by
25 all the looting that's happened three

1 times now in 2020, again later in
2 2020 and then again on October 2nd of
3 this year. At the end of my block a
4 lot of businesses were looted and
5 destroyed. My block ends at 52nd
6 Street, so a lot of the businesses
7 they were unfortunately dismantled
8 several times. I don't know how
9 those people are holding on. God
10 bless them.

11 But the most recent issue that
12 I had contacted Councilmember
13 Gauthier's office about was on
14 October 2nd. And having been through
15 this two times before, I'm a parent,
16 I have two young children at home, we
17 live on a block that's mostly made up
18 of families. There are a lot of
19 children around, longtime residents.
20 And all of a sudden you can hear
21 something's happening. I go outside
22 to check out what's happening and I
23 see 15 guys with hoods and masks on
24 going down my block. Some of them
25 with crowbars. Some of them with, I

1 don't know if they had other weapons,
2 you can't tell. It's nighttime.

3 Within 10 minutes, those
4 people are at the end of my block
5 trying to break into stores. More
6 and more people are showing up, cars
7 full of people are showing up and
8 parking and getting out, as if
9 they're going to the store to go
10 shopping. They brought boxes and
11 other things with them, so we called
12 911. It was probably around
13 11:00 p.m. Very difficult to get
14 through. There was a lot going on
15 that night in the City. I understand
16 that.

17 Eventually we did get through
18 and the dispatchers sounded a little
19 bit in duress or whatever. I
20 understand. But we were in what I
21 felt like was an emergency situation
22 that needed a response quickly
23 because a quick police presence on
24 52nd Street would have pretty much
25 stopped anything from happening.

1 Instead over the course of the next
2 two hours I continued to call 911.
3 We received almost no police
4 response. It took more than two
5 hours for even one officer to arrive
6 at the scene.

7 There was a brief moment when
8 one officer did pull up and park
9 outside of the store so everyone just
10 kind of dissipated. And then as soon
11 as they pulled off, everything
12 started again. People were loading
13 their cars like they were checking
14 out from a regular store. I mean, no
15 one was in a hurry. It was very
16 lackadaisical. Clearly no one felt
17 that there was any chance of getting
18 in any trouble.

19 However, we called 911 around
20 11 o'clock, maybe 11:15 or so. This
21 is continuing to build. And when we
22 spoke to the dispatchers, they
23 started to get kind of combative with
24 us about why are you calling us, what
25 do you want me to do about it. One

1 of the dispatchers said to my wife
2 that this is a very dangerous
3 situation, what do you want the
4 police to do about it, as if it was a
5 crazy idea to ask the police to
6 respond to this situation.

7 Several times different
8 dispatchers told us what do you want
9 us to do about it. And I understand
10 it's frustrating, you're the
11 dispatcher, you're putting the
12 reports in, you're not the one
13 driving the car, you can't get in
14 your car and drive out there. I
15 understand that very much and I
16 imagine for them, there are things
17 about their job that is very
18 frustrating.

19 It was -- we were in a
20 distressed situation. I had locked
21 the doors to my house, closed the
22 curtains. And I had basically gotten
23 all my family upstairs and prepared
24 for the worse, that maybe the crowd
25 will get crazy and start breaking

1 cars, trying to break into houses. I
2 have no idea where this is going.
3 This happened to us twice previously.
4 The first one was the early 2021.
5 And then the second one, the same
6 thing, my daughter was 2 days old.
7 She came home on Friday night -- no,
8 she came home on Saturday during the
9 day and Monday during the day is when
10 the riot happened. And again, at
11 that time same thing, no response.
12 Calling 911, no response. And it
13 makes us, you know, it makes us feel
14 as if our community isn't valued or
15 our community is not important.

16 We turn on the local news and
17 I see the police having a press
18 conference saying, oh, everything is
19 under control, Center City has been
20 secured, there's nothing to worry
21 about. And they're standing there,
22 and literally I'm watching a guy
23 carry a mattress out of a store and
24 load it into his car while two other
25 guys are prying open another door to

1 a business. And it's as if no one in
2 the City even knew this was
3 happening, but we were calling 911
4 over and over again. And I imagine
5 the owners of these businesses and I
6 imagine other residents were also
7 very concerned about this and calling
8 911.

9 Meanwhile we're essentially
10 trapped in our houses because who
11 knows how quickly this could turn
12 bad. Also, very concerning was
13 fires. I was very concerned that one
14 of them would -- someone would either
15 by accident or on purpose light one
16 of the businesses on fire which would
17 then sweep down our whole block and
18 we would have no way to leave.

19 The late 2020 incident that
20 happened in October ended with the
21 giant truck trying to drive through
22 the police line. I believe several
23 officers were injured in that
24 incident and then that truck crashed
25 at the end of my block. And then

1 that essentially ended -- at least
2 the police response came because of
3 that. But the next morning as I was
4 leaving the house to take my now
5 3-day-old daughter to her first
6 doctor's appointment, they were
7 towing the truck from the end of my
8 block past my car as I'm getting a
9 3-day-old baby into the car to go to
10 her doctor's appointment.

11 Nonetheless, the response time
12 has -- we've had other issues on our
13 block with, as someone else said, a
14 nuisance house. There were a lot
15 of -- over the summer a lot of young
16 kids gathering, teenagers out past
17 curfew. These people were definitely
18 up to no good but being loud, being
19 crazy. I know that one of them was
20 up to no good because he was already
21 wearing an ankle bracelet. But
22 calling 911 about that, they never
23 dispatched anyone. No one would ever
24 come. 2 o'clock in the morning a
25 raging party happening on our street

1 full of underaged children who are
2 supposed to be in their house because
3 of curfew. Nothing, no one ever
4 comes.

5 And when we call 911, at a
6 certain point they say, why are you
7 calling us back, why do you keep
8 bothering us. We've put it into the
9 system, why do you keep calling.

10 Well, if I called and then five
11 minutes later I called again and then
12 five minutes later I called again,
13 maybe that's excessive, I don't know.
14 A building was not on fire, a person
15 was not injured gravely. But as the
16 other community members have
17 testified, it all sounded very
18 familiar to me in the previous
19 testimony, that response times are
20 slow, if ever.

21 And not every dispatcher but
22 there have been dispatchers that I've
23 spoken with who don't appear to take
24 what we're saying seriously or are
25 dismissive of our problems, and

1 really the most shocking thing to me
2 was hearing a dispatcher say that
3 this is too dangerous of a situation
4 to send police to. I'm really not
5 clear who should be responding if
6 it's too dangerous at least for
7 police to respond to or saying
8 something like what do you want me to
9 do about it. Well, I've called 911.
10 I want you to dispatch police about
11 it. That's what I would like you to
12 do.

13 On the October 2nd night
14 eventually a police officer did
15 arrive, not a SWAT team, not a whole
16 squadron, one uniformed police
17 officer with a flashlight, and they
18 dispersed the entire crowd. That's
19 what it took, one uniformed police
20 officer. Not tactical response, not
21 tear gas which we did have down my
22 block, not any of those things. One
23 police officer arrived on foot with a
24 flashlight and it dispersed the
25 entire crowd.

1 So when I call and they say
2 what do you want, I want someone to
3 come out. There are between 40 and
4 100 people with black-hooded
5 sweatshirts on and masks on breaking
6 into a store. It seems as though
7 that's a job for the police to
8 respond to. So I would like to just
9 end, tie up my comments by saying
10 that I appreciate everyone's work on
11 this issue and for giving me the
12 opportunity to testify about my
13 experiences.

14 I do realize that the
15 dispatching is a very difficult job
16 and I don't have that job, and the
17 reason I don't have it is because I
18 could not do it. It's very difficult
19 so I have a lot of respect for the
20 dispatchers. And again, many of the
21 dispatchers have been very
22 professional. They're doing what
23 they can do.

24 And I do get a sense from them
25 their frustration that they are

1 putting in the dispatch request, but
2 then nothing happens. So then I call
3 them again, so then I call them
4 again, so then I call them again.
5 And if they've done their job
6 correctly which is they've listened
7 to me, they put the dispatch request
8 and then nothing happens, I can't
9 call anyone else. There is no one
10 else to call, so I end up just
11 calling them back again. And they
12 say, sir, we put it in, why are you
13 calling us again. Well, it's been an
14 hour and nothing has happened. It's
15 been two hours and nothing has
16 happened.

17 And again, I just like to
18 emphasize that, you know, I was on --
19 my block was one of the blocks that
20 was hit with tear gas during the
21 protests. My block was one of the
22 blocks that had street battles going
23 on, on it with police and everything.
24 But this particular time on October
25 2nd it was one uniformed police

1 officer with a flashlight that
2 dispersed the crowd. That's all it
3 took.

4 So Center City, they formed a
5 police barricade around the
6 businesses that were owned by major
7 corporations and blockaded them and
8 protected the Apple store at all
9 costs, but my neighbor on the corner
10 who sells discount mattresses, no
11 police barricade arrived to blockade
12 him. The brand new open businesses
13 on my block, a new ice cream store,
14 the pharmacy that is my pharmacy that
15 I get my prescriptions at, no one
16 blockaded that. And the Police
17 Commissioner was on T.V. saying
18 everything is under control, and
19 everything was very much not under
20 control. I believe at that time it's
21 the new acting Commissioner, not the
22 previous Commissioner. Nonetheless,
23 there was a commander on television.

24 So I want everyone to know
25 just what our experiences living in

1 the neighborhood and that we believe
2 that it's important that when we call
3 911, that it makes it feel like
4 something is going to happen and when
5 they say that it's someone's getting
6 dispatched, someone actually is
7 dispatched. And I realize this
8 hearing is about 911 dispatching and
9 that might be beyond their control
10 and I understand why they might get
11 frustrated, but taking it out on me
12 in a situation where I don't feel
13 safe in my own home at that moment,
14 not great, not great. So thank you
15 very much for the opportunity to
16 testify. And that's all I have to
17 say.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
19 so much for your testimony you gave.
20 I know Member Gauthier and I shared
21 those evenings, and I'm experiencing
22 PTSD at this moment from the call
23 that I got from Member Gauthier when
24 she was talking about what was going
25 on, on 52nd Street, and the

1 conversation said she overheard in
2 the crowd that they were now going to
3 my District to loot the 52nd and
4 Jefferson Street mall.

5 I remember that feeling of
6 despair when I called as well and
7 couldn't get a response because quite
8 frankly the system was overwhelmed
9 and there is no playbook for what
10 happened those evenings. And do I
11 understand the frustration of Center
12 City versus neighborhoods, Center
13 City safety versus neighborhoods.
14 And for a period of time -- I can't
15 speak for other Districts -- we did
16 not get the type of response to the
17 calls that would have given any of us
18 comfort that evening. For about 17
19 hours we kind of were on our own.
20 And I hope that we take from that
21 experience.

22 And what the hearing is about
23 is what did we learn, what can we do
24 so that we never ever, ever have to
25 experience that feeling of

1 helplessness that I know. Our
2 Districts are right next to each
3 other, Jamie. And I remember your
4 call to me telling me that they were
5 on their way and that feeling of
6 dread that followed.

7 So I'm sure -- Member
8 Gauthier, would you want to respond
9 to any of this?

10 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
11 you, Mr. Webber, for testifying. I
12 had that same experience of feeling
13 sort of back in that place from being
14 on 52nd Street when tanks were
15 rolling down and being on 52nd Street
16 after Walter Wallace, Jr. when the
17 truck crashed into the police, so it
18 was horrible. But thank you for
19 coming to share your experience and
20 thank you to everyone on the panel.

21 It's very hard to hear those
22 testimonies, but I greatly appreciate
23 you being here to share. And I hope
24 that you feel a sense of hope that in
25 sharing these stories you're helping

1 us, you're helping Council and the
2 Police Department and 911 to do
3 whatever we need to do to fix this
4 system and to make sure that nothing
5 like what happened to you and your
6 loved ones happens to other residents
7 in the City of Philadelphia. So
8 thank you so very much.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
10 Member.

11 Mr. Glass, who do we have
12 next?

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
14 next witness is District Council 33
15 Local 1637, President Gordon Zimmitt.
16 I'd also like to note for the record
17 that Councilmember Thomas is present
18 as well.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Welcome,
20 Member Thomas. Duly noted for the
21 record.

22 Mr. President, are you
23 available?

24 MR. ZIMMITT: Yes, I'm here,
25 sir.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: So please
2 state your name for the record and
3 begin your testimony.

4 MR. ZIMMITT: Gordon Zimmitt,
5 President of Local 1637, which
6 represents our 911 operators. Before
7 I turn it over to some of our
8 seasoned operator -- 911 operators, I
9 would like to point out the fact and
10 I believe some people on this virtual
11 hearing know this, but I just want to
12 reiterate again how much that this
13 job as a 911 operator is one of, if
14 not the most stressful as well as one
15 of, if not the most thankless jobs in
16 the City of Philadelphia and to
17 represent the men and women that
18 answer these calls has been a
19 privilege of mine.

20 However, what I would like to
21 also point out the fact that a lot of
22 these issues that we have been
23 circling back around trying to get
24 the solutions for our issues that we
25 have addressed with the police

1 department, and we are working with
2 them. However, before I get too much
3 into it, I do want you guys to hear
4 from some of our dispatchers that are
5 911 operators that are actually the
6 ones that answer these calls.

7 So first, I'm going to have
8 Tomasz Rog who is a 911 operator, and
9 I would like him to speak on some of
10 his experiences.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Rog,
12 are you connected?

13 MR. ROG: Yes. Actually in
14 the same room as Mr. Gordon. Good
15 morning, everybody. Good morning,
16 City Council. Good morning to the
17 citizens of Philadelphia because I'm
18 one of you as well. I'm just going
19 to come here and talk to you guys
20 about facts because the reality of
21 the job is there's a lot of things
22 that happen that unfortunately the
23 public isn't aware about. Maybe
24 starting with a public service
25 announcement, allowing the public to

1 know what the process of 911 calls
2 is, meaning goes from calltaker,
3 sometimes it needs to be connected to
4 another entity, meaning 911 fire
5 rescue. Somebody needs dispatch for
6 that. That's another room. That's a
7 different entity.

8 Dispatchers are also a
9 separate person from the calltaker.
10 So a calltaker doesn't really have
11 any I guess say in reference to when
12 the job gets dispatched. Now, as a
13 dispatcher I can only do as much as
14 the streets allow me. Meaning, the
15 personnel I have, I have to utilize,
16 so I prioritize the priorities based
17 off of the jobs I receive. Now,
18 unfortunately I wish I could send an
19 officer to every single job as soon
20 as it comes out, but there are nights
21 on Friday where I'll have four police
22 officers working in Olney and I have
23 to see which domestic is more
24 important than another domestic,
25 which person needs service more than

1 another person. That is the
2 unfortunate responsibility of a
3 dispatcher that has to unfortunately
4 go through the process and figure
5 out.

6 Now, that is not including all
7 of our violent crimes. These are
8 some of the numbers -- just to give
9 you an example, in 2019 we had 350 --
10 346 homicides. 2020, first year of
11 COVID that jumped by 40 percent to
12 500, 499, but I'll round up. After
13 that we have not hit below 520
14 homicides. Now, homicides is not
15 including shootings. We've processed
16 1400 shootings in 2019. After that,
17 2200, 2400, 2500. That's year-by-
18 year. That's not including
19 aggravated assaults and including
20 firearms, which counters 4,000 jobs
21 per year, not including rapes,
22 robberies, petty theft. Kias and
23 Hyundais, the last two years.
24 Hopefully, the City is aware of this,
25 maybe get into a civil suit with the

1 car manufacturers. I dispatch in the
2 mornings multiple officers to homes
3 for report of vandalisms in reference
4 to people breaking into Kias and
5 Hyundais, stolen car reports in
6 reference to people's Kias and
7 Hyundais being stolen, investigate
8 autos for abandoned Kias and Hyundais
9 on the highway. That has increased
10 so much in the past two years due to
11 that manufacturer defect, that I
12 still have to prioritize those jobs.

13 So I understand the
14 frustration in response time. But
15 the response time can only be so much
16 controlled by a dispatcher as myself.
17 Trust me, as a citizen myself I have
18 two daughters that live in
19 Philadelphia. I've been here my
20 whole life. I'm an immigrant myself.
21 I came to this country for the
22 purpose of a better life for -- my
23 mother came here for a better life
24 for me, for my children. These are
25 things that I'm fully aware of. And

1 I wish I could fix it.

2 Now, the problem is we don't
3 retain anybody. COVID took so many
4 senior dispatchers and personnel from
5 the room due to being overworked. We
6 worked remotely zero days during
7 COVID. I had COVID three times due
8 to the profession I chose, do you
9 know what I mean. We lost so many
10 people just to the fact of COVID, the
11 inability to work remotely for the
12 fear of getting sick. There are a
13 lot of people who are over 40, 50 --
14 well, let me rephrase. There was a
15 lot of people over 40, 50, 60 years
16 old that did not feel safe coming to
17 work. So these are things that have
18 changed rapidly in the last few
19 years.

20 Now, we're at a point where
21 about 70 percent of this room has
22 less than four years on, three years
23 on, so they can't even begin to train
24 or understand certain instances
25 because they haven't processed them

1 yet. You don't have to deal with
2 everything every day which is a
3 blessing, thank God. But mass
4 shootings, for example, like we
5 referenced Kingsessing. Kingsessing
6 was a mass shooting, terrible
7 instance. That year we processed 20
8 mass shootings. That's 1 of 20
9 unfortunately.

10 In 2019 we only had 10. In
11 2020, 27. The following year 25. So
12 our mass shooting rate has gone up
13 over 50 percent. I myself can tell
14 you I've handled three mass shootings
15 in the last two years, on Broad and
16 Olney and on Germantown Avenue.
17 These are things that I process
18 myself. These are things the
19 officers on the street have to
20 process, do you know what I mean.
21 People don't want to deal with the
22 post-traumatic stress of the job
23 without proper compensation and that
24 is a real issue right here, the lack
25 of retention, the inability to have

1 good personnel, because we're getting
2 paid \$47,000 a year to sit and spend
3 Thanksgiving at 400 North Broad
4 Street.

5 I haven't had Thanksgiving
6 with my children in eight years. My
7 daughters have never had Thanksgiving
8 dinner with me. Now, I'm not
9 complaining because I signed up for
10 this, but at a certain point people
11 need to be appreciated and need to be
12 compensated properly for the things
13 that they are doing. And the people
14 I work with are superstars,
15 superstars. They come in, they
16 sacrifice family time, they sacrifice
17 birthdays, they sacrifice their own
18 well-being, like I said, because of
19 COVID to do a job, then these people
20 need to be finally rewarded and
21 appreciated for that.

22 So what I think we need to do
23 is overhaul the room in a sense of
24 first off, we need at least \$15,000
25 more, and I'm not saying that just

1 picking a number out of the air
2 because I can move to Bucks County
3 right now and make \$12,000 more
4 instantaneously, not including my
5 years of experience, all my
6 certifications and everything like
7 that.

8 So Bucks County, for example,
9 has a tier system. You start as a
10 dispatcher but then you can become a
11 dispatch supervisor. Then you have
12 the ability to move into a management
13 position. Now, I'm only going to
14 mention Bucks because I can inundate
15 you with all the different counties,
16 states and everything, everybody has
17 the tier process. But in that same
18 breath if you raise the pay, you also
19 attract a different type of employee.
20 So with that said, with the higher
21 pay rate, make it not harder but make
22 the qualifications make sense with
23 what my job title is.

24 So, for example, test on
25 multi-tasking skills. I work off of

1 five screens simultaneously on the
2 dispatch side. My job, I will be
3 talking to one person, typing for
4 another. That's just the reality of
5 my job. But we can test for that
6 prior to coming into the room.

7 People's reaction time, the ability
8 to hear something and what is your
9 response to that, that has a lot to
10 do with dispatching and calltaking.

11 A reading and writing
12 comprehension, something as simple as
13 that would help you realize who do
14 you have and what kind of personnel
15 are you about to hire. Verbal skills
16 and short-term memory retention
17 skills, these are also things that
18 are very important on the dispatching
19 calltaking side because we process so
20 much information.

21 I might take 200 calls on a
22 Friday night, 250 calls, or on
23 dispatching me and my partner on a
24 Friday, Saturday night we might
25 dispatch over 600 jobs. So there are

1 times where jobs are in reference to
2 other jobs. You need the ability to
3 connect dots sometimes. These are
4 things that we need to assess prior
5 to getting into the room because if
6 I'm spending four months training a
7 dispatcher who I know, one, doesn't
8 have the qualifications, two, doesn't
9 have the skills and, three, really
10 doesn't care about the job, I'm
11 wasting my time, I'm wasting the
12 City's time and the City's money at
13 that point.

14 And there are people I can
15 tell you right now 10 minutes within
16 a conversation I know that they're
17 not built for this job, and that's
18 nothing against them because it's
19 just not for everybody, do you know
20 what I mean. And this is one of
21 those instances where we need proper
22 people in proper places because this
23 is a very important job. We are --
24 like you said, we are the first line
25 of response to the police department,

1 so we need empathy, we need people
2 who are sympathetic, we need people
3 who know how to speak to individuals
4 because that dictates a lot, not even
5 to the person who's calling, but the
6 officer responding.

7 If I'm on a phone call and I
8 give you a terrible experience on the
9 phone, you're going to give that
10 energy back to that officer and I
11 don't need that, so I need everybody
12 to be on the same page because if we
13 can do that, then that sets up a way
14 better experience, but then it also
15 maybe alleviates somebody calling
16 right back.

17 Give them the proper
18 information in reference to what's
19 going on. Auto accident, to
20 reference the auto accident in
21 Southwest Philadelphia really quick,
22 that's a terrible thing and I wish we
23 could send somebody. On a night in
24 Southwest Philadelphia everything is
25 based off of what's going on in the

1 neighborhood, so there might have
2 been a shooting four, five, six
3 blocks away. As soon as you get a
4 shooting, that ties up six, seven
5 officers. You got to hold a scene.
6 You might have to transport
7 complainants, you might have to go to
8 a hospital with a victim. There are
9 so many different things.

10 Not only that, but they also
11 have to process that job. They also
12 have to give the person who called
13 that job in the proper time and
14 explanation of what goes on going
15 forward, you know what I mean. And
16 the staffing issues and all that, we
17 have a room full of people that are
18 unfortunately undertrained right now,
19 and we have no reason as senior
20 people to stay anymore because all
21 we're doing is training without any
22 kind of promise of anything changing.

23 We don't get stress pay. We
24 don't get stress days. We don't have
25 any type of ability to really express

1 ourselves unless we go to EAP, which
2 is our Employee Assistance Program
3 and talk to a psychiatrist, do you
4 know what I mean. And there's a lot
5 of things that we can do to change
6 this room, but it all starts
7 unfortunately in the sense of
8 retaining employees and attracting
9 employees who have the
10 qualifications. And unfortunately,
11 that's a money issue. And like I
12 said, a pay bump of \$15,000 like I
13 said to the 47 we're making right now
14 seems very minimal to me, but it's a
15 starting point.

16 Also, to give another example
17 we did have civilian supervisors in
18 the room in Police Radio previously.
19 In 1989 a civilian supervisor was
20 making \$55,000 a year, 55 in 1989. I
21 am a senior dispatcher, which is
22 something that we just started which
23 the premise is amazing, but the pay
24 difference between a senior
25 dispatcher and a regular dispatcher

1 is \$1100. So after taxes we're
2 talking about \$700 additionally a
3 year. That's almost laughable in
4 terms of what the message is supposed
5 to be. That's not going to retain
6 anybody because as someone with time
7 on, it's almost disrespectful as that
8 being a pay bump. That's nothing
9 real, do you know what I mean.

10 So a civilian supervisor in
11 1989 made 55,000 but I'm at 52 in
12 2023. You already know the math just
13 doesn't make sense. Sorry to talk
14 everybody's ear off. My apologies.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: No, I think
16 your testimony was insightful. But I
17 want to let you know that we
18 absolutely appreciate the job you and
19 those dispatchers do. And Member
20 Gauthier, now Mayor-elect Parker, we
21 walked around there and saw those
22 conditions that people were almost
23 mandatory to work in, wasn't very
24 safe, wasn't --

25 MR. ROG: We actually did have

1 mandatory -- I apologize. During the
2 riots we were doing 12-hour shifts.
3 That's another part of the job that
4 we don't discuss, because again we
5 signed up for that. But there were
6 times where I would have something
7 planned. They're like, oh, no, we're
8 short personnel, you got to stay an
9 additional four hours mandatory.
10 These are things that we've all gone
11 through in this room, you know what I
12 mean. We're here just like everybody
13 else. And not to cut you off, but
14 like I said we understand the
15 mandatory because we did that. We do
16 the hours. We put the time in.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: So when we
18 were there, we heard from dispatchers
19 that talked about child care issues
20 that came about when mandatory
21 overtime was presented to them with
22 the offer that they could not refuse.
23 The good news is what I'm trying to
24 tell you is that Mayor-elect Parker
25 understands that in a close and

1 personal way based on those visits,
2 not visit, visits, so that hopefully
3 down the line we'll be able to
4 address some of those things.

5 But let me just go back to
6 your testimony. And what I
7 appreciated is we need to do a better
8 job of educating the public as to how
9 you as dispatchers prioritize jobs,
10 and it might give some understanding
11 if there's a murder versus a shooting
12 versus someone's porch furniture
13 being stolen, and those things to the
14 people that are undergoing them, you
15 know, they don't -- there's an
16 urgency when they call, but there has
17 to be a priority when you guys go
18 through how you respond and that
19 education process should happen.

20 I'd also go on to say that
21 stress level that you deal with every
22 day, you talk to people on their
23 worst day, when they're going through
24 traumatic occurrences within their
25 homes and their communities. So

1 there is a level of urgency that you
2 guys sometimes cannot emotionally
3 match their energy because you have
4 to take down the facts and that kind
5 of difference in intensity often can
6 come off as less than sympathetic.
7 But what I want is not sympathy. I
8 want accuracy in what address is
9 being taken down and whether or not
10 the people that you're responding to
11 have mental health issues that need
12 co-respondents and taking down those
13 facts is methodical and only trained
14 professionals, you touched on that.

15 Yes, we need to do different
16 testing to determine if people have
17 the aptitude to be able to remember
18 half of the things that are being
19 said at an emotionally-charged
20 incident. But I want to let you know
21 we hear you and we are having this
22 hearing because of it.

23 Member Gauthier.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I just
25 wanted to thank Mr. Zimmitt for being

1 here and for really highlighting not
2 only the stress of the job but the
3 pay disparity, the conditions. I do
4 have questions after the panel
5 finishes, but just wanted to take a
6 moment to say thank you. And the
7 purpose of this is for us to get you
8 guys what you need. So thank you so
9 much.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. Does
11 anybody else or where are we at on
12 the witness list, Mr. Glass?

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
14 there are two more witnesses for this
15 panel before we move on to the police
16 department. But Councilmember Lozada
17 would like to be recognized at this
18 time as well.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
20 Lozada.

21 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: I also
22 want to reiterate my appreciation for
23 Mr. Gordon and all of the dispatchers
24 who respond to our most difficult
25 moments. I have family who also work

1 as a dispatcher and have heard
2 firsthand, right, some of their
3 challenges. And so, I understand.
4 What I really don't want is for the
5 dispatchers in this moment to take
6 this as if we are taking a shot at
7 them.

8 I think that this is an
9 opportunity for us to hear directly
10 from them about what some of their
11 challenges are so that together we
12 can work towards making their work
13 environment a better place so that
14 they can serve the residents of the
15 City of Philadelphia, but I have
16 heard and I can sympathize to some of
17 the challenges and about the
18 sacrifices that many of you
19 experience on a day-to-day basis.

20 And I've also heard about how
21 often times you feel unappreciated in
22 situations that you're confronted
23 with and that you feel like you're
24 not heard. We are hearing you. This
25 is an opportunity for us to work

1 together and come up with some solid
2 recommendations to better improve
3 your work environment.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
5 very much.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Mr. Chair,
7 can I just jump in and echo the
8 sentiments of all of the other
9 Councilmembers and just communicate
10 my appreciation for D.C. 33 and the
11 workers. This is informative and
12 disheartening at the same time. So
13 just wanted to add to the chorus of
14 the choir. Thank you, sir.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
16 Member Thomas. You hit the nail
17 right on the head with it's
18 informative and disheartening all at
19 the same exact time. So I'm going
20 to -- Member Harrity, would you
21 continue the witness for a second? I
22 have to attend to a separate matter.
23 It'll be about five minutes.

24 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: (Muted).

25 THE CLERK: Mr. Harrity --

1 Councilmember Harrity, you are on
2 mute.

3 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Sorry
4 about that. Can you call our next
5 witness.

6 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. --
7 Councilmember Harrity. Our next
8 witness will be Latifah Bashid.

9 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Hello,
10 Lateefah. Please state your full
11 name for the record.

12 MS. BASHID: Latifah Bashid.

13 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Good
14 morning.

15 MS. BASHID: Good morning.
16 Okay. I just wanted to speak on I've
17 been a 911 dispatcher for the last --
18 going on 17 years. I actually love
19 my job. I'm very passionate about my
20 job. I work North band majority of
21 the time for the last 10 years, which
22 is the 14th and the 35th, A-1
23 District very busy. I'm saying that
24 to say when I first started Friday,
25 Saturday and Sundays were busy for

1 us. Now, it's Monday, Tuesday,
2 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and
3 Saturday and Sunday.

4 We are extremely busy. And
5 it's not just like -- I want everyone
6 to understand how we prioritize jobs.
7 Like I said, I work North band. On a
8 regular night we might have three
9 police officers that I can actually
10 delegate jobs to. We have more
11 police on the street, but I can't
12 give them jobs, if that makes any
13 sense. They're there for like
14 priorities, shootings, robberies,
15 theft, vehicle theft like that.

16 So with me saying that when we
17 get -- some nights I might have 25
18 jobs pending. So when I sit down on
19 my 2:00 to 10:00 shift, I have to sit
20 there, I go through each job and I
21 see what is the most I'm not going to
22 say important because when everyone
23 calls 911, everybody who called is
24 important. But I have to sit there
25 and figure out who I'm going to give

1 these jobs out to. And sometimes I
2 might come into work and we might
3 have a job -- we have people waiting
4 10, 11, 12 hours sometimes.

5 So in that instance, what we
6 do is we let the street supervisor
7 know we have this thing where we do
8 zero cards. And we say -- we
9 (inaudible) a supervisor, we say just
10 be advised we have 25 jobs pending,
11 no priority 1s but we're at zero car.
12 Meaning, we cannot give out the jobs
13 because we have no one, because
14 they're busy on other jobs. During
15 COVID we worked a lot. Thank God
16 I've never had COVID. I worked every
17 day during COVID. I rarely called
18 out sick. We were mandated at least
19 three, four times a week which is an
20 extra four hours.

21 I had an older son so it was a
22 little more easier for me. Like I've
23 actually taken people's mandatory and
24 said, you know what, go home with
25 your kids, I'll stay because my son

1 was in high school and he can pretty
2 much figure it out. He was in his
3 last year of high school. So with me
4 saying that, during COVID we were not
5 compensated. We wasn't thanked.

6 A lot of stuff -- I had an
7 active shooting one day on the 35th
8 during my 6:00 to 2:00 shift early in
9 the morning. It wasn't all late and
10 I believe it was like a Monday or
11 Tuesday. Someone was actively
12 shooting in a building and I handled
13 it, and no one came over and said,
14 you did a wonderful job. No one gave
15 me a pat on the back. My partner
16 said, wow, you did a good job. But
17 we did have one Deputy Commissioner
18 at the time who actually did call my
19 cell phone and tell me, wow, you did
20 an amazing job. They wound up
21 catching the person, the shooter.
22 Unfortunately, someone did get shot
23 and they died. But that was the only
24 time I ever felt appreciated, but
25 it's sad that I have to feel

1 appreciated when someone else's
2 family is suffering.

3 Like I said, I love my job.
4 I've been there going on 17 years. I
5 was able to put my son through
6 Catholic School his whole time. From
7 the time I started, my son went to a
8 private Catholic School up until he
9 graduated St. Joe's Prep. And now,
10 he has a full academic scholarship to
11 St. Joe's University. I actually
12 love my job. I'm one of the ones
13 like Tomasz says, yes, I do feel
14 unappreciated. But at the end of the
15 day, I actually like the job that I
16 do. And that's basically all I have
17 to say.

18 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank you
19 for your testimony.

20 I actually have a question for
21 President Gordon. President Gordon,
22 can you tell me the number of
23 dispatchers right now you guys are
24 short? How many are you budgeted for
25 and how many do you actually have?

1 MR. ZIMMITT: We're budgeted I
2 believe for 350. And right now I
3 believe we're at about 278, 288.

4 MS. BASHID: With this newest
5 class we're at 320.

6 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Yeah,
7 that's crisis level for you guys like
8 you were saying. Okay. I got it.

9 Any other questions from
10 Members? I see Councilman --

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah. I
12 had --

13 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Go ahead,
14 Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and then
15 we'll go to Member Gauthier.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just a
17 real quick question. Is the
18 Administration on the call? Like
19 what is the actual plan and strategy
20 for recruitment to staff up because I
21 know this is the first time that the
22 staffing levels have been part of
23 this conversation?

24 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Point
25 of information, if that's okay.

1 Councilmember Johnson, I mean
2 we're free to let Mr. Zimmitt
3 respond, but we also have PPD on the
4 next panel and --

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Cool.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: -- a
7 lot of that will be discussed.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'll
9 wait. I just wanted to get an idea,
10 but I know that staffing issue keeps
11 coming up over and over. So I just
12 wanted to tell, Mr. Gordon, the young
13 lady that's working with you, could
14 you slide back over.

15 MS. BASHID: Can I just --

16 MR. ZIMMITT: I think he had a
17 question.

18 MS. BASHID: I'm sorry. Go
19 ahead with your question. I
20 apologize.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Not a
22 question. I appreciate you. Thank
23 you for your hard work. Thank you
24 for your dedication. I look at it as
25 a real public service job. I don't

1 think people recognize the trauma
2 that you deal with when you actually
3 call and somebody's on the other side
4 of the phone who actually understands
5 what you're going through and kind of
6 walks you through a process, right.

7 And so, I appreciate
8 everything that you're doing, I do.
9 And I'll talk more about this with
10 the police department though, but we
11 do have to make sure y'all are
12 supported from a level of staffing
13 standpoint because I personally was
14 in a situation with my son in a
15 shoot-out on the corner of my block.
16 I'm a Councilperson, but no one knows
17 that on the other side of the call,
18 and nobody came, nobody. No
19 response, no nothing. So I just
20 called the people I knew and the
21 police department off my cell phone
22 to get a response.

23 And so, for me it's about
24 fixing what needs to be fixed and
25 supporting y'all in terms of the work

1 that y'all are doing. And it's
2 incumbent upon us as a City to get it
3 done right. Thank you very much and
4 thank you for --

5 MS. BASHID: I --

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Go ahead.

7 MS. BASHID: Okay. I just
8 wanted to say in response to what you
9 just said. I'm sure someone answered
10 911 when they called for the
11 shooting.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: (Shaking
13 head).

14 MS. BASHID: Oh, no one
15 answered 911?

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No, sis.
17 That phone -- that phone just kept
18 ringing.

19 MS. BASHID: Okay. Can I just
20 say that I'm not making up any
21 excuses for that. But when there's a
22 shooting, a lot of people call 911, a
23 lot of people call. And it could be
24 25 of us sitting in there taking 911
25 calls, but there's only two Fire

1 members. Meaning, every time we get
2 a phone call for a shooting I can get
3 the same phone call five times. I
4 still have to transfer to Rescue.

5 And a lot of the times there's
6 only two people working in Rescue for
7 the whole City and the phone just --

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes,
9 young lady. And I think the point
10 that we're getting at from the
11 staffing support standpoint is that
12 the Administration has to figure this
13 out. I mean, it's totally
14 unacceptable. That's why my
15 colleague is calling this hearing.
16 But probably what's more unacceptable
17 is that this is the second time we're
18 having a hearing on the same exact
19 topic, which means nothing has been
20 done from the last time in terms of
21 moving the City forward around this
22 particular issue.

23 And so, I'm just here to be
24 supportive. But I didn't want to let
25 you get off without recognizing that

1 you are appreciated. I want you to
2 know that, like we appreciate you.
3 So I just wanted to make sure you
4 recognize that there are folks in
5 government who we're not pointing the
6 fingers. We recognize that something
7 needs to be done. But in terms of
8 the workers, we definitely support
9 you. So I just wanted you to know
10 that.

11 MS. BASHID: Okay. Well,
12 thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
14 welcome.

15 Thank you, Mr. Harrity.

16 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: You're
17 welcome.

18 Councilwoman Gauthier, do you
19 still have questions?

20 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I have
21 a brief comment. I just wanted to
22 say to Ms. Bashid, you did a good job
23 and we appreciate you. And we have
24 to figure out as a City how to
25 express that in a better way, so

1 thank you so much.

2 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Yeah. I
3 mean, we all owe you guys a debt of
4 gratitude for sure. You know, I'm a
5 son of a police officer so, you know,
6 I've heard the stories. I know what
7 you guys do. I mean just, you know,
8 you're the first line of defense.
9 You know what I mean, between giving
10 advice on how to stop the gunshot
11 thing or, you know, whatever it is.
12 So just know that us here on Council
13 we respect you. We respect what you
14 do. All we're trying to do with this
15 is figure out how we help you, what
16 would be the best way to give you the
17 resources that you guys need in order
18 to be able to do the job the way it
19 used to be done.

20 As so many of our other
21 testifiers testified that, you know,
22 they know the difference between when
23 they used to call 911 a few years
24 back to calling 911 now, which the
25 numbers that you guys were saying,

1 350 to 278 that's a big, big
2 difference when it comes to
3 dispatchers. I mean, like I get it,
4 you know, so just know that we
5 respect and we thank you for what you
6 do. And this is in no way a way to
7 try to push blame on anybody. We
8 just want to know what we got to do
9 to fix it to make Philadelphia safer.
10 So thank you.

11 Anthony, anything else going
12 on?

13 THE CLERK: Yes, Councilmember
14 Harrity. Our next witness for this
15 panel is Michelle Jordan.

16 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:
17 Ms. Jordan, are you ready to testify?

18 MS. JORDAN: Yes, I am, sir.
19 Hi --

20 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: How --

21 MS. JORDAN: Hi --

22 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: I'm
23 sorry.

24 MS. JORDAN: My name is
25 Michelle Jordan. I've been a

1 dispatcher for 15 years and I have
2 seen many, many changes. And I think
3 my colleagues in here right now,
4 they've spoken on a lot of things
5 that I guess I was going to say. So
6 I'm going to tell you about our
7 morale and why it's so low, what's
8 causing it.

9 And just to piggyback on a lot
10 of things, the morale starts with
11 feeling unappreciated. The morale
12 starts with feeling -- just last
13 month I sat and talked on the air and
14 I was the voice that you heard on
15 Channel 29, 17, 6, 3 when the officer
16 was killed at the airport. I was
17 that voice. I was on that air for
18 five hours straight. I did not get
19 up to take a break. I did not get up
20 to eat my lunch. I didn't get up to
21 do anything.

22 I had to be told, hey, hurry
23 up and go do something but come right
24 back. So I had big wigs come into
25 the room where I was dispatching. I

1 was on J-Band, which is our city-wide
2 band that controls, that can speak
3 and talk to all entities that
4 Philadelphia consumes. And you know
5 what I got, I got nothing. I got a
6 Wawa, have a shorti and soda on us
7 the next day. I never got
8 appreciated.

9 I never got told, you did a
10 great job, I know you're tired, maybe
11 you should stay home today. Because
12 you know what, we work with these
13 officers every day. And just like
14 the City of Philadelphia you're
15 calling on your worst days when you
16 are calling 911, this is the
17 officers' worst days too sometimes
18 and we deal with that. We
19 internalize. We continuously
20 internalize.

21 Our job is one of the worst
22 cases of whisper down the lane that
23 you can imagine because of retention
24 ratings. Our supervisor's retention
25 ratings are just as worse as the

1 dispatchers themselves, so that's
2 something that the police have to
3 address. But because of that, our
4 supervisors then rely on us to tell
5 them when we are doing wrong or rely
6 on the public to call and say, hey, I
7 had a bad experience with 911 and
8 then rely on us once again to
9 objectify and figure out what was
10 wrong with that call or why the
11 dispatching was wrong.

12 So imagine being told to tell
13 yourself or your counterparts you're
14 not a supervisor, but the
15 supervisor's job has then been
16 delegated to a dispatcher to figure
17 out what we did wrong, and then they
18 then plagiarize almost and say, hey,
19 now we figured out what you did wrong
20 and now you're in trouble. It's a
21 lot. It encompasses a lot. Our
22 morale is so low.

23 There is nothing that says
24 anything about us being so-called
25 senior dispatchers -- senior

1 dispatcher is someone that has been
2 there for three years or more. I
3 think that's a slap in the face, that
4 someone that's been there for 15
5 years, and a 3-year veteran versus a
6 15-year veteran is making \$7 -- what
7 is that total, maybe \$10 a pay. It's
8 a slap in the face.

9 We do need to bring in
10 civilian supervision and we also need
11 to have people that are dedicated,
12 which the dispatchers are dedicated
13 to the room. I am dedicated to that
14 room. I took prestige in this job.
15 I hold this job in such a higher
16 position that when I speak on this
17 job, my feelings are hurt. My
18 feelings are hurt that we even have
19 to have this hearing because we work
20 together, we work very hard and we
21 have seen that COVID has brought in
22 150 or more people and we're having
23 the hardest time keeping them,
24 retaining them, training them
25 properly.

1 And at this point, it's a
2 definite struggle. We have a ratio
3 of maybe 20 veterans to 70 brand new
4 people on a shift. That explains
5 itself. That explains some of our
6 issues. Not just that, our staffing
7 levels when you're saying we're not
8 answering, there is some
9 mathematician that I do not know, we
10 never get an answer as to who the
11 mathematician is, but the
12 mathematician that tells us that our
13 room only deserves to have 20
14 calltakers, 20 on a Friday night,
15 that's -- we have 45 seats, 45 seats
16 for you to be able to calltake so
17 that every call gets answered in a
18 responsible time. So our goal is to
19 have all calls answered in 10 seconds
20 or less.

21 But on a Friday night where we
22 know even on a 90-degree day as soon
23 as it's nice out, we have multiple
24 crimes happening at the same time,
25 shootings. So imagine the phones

1 are -- yeah, your call is going to be
2 in the queue. It's going to over-
3 ring. It's going to cause a problem.
4 But we have to ask the police
5 department why are they utilizing
6 numbers based on 2009. Why are you
7 using those numbers? Why do you
8 think that on a Friday night between
9 3:00 and 11:00 you only need 18
10 calltakers or 20 calltakers. It's
11 inappropriate at this point.

12 And, no, we're not including
13 the math of Philadelphia is growing
14 every day, every year. We went from
15 3,000 people -- 3,000,000 people, I'm
16 sorry, what, four years ago. We are
17 at 6,000,000 people now. We doubled
18 in size. But we did not double on
19 calltakers. We did not double --
20 anything that we do, our strategies
21 on how we handle things have not
22 changed and we need change, and we
23 need for the veterans to feel -- the
24 veteran dispatchers to feel
25 appreciated and utilized properly but

1 also compensated for being able to
2 teach.

3 We can teach. We are good at
4 what we do. I wouldn't stay here if
5 I wasn't. I would not. I would
6 think that I would want the best
7 people to answer my 911 call. I want
8 the best people to dispatch the
9 officers so that the officers feel
10 safe. I don't know if we even
11 have -- officers have lost confidence
12 in their dispatchers. Dispatchers
13 have now -- we have lost our control
14 of how we control our air and get
15 things out.

16 Everything's in a disarray.
17 And at this point, you know, I've
18 done this so long and I never thought
19 that I would start looking for
20 another job. I never thought that.
21 I really thought I would retire from
22 the City, and that's sad because I
23 have a lot to offer. And a lot of
24 times any time we ask questions of
25 the police department when we sit in

1 these management meetings and things
2 like that, we get very generic
3 answers.

4 We get why are you not
5 staffing the phone room. We have 45
6 seats. And why you don't -- why
7 wouldn't you put 45 people in those
8 seats and then we wouldn't hear about
9 an over-ring. We wouldn't hear
10 anybody complaining about anything
11 unless it had to be connected to the
12 fire department, which they are
13 understaffed. So they should be here
14 in this meeting as well because they
15 are dispatchers also. They need to
16 be here to address their issue. But
17 right now I guess we're going to talk
18 about our issue.

19 But as far as the police
20 department and not answering calls,
21 we have 45 seats. We have 18 people
22 working. That is very important to
23 address. And, you know, other than
24 that I really don't know what else to
25 be asked of us. We have a good

1 system. 911 on its basis, its
2 foundation is good. The priority
3 system works. It does work. A lot
4 of things that people are feeling is
5 out of the dispatcher's control. It
6 is based on police staffing levels,
7 not 911 staffing levels because we
8 have people. We have enough people
9 to cover 45 seats. We have enough
10 people to cover the 16 bands. We
11 have enough people, but do we not
12 utilize them. We don't.

13 And maybe the overtime thing
14 or maybe we need to create a new
15 group so we can break down and have
16 more people in the room at an active
17 time versus our days off, I'm not --
18 I can't get into how much overtime we
19 put out. I don't know, but I do know
20 that we are very capable of answering
21 your calls and we do not mean to
22 sound disgruntled when we answer our
23 phone calls. We do not mean to sound
24 dismissive.

25 I just think that, yes, we do

1 need to create a PSA from your
2 dispatchers to explain how our
3 answering -- how we answer our calls,
4 how we dispatch our calls and very
5 transparent. Let the police
6 department be transparent on we are
7 800 officers short in counting. And
8 then we need to talk about why we
9 have officers doing civilian jobs,
10 but that's another story for another
11 day. I'm done.

12 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
13 you. Thank you for your testimony.

14 Any questions for this
15 witness?

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Gauthier would like to be recognized,
18 Councilmember Harrity.

19 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:
20 Councilwoman Gauthier, you're up.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
22 you. First, I wanted to thank
23 Ms. Jordan for your testimony. I
24 also just wanted to thank you for
25 sharing the story about what it was

1 like to take the call when Officer
2 Mendez was shot and killed and the
3 other officer injured. I can't
4 imagine the level of trauma that must
5 go along with that, and we thank you
6 for your service and also thank you
7 for highlighting how things are in
8 the room, right, and the amount of
9 seats that are filled and how that
10 translates to, you know, a 911
11 response.

12 And thank all of you,
13 Mr. Zimmitt, Ms. Bashid, Mr. Rog, as
14 well for your testimony. We're here
15 to support you and to take action,
16 and to ensure not only that our
17 constituents get the service that we
18 want, but that the 911 call center is
19 an attractive and desirable place to
20 work and have a career. And I think
21 we all recognize that answering 911
22 calls is one of the most taxing and
23 traumatizing jobs in the City and we
24 applaud all of you for the critical
25 role that you play in public safety.

1 I was wondering if each of you
2 could summarize how you think the
3 City can better support our 911
4 dispatchers professionally and
5 emotionally, and also talk about, you
6 know, what are some of the things
7 that your members say would help them
8 to stay with the City of
9 Philadelphia? If everybody could
10 take a turn answering those
11 questions.

12 MR. ROG: Tomasz again. Oh,
13 my screen went black. I don't
14 know --

15 (Background interruption.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: We can
17 hear you guys. I don't know -- I
18 don't know what's happening at this
19 time.

20 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: We can
21 see you and we can hear you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yes,
23 and we can see you.

24 MR. ROG: All right. Well,
25 what I was saying earlier I'm going

1 to say the same thing again. I'm
2 also the shop steward for my squad.
3 So I do hear the issues the room has,
4 the things that people talk about.
5 And a lot of the issues have to do
6 with monetary things and not to make
7 it about money, but money in itself
8 brings respect, brings appreciation,
9 brings consideration that people know
10 what people are going through.

11 Again, we're all civilians.
12 None of us are sworn. We don't go
13 through the pay increases nor do we
14 have the upper mobility like my
15 supervisors do, we have a corporal
16 sergeant and a lieutenant. I'll have
17 six police officers working in the
18 room at one time. If you combine all
19 their salaries, they're making close
20 to \$1 million a year, you know what I
21 mean.

22 Meanwhile the dispatchers,
23 again we're making \$47,000 to \$50,000
24 a year. And again, that's including
25 sacrificing our weekends, our nights,

1 our holidays, our personal time.
2 These are all things that we all put
3 into account where the only people
4 really now are staying are the ones
5 who genuinely really care about the
6 City and are also trying to make a
7 difference in riding out the storm.
8 Because there's nothing really
9 stopping them from leaving.

10 I lost a lot of my co-workers
11 because they went to the counties,
12 they went to the universities, they
13 went to UPenn, they went to Temple,
14 they went to transit police, they
15 went to, you know, Bucks County,
16 Mont. Co. These are all things
17 within, you know, our realm of
18 possibility. The only reason we're
19 still here is because we still
20 genuinely care about the City and we
21 don't want to leave the City stranded
22 because if we leave, I think to
23 myself all the time, if I leave, then
24 who's going to take my place.

25 And not to put myself on some

1 kind of pedestal, but I think the
2 same thing. Not to joke around I
3 told my partner every day that works
4 in North Philly with me, the day you
5 leave is the day I transfer out
6 because I'm worried about who I'm
7 going to work with next. So with the
8 pay increase, with the ability of
9 upward mobility, some kind of promise
10 that I could be a supervisor, a lead,
11 a management role in the department,
12 then I have the ability to want to
13 stay.

14 I'm literally waiting for my
15 pension to hit at 10 years to maybe
16 pivot and go to work in Maine or
17 Vermont because I know I'm going to
18 process 10 percent of the amount of
19 work I do now and I'll have no, you
20 know, I won't have to deal with the
21 stress of shootings, officer-involved
22 shootings, mass shootings. Hearing
23 my officers on the street telling me
24 they're scooping somebody, dealing
25 with infants dying, these are things

1 that we deal with on a daily basis
2 but are not compensated because
3 nobody thinks about it.

4 Nobody talks about it. These
5 are all things that are just
6 happening behind the scenes, but the
7 people behind the scenes are the ones
8 who are leaving. These are the ones
9 that we need to be concrete. We need
10 those written and reading
11 comprehension tests prior to coming
12 because we need to bring the best in.
13 This is one of those jobs when I took
14 this job I felt privileged. Now,
15 it's more so like we are privileged
16 to have these people come in.

17 And it really shouldn't be
18 that way because this is such an
19 important job with so many
20 responsibilities, that people should
21 know how great they are and how
22 important they are to this place.
23 But when you're telling somebody that
24 your pay is this and you have no way
25 of going forward, then you're not

1 telling that person that they matter,
2 because you're telling them like,
3 hey, I could just replace you with
4 any other human being. But in all
5 reality you can't replace me that
6 easily.

7 And again, not to say that I'm
8 God's gift to whatever, but all these
9 dispatchers you spoke to today are
10 just another version of myself and
11 I'm another version of them, because
12 we all understand this struggle and
13 we've been here long enough that we
14 know that we deserve more. And it's
15 not because we're money hungry. It's
16 because that we've already gone
17 through these motions. Like Michelle
18 said, she's been here 15 years.
19 Someone who's been here 3 years can
20 make the same amount of money as her.
21 That doesn't make any sense. It
22 doesn't make sense in a professional
23 world. It doesn't make sense in any
24 type of aspect, you know what I mean.
25 And we're also training.

1 We're also giving advice to the
2 supervisors in the room. These are
3 all things that we're doing, that
4 we're not being compensated for, so
5 if you give the people in the room
6 the ability to look forward to
7 something. But not only that, if
8 you're putting the job out there and
9 you see the job is \$64,000 with these
10 qualifications, you're going to bring
11 in a different type of employee, a
12 different, you know, the recruiting
13 is going to be different at that
14 point.

15 So the inadequacies of the
16 room have to do with everything that
17 goes on outside, because the people
18 in the room are concrete. The people
19 in the room know what they're doing.
20 What we need to do is tell those
21 people we appreciate them, we
22 understand what they're doing and we
23 want to help them moving forward in
24 the same department because that
25 longevity only means a better

1 dispatcher.

2 I'm a firm believer you got to
3 put 10,000 hours in to be proficient
4 at anything. And some of these
5 employees are only lasting a year
6 because they don't know what they're
7 getting themselves into, their job is
8 too hard and they're already on their
9 way out by the time they hit that
10 door kind of, you know what I mean.
11 So we need to work on that retention
12 by first appreciating the people who
13 are already in there but also letting
14 the people who don't have that job
15 yet know, hey, we're looking for
16 people, but we're looking for quality
17 people.

18 I don't need quantity in that
19 room. I need quality because you can
20 give me 5,000 people, but if they
21 don't know how to talk to the human
22 being, if they don't know how to be
23 empathetic, sympathetic or how to
24 look at a map and tell directions,
25 north, south, east and west, I can't

1 do anything with that. So what we
2 need to do is figure out a way of
3 getting proper people in there,
4 better people in there while also
5 retaining the ones we have now.
6 Because if we don't change this soon
7 with the way we're going in the next
8 two years, 10 percent of that room
9 will have more than five years on.
10 And at that point, I don't know if
11 we'll be able to recover from those
12 numbers.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
14 you. That was a very thorough
15 answer. So before I conclude my
16 questioning for this panel, I'll just
17 ask if any of your colleagues want to
18 weigh in on what type of support you
19 need professionally and emotionally
20 and what can help dispatchers to stay
21 with the City?

22 MR. ZIMMITT: Yes. Michelle
23 Jordan would like to speak. One
24 second.

25 MS. JORDAN: Hi again.

1 Civilian supervision is definitely
2 needed. That is one of our top
3 priorities. I believe that we need a
4 tier system because we can save
5 money. A lot of people that come
6 into our job are under the impression
7 that they will only calltake. So
8 being a calltaker in most counties
9 comes with a pay rate of a certain
10 standard. And then if you would like
11 to make a certain amount of money
12 more, you would become a dispatcher
13 and then it continues. But a tier
14 system of how we operate for, one, it
15 could save the City a lot of money
16 because then we're focusing on one
17 group doing one thing and then you're
18 moving on in the ranks over time.

19 We toy with this split shift
20 to bring in more people on our busier
21 hours. We toy with it, but if we
22 were to like I said have a tiered
23 system because right now we're saying
24 that we need it because we're asking
25 for more people to be there during

1 certain hours because of the
2 mathematician that comes up with why
3 we only need 18 people on a Friday.
4 If we were to then like I said have
5 that tiered system with calltakers
6 being something as we had 45 people
7 covering 45 seats, there would be no
8 need for that.

9 And lastly, better -- working
10 on our training center. The same
11 Tomasz is talking about and everyone
12 else, working on our training center.
13 Working on how we -- we can't cater
14 to -- our training center currently
15 is (inaudible) catering to the people
16 that we're hiring, not letting them
17 cater to the job that they want. We
18 are allowing them to work from 8:00
19 to 4:00. That's not a shift that we
20 currently have. We've never had it.

21 We work from 7:00 to 3:00,
22 3:00 to 11:00 and then we have a
23 steady shift of 11:00 to 7:00, and I
24 think we set them up at a
25 disadvantage by doing this and then

1 throwing them into a 7:00 to 3:00
2 situation and you don't get to see --
3 they don't get to see that they don't
4 have child care during that time.
5 They don't get to see that they don't
6 have somebody to take their mom to
7 the doctor's in the morning time.
8 They don't get to see that. They
9 don't have that person to pick up
10 from after school, so we have to go
11 back to standards. We have to have
12 standards put in place.

13 Again, I know COVID we were
14 desperate. We're not desperate right
15 now. We have to go back. We have to
16 go back to setting standards and
17 keeping them. And also like I said,
18 pushing for our senior people to have
19 better roles within our job. That's
20 all I pretty much have to say. Do we
21 have to add anything to this?

22 MR. ZIMMITT: (Shaking head).

23 MS. JORDAN: All right. We're
24 done.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

1 Excellent and informative testimony.

2 Thank you so much and thank you for
3 the work you do every day.

4 MR. ZIMMITT: One second.

5 Before we conclude with us, I do want
6 to share one thing. With everyone
7 that's on this virtual hearing, I
8 believe we all -- I think I can speak
9 for all of us when we say we all want
10 the 911 operators to succeed.

11 And, Councilwoman, you asked
12 us what do we think we need to help
13 to reach that succession. And a lot
14 of it is based off what you just
15 heard from these dispatchers and
16 myself. However, this fight, this
17 was already put in place before
18 COVID, before the pandemic. My
19 predecessor Frank Halbgherr testified
20 to City Council, and I believe
21 Councilman Jones actually alluded to
22 it. And that right there told you
23 what exactly we needed.

24 Now, again the police
25 department has been doing an amazing

1 effort as, you know, hiring people.
2 However, the problem is now our
3 retention. And before we had so
4 many -- we had other agreements put
5 in place with the prior Chief that we
6 don't now. A lot of those things
7 need to be revisited, you know. As
8 Michelle just said, our training
9 center, our training center is
10 currently the 311 center, who
11 actually is not working there. Are
12 they working remote? I'm not sure.
13 That's not for me to speak on.

14 However, that training center
15 has I want to say between 25 to 30
16 monitors while we've been getting
17 classes of over 40. So, you know,
18 and our training staff does a good
19 job with navigating who they have
20 with what they have. And doing the
21 best that they can to prepare them
22 for when they do get into the room,
23 but those are some of the things that
24 we need to look at again.

25 The funding again is just a

1 start. Again, the morale has been
2 low. Of course the pandemic lowered
3 morale across the world honestly. As
4 far as the senior dispatchers, the
5 supervision and the fire -- when the
6 911 operators look over at Fire and
7 the fire department has civilian
8 supervisors over their operators, it
9 can done. And it's something that
10 really needs to be looked at because
11 over in Fire those are qualified,
12 those are qualified operators that
13 become the supervisors, you know.

14 Over on Police side, I mean,
15 yeah, police, 911 operators, our
16 supervisors are sworn personnel.
17 Now, it is something that is
18 definitely something that we need to
19 look at. Again, working through the
20 pandemic lowered the morale, working
21 through not being able to work
22 remotely, still having to come in.
23 When everyone was home, these 911
24 operators were there.

25 So when you look at it and you

1 ask them to ask for more and more and
2 to continue to doing the job that
3 they do and they do it without
4 question, because they do care --
5 when you ask that and then there's no
6 kind of compensation, nothing to look
7 forward to, that's what our operators
8 look at. So again, that's why we are
9 on this, that's why we're on this
10 Zoom so that everyone can get on
11 board.

12 And with anything that you
13 guys need, I can submit whatever it
14 is you guys need. You know, any
15 person on this Zoom call or any
16 Councilmember.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
18 you, Mr. Zimmitt. And I hear the
19 frustration in your voice and I hear
20 that you guys don't want to keep
21 coming to the same hearing saying the
22 same things. But sometimes progress
23 takes many steps, right. And
24 Councilmember Jones started this off.
25 We've moved forward. We got more

1 people. And now, you know, together
2 we're going to move it even further
3 hopefully with the support of the new
4 Mayor also.

5 So thank you for coming to the
6 hearing. Thank you guys for sharing
7 your testimony. It's really critical
8 in getting us to a different place.

9 MR. ZIMMITT: Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
11 so much, Member -- thank you so much,
12 Member Harrity, for getting my back
13 while we were there.

14 Where are we, Mr. Glass?

15 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, we
16 are now ready for our final panel,
17 the Philadelphia Police Department.
18 That'll be Commissioner John
19 Sanford -- John Stanford and Deputy
20 Commissioner Krista Dahl-Campbell.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
22 so very much.

23 Commissioner, are you there?

24 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: Good
25 morning. It's still morning. I am

1 here. A lot to take in, a lot to
2 unpack there. And, you know, again I
3 hear the echoes of, one, starting
4 with citizens that have called in and
5 testified this morning. You know,
6 again a lot of moving stories, a lot
7 of incidents that I can understand
8 the sentiment of how some folks feel.

9 I want to express my
10 condolences for the folks that we
11 lost in the Kingsessing incident and
12 those that were traumatized as a
13 result of that incident, which
14 ultimately has led us to being here
15 today. And I also want to
16 acknowledge the work that's done by
17 our police communication dispatchers.
18 That is something that goes
19 unnoticed. And, you know, listening
20 to them express that today and, you
21 know, it hits close to home of
22 understanding the work that they do
23 each and every day and it is taken
24 for granted by many. Certainly not,
25 you know, I would say not those of us

1 that understand that and know that in
2 this profession, they are our
3 lifeline on the street as police
4 officers. But it is a very, very
5 challenging profession, and one that
6 gets overlooked. So I can completely
7 understand their sentiment.

8 And hopefully out of this
9 hearing today will come some
10 solutions, one, for them but also
11 moving our department forward and
12 being able to serve the citizens of
13 this City in the highest possible
14 way. I will share my screen and
15 start off with just going through
16 some of the points that have gotten
17 us here. But I may be working
18 backwards in terms of connecting on
19 some of the things, the issues that
20 have been brought up. So we'll kind
21 of jump right into sharing my screen
22 so that everyone can see.

23 All right. So the first thing
24 that was discussed here as it relates
25 to the dispatcher pay, so one of the

1 things that we looked at as a result
2 of analyzing what has been going on
3 with our communications group, the
4 yearly pay, minimum pay is around
5 just over \$42,000. And looking at
6 the averages across the country would
7 be somewhere around \$47,000. Our
8 yearly maximum is around \$53,000,
9 \$53,700. And again, the averages are
10 somewhere around \$64,000.

11 And so, just right off the bat
12 you'd be looking at to bring our
13 folks up to a minimum, they would
14 need a 10 percent increase. And to
15 bring them up to a maximum, you would
16 need a 17 percent increase. And so,
17 I think I heard one of them
18 expressing that early on in testimony
19 that, you know, an increase in the
20 pay levels would definitely do some
21 significance in terms of retention
22 and even so much as hiring folks that
23 are interested in this profession.
24 And quite frankly, individuals that
25 would be able to feed their families

1 based upon a salary that would
2 reflect the work that's being done.
3 And to be quite blunt about it, even
4 those pay amounts still don't reflect
5 the work that they're doing each and
6 every day.

7 When you get into the totals,
8 one of the things that we also
9 discussed on this call, on this
10 hearing is around our employment
11 breakdown. So since 2020, you can
12 see the numbers have significantly
13 increased. 21 people were hired in
14 2020, 103 in '21, 113 in '22 and then
15 118 so far this year. So this year
16 has been the highest over the past
17 four years giving us a total of 355
18 people that have been hired over that
19 period of time.

20 The problem is retaining them.
21 And so, we have lost 304 during that
22 same amount of time. And so, it's
23 one of those things where we're not
24 covering much ground in the amount
25 that we're hiring because of the

1 retention issue. And so, right now I
2 think we're staffed at just a little
3 over 300 but quite naturally needing
4 much more to address the needs and
5 the workload that's in Radio each and
6 every day.

7 As it relates to the 911
8 calls, I heard a couple different
9 community members express a couple
10 different issues but around their
11 calls for service and how long it
12 takes to answer 911. So our overall
13 goal is to answer 90 percent of those
14 calls in under 10 seconds. And you
15 can see the red line there is the
16 baseline for that 90 percent of the
17 calls threshold.

18 And so, you can see this year
19 in 2023 that number has been
20 fluctuating in the 80s which has been
21 significantly higher than previous
22 years as far as the wait time when
23 folks call 911, but you can also see
24 since August that number has been
25 above that 90 percentile for

1 answering those calls in under 10
2 seconds, and that's something that's
3 actually monitored and looked at each
4 and every day. That's something we
5 started doing since, you know,
6 essentially reviewing our process and
7 looking at what we've been doing.
8 That's one of the things that we look
9 at and review each and every day to
10 try to stay within that goal of
11 answering 911 calls within that
12 10-second time frame.

13 So what brought us here in the
14 hearing itself. And I'm not going to
15 rehash everything because,
16 Councilmember Gauthier, you kind of
17 went over this initially. But
18 bringing us back to the fact that it
19 was the incident that happened in
20 early July in which a citizen called
21 911 and reported a shooting incident
22 after hearing gunshots. And so, that
23 information was received improperly
24 and the wrong address was placed into
25 the system of 1600 North 56th Street

1 when it was actually 1500 South 56th
2 Street.

3 As a result, our officers
4 responded to the location. But
5 obviously we know that the result was
6 that this was not the proper
7 location. As a result of that, we
8 put together a working group to
9 pretty much review our practices, and
10 that working group consisted of
11 research and planning,
12 communications, police radio
13 communications, patrol, our Chief
14 strategy office as well as the legal
15 department and to look at what our
16 policies reflected and what we needed
17 to change. And so, out of that we
18 were able to make some changes almost
19 immediately, and some others are
20 going to be more long-term.

21 So one of the things that we
22 did was the police communication
23 dispatcher involved in that call went
24 back through a training session
25 identifying what was wrong or what

1 could have been done looking at
2 improvement and just retraining
3 around that initial incident. One of
4 the other things in terms of looking
5 at was when individuals call 911 what
6 are they asked in terms of our
7 greeting.

8 And so, the greeting was
9 changed from just a 911 radio
10 dispatcher name or I'm sorry, radio
11 dispatcher number, how can we help
12 you. That message, that greeting was
13 changed to now when you call 911,
14 that radio -- that 911 calltaker will
15 provide their radio dispatch number.
16 They will ask the question what is
17 the location of your emergency and
18 does this address have a directional
19 indicator, meaning north, south, east
20 or west. And that was implemented
21 immediately to be able to address any
22 type of issues surrounding a
23 direction. As well as when we do
24 callbacks, that's now a recorded
25 conversation.

1 Before when we would call back
2 to an individual that would call 911,
3 we had a supervisor call back and
4 radio would call back. That call was
5 not recorded. Now, that conversation
6 is being recorded in which citizens
7 will be told that once they are
8 connected with a police department
9 supervisor, that that information at
10 that point is being recorded, so that
11 is something also that has changed as
12 a result of this incident.

13 The long-term solution and,
14 you know, heard it in terms of around
15 training concerns, but one of the
16 long-term solutions is implementing a
17 vendor-based calltaking procedure
18 solution that will essentially come
19 with preformatted questions for the
20 calltaker to utilize when citizens
21 are calling 911. We're looking to
22 have that implemented and fully
23 operational by January of 2025.

24 But just to again give you an
25 idea of some of the immediate

1 solutions that we put in place, give
2 you one example to know that this is
3 working. And so, one of the things
4 was we had an incident in August
5 shortly after implementing the new
6 process of asking the calls and
7 asking the direction of when someone
8 calls. During that incident someone
9 called, a complainant called 911,
10 gave an address of 2500 North 4th
11 Street. Somehow the calltaker
12 entered that as 2500 North Broad
13 Street. When police arrived to that
14 location, nothing was showing so it
15 initiated a callback.

16 When that callback was
17 conducted, it was determined that
18 that was the wrong location and
19 therefore was rerouted to the correct
20 location which happened to be in the
21 26th District. And so, that process,
22 that person, the calltaker was
23 counseled and retrained on how to
24 identify locations in just what they
25 were doing.

1 But just to give you some
2 quick roundup of some of the things
3 that we have been doing to address
4 this issue, and I'm just taking my
5 screen back off. I'm open to any
6 questions that you may have.
7 Hopefully just running through kind
8 of briefly to kind of sum up some of
9 the things that have been addressed
10 so far in the hearing.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: So thank
12 you, Commissioner, for your
13 testimony. Before I turn it over to
14 other members of this Committee, very
15 quickly if you were to name the
16 takeaways because you were elaborate
17 in your presentation and testimony,
18 takeaways is we are going to do the
19 following things so that this never
20 happens again, and what types of
21 redundancies are we going to employ
22 to make sure that we check and check
23 twice before we kind of close a
24 request? Give me those succinct
25 things that we've learned from this

1 instance.

2 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So
3 we've learned, one, around the
4 training component that making sure
5 that our folks are properly trained,
6 and I think even some of the
7 dispatchers that spoke today touched
8 on that. So that is one piece of
9 that, is making sure that all of our
10 staff are trained properly. Also,
11 the policy around the callbacks. And
12 so, making sure that there is a
13 supervisor when they are conducting
14 the callbacks from the confidential
15 caller location that, one, that's
16 being verified, two, that that's
17 being recorded so that there isn't a
18 discrepancy and if there is a need to
19 review, that we have that available
20 to us.

21 The other immediate correction
22 is the fact that when you call 911 we
23 are asking very specifically is there
24 an address, directional indicator,
25 and that would eliminate any

1 confusion around north, south, east
2 and west. And so, hopefully having
3 that now implemented will be very,
4 very direct in terms of when people
5 are calling being able to ascertain
6 that information as quickly as
7 possible and as accurately as
8 possible.

9 We're going to continue
10 implementing the training as I stated
11 but also looking at that more long-
12 term solution with additional
13 preformatted questions. That's
14 something that we want to see moving
15 forward and see that implemented as
16 quickly as possible as well as
17 continue to hire. And so, one of the
18 big takeaways is also hiring more and
19 more dispatchers. And we've done
20 that this year. You can see this has
21 been the highest year, but trying to
22 essentially fill those positions as
23 quickly as possible. But a big part
24 is around retention, and I think you
25 heard it here today that if we can

1 find a way as a City to be able to
2 retain these individuals that are
3 doing such a strenuous task and such
4 a stressful task, quite frankly again
5 I think that keeps us at a level of
6 having employees that want to be here
7 that feel that they are appreciated
8 in the work that they're doing and
9 will allow us to keep the staffing
10 levels where they need to be.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Just one
12 other question to add and I'm going
13 to turn it over. When someone calls
14 911 and they hang up, what is the
15 wellness check procedure that could
16 be involved? If suddenly I'm calling
17 911 and I'm in a domestic dispute and
18 the partner involved threatens me and
19 I hang up, what is the appropriate
20 protocol procedure to check on
21 whoever that person was that called?

22 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So if
23 there is -- and I think two different
24 examples were kind of provided. If
25 there is a situation where we answer

1 and there is an incident where the
2 dispatcher can hear some type of
3 commotion and essentially there is a
4 hung carrier -- not hung carrier, but
5 an open line in the sense of where
6 the person, the call is disconnected
7 as a result of something that you can
8 identify that warrants a callback or
9 that indicates there is some type of
10 emergency situation, then a callback
11 can be conducted in that situation.

12 I also heard someone say that
13 when they call 911 if the call is not
14 picked up, if there is not a call
15 that's picked up or answered, there
16 isn't a process in place at this
17 point of just calling back the random
18 numbers of 911. There is not. And
19 so, that's something we can examine
20 and look at. But again, that's not a
21 procedure in place of just --
22 essentially missed calls that are
23 returned, that is not something
24 that's in place at this point in
25 time. But that's something we can

1 examine and take a look at.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, I
3 think for a number of reasons we
4 should. I remember a couple of times
5 my kids used to dial 911 and hang up.
6 And suddenly we would get a call back
7 and even people coming to the door to
8 do a wellness check, and this is
9 something that I think, yes, adds
10 steps and work to the individual
11 officer but in the case where someone
12 is being intimidated or even held
13 hostage, it might be an appropriate
14 thing for us to examine how we
15 proceed when in cases of disconnect,
16 so something to think about.

17 Mr. Glass, who do we have that
18 wants to question the Commissioner?

19 THE CLERK: Mr. Chair,
20 Councilmember Gaut --

21 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: Sir,
22 if I could just point out one
23 thing --

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Say it
25 again.

1 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: If I
2 can point out something in response
3 to your question around that, is if
4 one thing we have to just keep in
5 mind is that the cell phone usage
6 today is much higher than landlines.
7 And so, when folks if they are
8 calling from a cell phone and a call
9 is disconnected, as far as a wellness
10 check, that's not always possible
11 because we won't know their location.

12 And so, I know someone had
13 asked that question earlier. If it's
14 a landline where we know it's tied to
15 an exact address, there is a
16 possibility there. But when it comes
17 to a cell phone where it's bouncing
18 off a tower, we may not be able to
19 pinpoint an exact location. So I
20 just wanted to clarify that.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: But,
22 Commissioner, can we at least call
23 back to the number?

24 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: Oh,
25 absolutely, absolutely. And that's

1 the part that I think we can take a
2 look at how that would go about being
3 done and the steps for that. I just
4 was referencing the actual wellness
5 check, because so many people use
6 cell phones essentially as their home
7 phone today because they're always on
8 the go. There are a number of folks
9 that don't have those landlines. And
10 so, I just don't want the general
11 public to hear and think that we
12 would then have the ability to know
13 where they're at just based on their
14 cell phone.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Understood
16 and thank you for that.

17 Member Gauthier.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
19 you so much, Mr. Chair.

20 And thank you, Commissioner
21 Stanford, for your testimony and for
22 your partnership. Council is not
23 ignorant of the fact that 911
24 dispatches nationwide are
25 experiencing these issues. This is

1 not a Philadelphia-specific problem,
2 but we look forward to continuing to
3 work together to enact a
4 Philadelphia-specific solution. And
5 I also want to thank you,
6 Commissioner Stanford, and Deputy
7 Commissioner Dahl-Campbell and your
8 team for following through on your
9 pledge to investigate the incident on
10 July 2nd and for taking the steps to
11 implement changes to ensure that this
12 never happens again.

13 What struck me in what
14 happened with that call related to
15 the initial victim of the mass
16 shooting was that we had a person who
17 was probably scared, but they called
18 911. They were descriptive about
19 what happened. They even
20 participated in the callback, right.
21 I really appreciate the change
22 towards making sure that the
23 callbacks are recorded. I thought it
24 was unfortunate that we weren't able
25 to parse through a recording of the

1 callback to understand where we went
2 wrong, so I think that's a meaningful
3 change.

4 I did want to ask you about
5 this sort of preformatted -- the
6 questions with the new vendor. Can
7 you explain why that would take until
8 2025 and what the process will be to
9 get that in place?

10 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: I can
11 pull in -- yeah, I was just about to
12 tap in Deputy Dahl-Campbell. She can
13 pull someone from her team to explain
14 the process that we're going through
15 to get the vendor and everything up
16 and running.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
18 CAMPBELL: Good morning, everyone and
19 good morning, Councilwoman. I am
20 Krista Dahl-Campbell. I'm the Deputy
21 Commissioner of Organizational
22 Services. I just want to say again I
23 appreciate everyone taking the time
24 to listen and go through this. Our
25 dispatchers are amazing folks that do

1 an incredible job. I always say it's
2 definitely more than a job. It's a
3 career and it's a calling, and I'm
4 personally grateful to them.

5 For your question, I'm going
6 to turn it over to Joseph McBride so
7 he can kind of walk through why we
8 have those dates associated with that
9 implementation.

10 MR. DELANEY: I'm Sergeant
11 Delaney from Inspector McBride's
12 office. Can you hear me?

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes. State
14 your name for the record please --

15 MR. DELANEY: Sergeant
16 (inaudible) Delaney. I work in
17 Inspector McBride's office. And to
18 the question about why it's until
19 January 2025 for the implementation
20 of that, currently right now the City
21 with OIT and the Philadelphia Fire
22 Department and the Philadelphia
23 Police Department are working on a
24 unified CAD system, that's a
25 computer-aided dispatch software. So

1 anyone that went into the rooms, ours
2 in the fire room last time would have
3 seen that we were on two different
4 CAD platforms that didn't talk to
5 each other.

6 We're moving to a unified CAD
7 platform that talks to each other.
8 And then from that, we build the
9 interface that allows APCO to be able
10 to work. So we have to get to that
11 CAD platform to create the interface
12 so that we can put APCO into place.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.
14 Thank you so much for that.

15 My next question is for the
16 Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner
17 Dahl-Campbell. I'm curious to know
18 if our dispatchers handle more calls
19 per capita than other 911
20 dispatchers. And if so, how much
21 more?

22 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So I
23 don't know in terms of if we have a
24 breakdown per capita. But I'll tell
25 you anywhere between 2.5 million to 3

1 million calls for service a year
2 comes in for this City. And when you
3 look at it was touched on the more
4 and more violent crime that we have,
5 the more and more crime that we have
6 in the City overall, those calls
7 increase. All right. And so, that's
8 why it's such an important piece and
9 this all goes hand-in-hand of us
10 continuing to attack the crime in the
11 City, because as we drive crime down,
12 both violent crime and quality-of-
13 life crime and all crime, property
14 crime, as we continue to drive crime
15 down, those calls into 911 are
16 decreased. And so, that's one of the
17 big differences that you see between
18 our City and some of the surrounding
19 townships in neighboring areas, is
20 that they don't have the same amount
21 of violent crime, the same amount of
22 that call volume.

23 And so, that's just something
24 we have to be mindful of working as a
25 City, all of us, to drive the crime

1 down and continue to drive down some
2 of the issues that we see, because
3 ultimately that would lessen the load
4 of what comes into 911 to allow many
5 more of those calls, those
6 dispatches. Same thing with people
7 having to wait for an abundance of
8 time for an officer to arrive, that's
9 not because the officers don't want
10 to come and handle their incident or
11 that they don't care. It's just
12 because they are running from call to
13 call. And so, it's just that's all a
14 part of the call volume. But I don't
15 have that breakdown per capita. I
16 don't know if that's something DC
17 Dahl-Campbell, if those numbers are
18 available or if we need to get those
19 and get back.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
21 CAMPBELL: Staff Inspector McBride,
22 do you have them? If not, we can
23 look to get them.

24 INSPECTOR McBRIDE: No,
25 Commissioner --

1 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yeah,
2 I -- go ahead. I'm sorry.

3 INSPECTOR McBRIDE: Each 911
4 call center may be a little
5 different. So if you're just
6 comparing us to Bucks County, Bucks
7 County's intaking all those 911 calls
8 and then dispatching them to
9 different townships, so the data from
10 Philadelphia is not going to match
11 the data for Bucks County and vice
12 versa, and that may happen in
13 different places. Just take Kansas
14 City, for example. Kansas City's in
15 a county. They're dispatching
16 multiple different locations,
17 different cities, different
18 townships. So our numbers may not
19 match someone else's numbers because
20 they're going out different as
21 they're coming in.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Do you
23 all think it's important for us to
24 have a sense of that? We saw the
25 chart about where we sit in terms of

1 minimum and maximum salaries and how
2 we compare regionally. But do you
3 think it's also important as we're
4 pegging the salaries of our existing
5 staff and trying to be competitive to
6 hire new staff, do you think it's
7 important for us to understand how
8 our call volume also compares to
9 those other areas?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
11 CAMPBELL: Councilwoman, I totally
12 agree. I do think it's very
13 important because I think it will
14 show the enormous volume that these
15 dispatchers have to dispatch, so
16 we'll look to get that exact so that
17 we can send it in and get back to you
18 on it.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
20 you. We heard the dispatchers talk
21 about the consequences of not having
22 promotable levels for civilian
23 dispatchers. In the past, I know PPD
24 has said that they need, you know,
25 that we need sworn officers to serve

1 as supervisors because this work
2 involves deploying officers into
3 potentially life-threatening
4 situations. I also agree that this
5 is important, but the current
6 hierarchy means that dispatchers have
7 virtually nowhere to go but elsewhere
8 when they want to move into a higher
9 paying or higher responsibility role.

10 Would PPD be open to
11 introducing a promotion system for
12 civilian dispatchers so that we can
13 better compete with regional police
14 departments to keep the best talent
15 here with the City of Philadelphia?

16 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: I
17 think that's absolutely something
18 that we can look into. And I would
19 agree that there needs to be the
20 opportunity for folks to advance. I
21 mean, that's a real reality. The
22 same way we have the ability for our
23 sworn personnel to have the
24 opportunity to advance, that
25 opportunity needs to exist for our

1 civilian professionals as well. And
2 so, I think that that can definitely
3 be open for discussion.

4 It doesn't necessarily mean
5 that we replace sworn personnel in
6 terms of in that, and I think that
7 that needs to be clear too because
8 sometimes it's that misunderstanding
9 that you have to replace sworn
10 personnel. I think there can be a
11 combination of the two. It's just a
12 matter of defining what their tasks
13 are and how that hierarchy will look
14 and operate. But I definitely think
15 in today's time you have to have an
16 opportunity for advancement in
17 careers because that's the only thing
18 that is going to realistically keep
19 people or make people want to stay in
20 this profession and particularly in
21 our department. So I think that
22 that's a discussion we can absolutely
23 have.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
25 you. We also heard Mr. Zimmitt and

1 the other dispatchers share concerns
2 they have about the readiness of some
3 of our new hires. Can you talk a bit
4 about our recruitment selection and
5 training process for the dispatch
6 positions?

7 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So I
8 will give that again to DC Dahl-
9 Campbell? You can go into that one a
10 little bit for her, please.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
12 CAMPBELL: Sure. And I can have
13 Staff Inspector McBride get into
14 specifics, but I can tell you that
15 we've done a good job at recruiting.
16 We get a lot of applications that
17 come through. We go through them.
18 We certainly don't accept everyone
19 for a variety of reasons, but we look
20 to try and fill these vacancies that
21 we have.

22 Once we are able to apply and
23 be accepted, we actually just
24 yesterday started a new class so they
25 will be in training for the 12 weeks.

1 We'll have a ceremony and then they
2 go into another form of training
3 where they're learning different
4 skills in the room. So there's a
5 training process in place to get them
6 ready to enter the room. But it is
7 intensive for our staff to be able to
8 train them. Training obviously takes
9 additional energy and work, but they
10 do an excellent job in getting folks
11 ready to enter the room.

12 I'll turn it over to Staff
13 Inspector McBride to kind of break
14 down the process of bringing folks
15 in.

16 INSPECTOR McBRIDE: So we get
17 a list from City Human Resources and
18 then here at Communications Division.
19 We interview all those candidates.
20 Those candidates are then chosen.
21 Like the Commissioner said, some are
22 rejected for reasons. There are
23 standards that they have to meet.
24 They have to be CJIS-compliant to be
25 able to work inside the police radio

1 room. Some people cannot get over
2 the hurdle of being CJIS-compliant.
3 Once they are hired by the
4 City, they go through an intensive
5 inclassroom training through our
6 training center. There's a
7 graduation that occurs. The
8 Commissioner attends and it's great
9 recognition for the hard work that
10 they have done to get to that point,
11 but then their training continues
12 inside a live environment. They sit
13 down with senior dispatchers. They
14 sit down with experienced dispatchers
15 and each day after their training in
16 those 12 weeks while they're in that
17 live environment, they're critiqued
18 and evaluations are performed by
19 those senior dispatchers and the
20 supervisors and the supervisors sign
21 off on those critiques. Hopefully,
22 most of the time they're positive and
23 would be able to help that dispatcher
24 as they're going through the training
25 process in the room.

1 I think what happens is once
2 they leave that classroom environment
3 and they step into that live
4 environment, then they get to really
5 experience the challenges that come
6 with being a dispatcher. A lot of
7 people you can tell them over and
8 over again what a crying mother
9 sounds like when their child's been
10 shot, and that scream, that blood-
11 curdling scream, but until you hear
12 it live, it's very different. So
13 that's some of the issues that once
14 they enter that live environment,
15 that they get themselves into, that
16 they have to overcome to become
17 successful in that room. And I think
18 a lot of times that's where maybe we
19 lose a couple people in that room.

20 But we do our best to
21 continuously train them vigorously
22 and if during that time they need
23 that help, that help's available to
24 them through our EAP program either
25 with the police department or with

1 D.C. 33, and we also have the police
2 clergy who walk through every
3 Wednesday to speak to our
4 dispatchers, our trainees to see if
5 anyone needs to just step outside and
6 get some quiet time and be able to
7 just get what's off their chest and
8 be able to talk to somebody else. So
9 we do have things in place that help
10 them and we are constantly motivating
11 them to try to get to the end goal,
12 which is to be a professional
13 dispatcher in a very, very busy
14 environment.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
16 you. Before I pass it off to my
17 colleagues, I just wanted to thank
18 you, Commissioner and your whole
19 team, for your insightful and honest
20 answers. I think that the main
21 takeaway for me is that we will never
22 be able to recruit and retain top
23 talent if we keep paying our 911
24 dispatchers a below-average salary to
25 handle an above-average call volume,

1 right.

2 We are a first class city. We
3 need to be recruiting first class
4 talent by paying them first class
5 wages, and this is already a
6 conversation that we've been having
7 as part of Council's midyear transfer
8 ordinance process. And today's
9 hearing I think reinforces the
10 urgency of the issue. And so, I just
11 wanted to thank the team at PPD for
12 participating and also thank the
13 dispatchers and every constituent
14 that joined us today as well. And
15 with that, I'll pass it on to my
16 colleagues.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
18 Member.

19 Are there any others to
20 question the Commissioner?

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah, I
22 have a question. Hand is raised,
23 sir, Mr. Chairman.

24 Commissioner --

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member

1 Johnson, please proceed.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
3 very much. Commissioner Stanford,
4 good to see you as always. Thank you
5 for your leadership. I just had a
6 couple questions regarding, one, the
7 training. Is there a trauma support
8 component that's a part of the
9 training for the 911 dispatchers?
10 And then, two, what's the recruitment
11 strategy? And again, I know we've
12 been down this road before regarding
13 dealing with 911 and staffing levels
14 and issues around it.

15 And so, I'm trying to get a
16 better sense of what's the actual
17 strategy moving forward. And I know
18 there's some advocacy regarding
19 additional support for 911
20 dispatches, which is definitely
21 greatly needed. But I just want to
22 get an idea about like, okay, we have
23 the funding, but what's the actual
24 plan, what's the recruitment plan to
25 staff up to the level that we need

1 besides also on the increase in pay?
2 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: Good
3 afternoon, sir, and thank you for
4 your question. So in terms of the
5 trauma component, that's a part of
6 that. And as you heard Staff
7 Inspector McBride address the fact
8 that we have EAP, both ours as well
9 as District Council 33's available.
10 And a part of having the clergy
11 coming through that space every week
12 is to give folks an opportunity.
13 Sometimes the faith-based component
14 is a little more inviting and
15 welcoming in the sense that it
16 doesn't feel like it's just a part of
17 your employer doing this, right, and
18 so exploring that opportunity.
19 And we're open to constantly
20 looking at new ways and additional
21 ways to enhance that component for
22 both our sworn and our nonsworn
23 because this is a job that puts a lot
24 on you and sometimes you don't even
25 realize what you're carrying until

1 someone, you know, either confronts
2 you or has an opportunity to just
3 recognize that you have something
4 that's weighing on you. And so, we
5 try to be mindful of that.

6 As far as the recruitment
7 effort, so we've been trying to push
8 to hire more and we've been doing
9 that very good this year. But we can
10 always look at increasing again our
11 pathways for that as well. The same
12 way that we have increased and had a
13 recruitment strategy around our
14 sworn, we definitely can do this
15 around our, you know, professional
16 positions in terms of nonsworn
17 positions, both for dispatchers and
18 across the board to make sure that we
19 are getting the best and the
20 brightest. And so, that's something
21 that definitely I think we need to
22 explore a little bit more as to that
23 recruitment strategy, really get
24 something down, narrow something down
25 that's going to be a little bit

1 firmer than what we have that will be
2 a little more concrete, if you will,
3 to make sure that we are getting the
4 best and the brightest to come
5 through that opportunity.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah.
7 Well, thank you, Commissioner. And I
8 will hope that -- I know there's a
9 budget cycle that's going to come up
10 in June, right, that when you and
11 your team come back to City Council
12 that -- because I believe this is a
13 sense of urgency or it should be a
14 sense of urgency around this issue,
15 right. We're addressing levels of
16 not only gun violence but crime just
17 in general, right, down to homicides,
18 down to some shootings, obviously
19 we're dealing with other issues,
20 rather it's carjacking, rather it's
21 robberies and so forth. And
22 obviously the 911 dispatchers play a
23 critical and vital role, right.

24 And again, my personal
25 experience, shoot-out on the corner

1 of my block, right. I call 911. I
2 could have just picked up the phone
3 and called someone personally because
4 I have a lot of your cell numbers,
5 but let me go through the protocol as
6 a public citizen and call 911, and
7 that jawn just rang and rang and rang
8 and rang, right. And I'm like, okay,
9 this is real. And I remember
10 speaking about it on the Council
11 floor as a follow-up.

12 And so, I would just expect
13 that part of your team when they do
14 come back in front of Council for our
15 budget hearing and we are given
16 updates, that we should see a robust
17 plan rather it's around recruitment,
18 social media, same thing like you're
19 doing at the police department,
20 social media, commercials recruiting
21 people, and especially with us being
22 a number one big city when it comes
23 to poverty, people looking for work,
24 right. And so, I think increasing
25 the pay scale and also aggressively

1 going about recruiting people to come
2 and do this great work I think will
3 go a long way. And so, that's all I
4 wanted to say.

5 As always, good to see you.
6 Keep up the good work with you and
7 your team in terms of keeping our
8 City safe. Thank you, Commissioner.

9 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: Thank
10 you.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
12 Member Johnson.

13 Who do we have next,
14 Mr. Glass?

15 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
16 Councilmember Harrity would like to
17 be recognized.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
19 Harrity.

20 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Leader,
21 how are you. My questions are -- and
22 I heard Councilman Johnson hint on
23 this too, is the mental health aspect
24 of it I mean I'm, you know, I've seen
25 it firsthand. My father, he was

1 assigned to the Tri-State Strike
2 Force for Narcotics and, man, he
3 would come home some days after some
4 of the things he had, you know. He
5 was a mess.

6 My concerns are, you know,
7 I've heard before just with police
8 officers they get like one visit for
9 free a year, and then it's \$150 a
10 visit like the same as medical. Is
11 that true because for me if there's
12 anyone that deserves to be able to
13 speak to somebody whenever they need
14 to, it would definitely be our first
15 responders and our dispatchers
16 because like we said they get the
17 trauma first, you know what I mean.

18 People call them. They're
19 trying to talk to them through what
20 to do to keep the person alive or
21 help with the mental break or
22 whatever is going on. Just do you
23 guys feel that you're getting enough
24 attention when it comes to mental
25 health for the officers and the

1 dispatchers?

2 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So in
3 terms of EAP, we have all of those
4 options that are available. There's
5 no cost to anyone for that. We've
6 even added in terms of our
7 dispatchers into our crisis
8 intervention training and having
9 access to the coordinator of that for
10 having the opportunity to discuss any
11 type of issues that they may be
12 encountering.

13 But obviously, one of the
14 other things, health and wellness is
15 a big component of the department.
16 And so, moving forward we're
17 revamping our EAP program, also
18 introducing an early intervention
19 system that will be able to address
20 perhaps the needs of officers and
21 civilian personnel. Moving forward,
22 so there is a lot that we're trying
23 to do to, one, we acknowledge that
24 that's a space that needs more
25 attention from a department

1 standpoint. And so, we're doing that
2 and we obviously welcome any
3 additional support, you know, from
4 City Council and from the City as it
5 relates to that, because again we're
6 certainly not going to turn down any
7 help when it comes to being able to
8 make sure that our men and women --
9 and when I say men and women, I'm
10 talking about sworn and nonsworn --
11 have the support that they need and
12 have the resources available to them
13 because this is a job that weighs --
14 again as I said repeatedly, this is a
15 job that weighs on you and you never
16 know which one of those incidents is
17 going to hit you until it hits you.

18 And so, being conscious of
19 that and acknowledging that, we are
20 open to any support that we can have
21 around that area.

22 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:

23 Appreciate that. Like I said, it's
24 for me keeping our officers in -- you
25 know, did you say that you have

1 clergy so they can talk to? Now, I
2 actually like that because some
3 people really don't feel comfortable
4 talking to a doctor, you know what I
5 mean, because they know, well, this
6 might go on my record. But being
7 able to talk to somebody else that is
8 also -- a lot of clergy go to
9 training for this kind of stuff while
10 they're in the ministry and stuff
11 like that to be able to deal with
12 their patrons.

13 So, yeah, I like that idea too
14 that they may be able to speak to
15 clergy or somebody who may not
16 necessarily be somebody that's going
17 to write the notebook and go back to
18 their, you know, give them more
19 freedom to speak. So thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER STANFORD:
21 Absolutely. We utilize our clergy.
22 They sometimes don't get enough
23 credit for how they're there as well
24 our chaplain and clergy that are
25 available. They do this every day

1 for even our sworn personnel. And
2 so, they are available not just in,
3 you know, times of crisis, but they
4 visit our roll calls, visit our
5 districts and our units as another
6 means of support for our folks.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
9 Member Harrity.

10 Member Gauthier, did you have
11 follow-up questions?

12 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: No.
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. With
15 that, who do we have, Mr. Glass? Is
16 that it?

17 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, that
18 was our final witness for this panel
19 and there are no other members
20 seeking to be recognized at this
21 time.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are there
23 any other people wishing to testify
24 on this resolution that we have not
25 heard from?

1 (No response.)

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing
3 none, we will thank the people who
4 testified today. The insight is
5 useful and will be utilized as we go
6 forward developing a strategy to
7 address our 911 scenario and
8 department within the City of
9 Philadelphia, so thank you for your
10 testimony.

11 And we will now proceed with
12 Bill No. 230510. Mr. Glass, will you
13 read again the title of that bill.

14 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
15 Bill No. 230510, amending Chapter
16 10-600 of The Philadelphia Code,
17 entitled "Public Spaces, Prohibited
18 Conduct," by prohibiting certain
19 official coverings from being worn in
20 certain spaces, all under certain
21 terms and conditions.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
23 Mr. Glass.

24 I'd like to recognize the
25 author of this bill, Member Phillips

1 for remarks.

2 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Good
3 morning -- good afternoon now
4 actually. Thank you, Chairman and
5 members of the Committee on Public
6 Safety and viewing members of the
7 public. Today you will hear Bill No.
8 230510, which I introduced to ban
9 individuals from wearing ski masks in
10 public spaces. This bill and
11 amendment to it which this Committee
12 will vote on was written in lockstep
13 with the Administration and Law
14 Department. We are secure and
15 certain that this ban has legality.
16 And to repeat, we're certain that
17 this bill has legality.

18 And I will remind Committee
19 members that this ban is not
20 unprecedented in many states and
21 municipalities. It is not
22 unorthodox, including this is
23 occurring in Virginia, West Virginia,
24 Florida, South Carolina and Georgia.
25 And before the pandemic, New York

1 City and the District of Columbia.
2 There has been misinformation about
3 what this bill does so just let me be
4 clear. The ski mask bill covers
5 school buildings, recreation centers,
6 daycares, parks, City-owned buildings
7 and all modes of public
8 transportation. Additionally, there
9 are exceptions for holiday costumes,
10 religious garments, wearing ski masks
11 for your job or trade, theatrical
12 productions, winter sports and those
13 lawfully engaged in First Amendment
14 activities.

15 As we all know, casually
16 wearing ski masks hinders law
17 enforcement from identifying
18 dangerous criminals. So we recall
19 that in September 2022 five mass
20 individuals, some or all of whom were
21 ski masks shot into a crowd of people
22 attending the junior-varsity football
23 scrimmage, killing a 14-year-old and
24 injuring four others. In May 2023, a
25 shooter wearing a ski mask shot and

1 killed a 15-year-old high school
2 student on a public bus in July 2023.
3 In July of 2023, an attacker dressed
4 in a ski mask body armor killed five
5 people and injured two children in
6 Kingsessing. It must end.

7 We cannot allow dangerous
8 criminals to evade detection by
9 wearing ski masks in public spaces,
10 not to mention intimidate the
11 neighbors each of us were elected to
12 serve. I would like to note for the
13 Committee that this bill has received
14 widespread support among our Council
15 colleagues with 10 Councilmembers
16 listed as co-sponsors. With these
17 facts and context and also in mind, I
18 look forward to having a productive
19 hearing and seeing the passage of
20 this bill so it can reach the Council
21 floor.

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
24 so much, Member Phillips, for your
25 attention to this issue.

1 Are there any other members of
2 this Committee who would like to
3 speak on this bill?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing
6 none, Mr. Glass, can you read the
7 names of the first panel to testify
8 on this bill.

9 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
10 Our first witness will be Deputy
11 Commissioner Francis Healy.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Deputy
13 Commissioner, welcome. Thank you for
14 your patience. You know what to do.
15 Please state your name for the record
16 and begin your testimony.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HEALY:
18 Thank you, sir. Good morning,
19 Chairperson Jones, Vice-Chair Johnson
20 and other members of the Committee on
21 Public Safety. My name as mentioned
22 is Fran Healy. I'm the Deputy
23 Commissioner in the Philadelphia
24 Police Department now and I'm
25 responsible for both the Offices of

1 Legal Affairs and Professional
2 Responsibility. First on behalf of
3 Commissioner Johnson or I'm sorry,
4 Commissioner Stanford, I apologize,
5 thank you for allowing the
6 Philadelphia Police Department the
7 opportunity to voice its opinion on
8 Bill No. 230510 amending City Code
9 10-613.

10 For a myriad of reasons,
11 COVID-19 seriously impacted the
12 policing profession across the
13 country and for that matter across
14 the world. However, the mask mandate
15 was incredibly troubling from the law
16 enforcement perspective. There was a
17 time not so long ago when any average
18 police officer would see a person
19 donning a mask before entering a
20 convenience store or a bank and they
21 would believe a robbery was about to
22 occur. I'm certain the clerks felt
23 that way as well when encountering
24 masked individuals.

25 However, the pandemic changed

1 that mindset where people were
2 actually more fearful of people
3 without masks than with masks. This
4 complicated policing as you can
5 imagine. But as I mentioned, this is
6 not just Philadelphia across the
7 world. Criminals quickly learn
8 benefits of masks, especially when
9 everyone was wearing one. The one
10 thing criminals hate the most is
11 being visible. Obscurity is their
12 mantra and the mask mandates made it
13 easy for criminals everywhere.
14 Pandemic's over and we're getting
15 somewhat back to normal. But many
16 people, especially those with
17 compromised immune systems or other
18 health issues still utilize medical
19 masks.

20 Nonetheless, criminals have
21 continued using masks to avoid
22 capture and it remains problematic.
23 So the department fully supports the
24 intent and rationale behind this
25 ordinance, and we thank the

1 Councilmember, which is the purpose
2 which is to combat the use of masks
3 by criminals to evade arrest at
4 prosecution.

5 Due to the issues I mentioned
6 regarding individuals with medical
7 concerns, an outright mask ban would
8 be problematic. So the department
9 appreciates the narrow scope of this
10 ordinance, just ski masks and
11 balaclavas. These types of face
12 coverings are not usually used by
13 individuals for medical purposes, and
14 we think it's a reasonable balance
15 between the right of persons to wear
16 medical masks and law enforcement
17 need to identify criminals.

18 I will say the enforcement can
19 be complicated. It's really going to
20 be a little difficult with the
21 exceptions, but the department is
22 incredibly grateful to City Council
23 for being proactive and responsive to
24 the concerns of law enforcement in
25 its efforts to combat crime

1 throughout the City. This concludes
2 my testimony. I'd be happy to answer
3 any questions.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
5 so much, Deputy Commissioner, and
6 thank you for your continued service
7 in law enforcement in our City.

8 Are there any questions for
9 the Deputy Commissioner?

10 Member Phillips.

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
12 Councilmember Lozada would like to be
13 recognized.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
15 Lozada, please proceed.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Deputy
17 Commissioner, thank you so much for
18 your testimony. My question is if
19 this were to become a law, if we
20 passed this, how enforceable would
21 this type of a ban be? You know,
22 we're living in a time right now
23 where certain policies are put in
24 place. We think that they're great
25 policies. We think they're excellent

1 for public safety. And then when we
2 operationalize them, they end up
3 being a flop or they become
4 problematic or the courts don't want
5 to enforce, the District Attorney
6 doesn't want to do something. So how
7 is this -- what's the chances of
8 something like this being enforced?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HEALY:
10 Well, the issue of enforcement and
11 being effective in crime is
12 incredibly important to understand
13 the distinction. This allows the
14 police officer actually to intervene
15 when they see someone wearing these
16 masks. Now, in essence are you
17 really going to cite them for the
18 mask all the time, possibly not. But
19 that's really not necessarily the
20 value of the ordinance.

21 The ordinance gives the
22 officers the legal authority to
23 intervene, to hopefully intervene
24 before something bad happens. If
25 during the course of the

1 investigation it's somebody just
2 wearing a ski mask, are we going to
3 cite every person. The answer to
4 that question is no. But the issue
5 is having the ability to stop the
6 individuals because we are
7 scrutinized very heavily on, you
8 know, who we stop. When we stop
9 them, we have to have reasonable
10 suspicion of criminal activity or
11 violation. And that's really -- and
12 I thank the Councilmember for this.
13 This gives us the authority to do a
14 little more.

15 Are we going to cite people?
16 I don't think that was ever the
17 purpose to cite everyone wearing a
18 mask. It's for the ability for the
19 police officers to take that
20 proactive step and this will help us.
21 I mean, the code violations are a
22 great tool quite frankly to law
23 enforcement. And I'll be very
24 honest, in 2016 when the -- I hate to
25 use the word decriminalize, but when

1 Mayor Kenney kind of decriminalized a
2 lot of the summary offenses at the
3 state level into the code violation,
4 there's a lot of people, myself
5 included in law enforcement, that
6 were a little skeptical. But in
7 retrospect, we found out that they're
8 incredibly useful because they allow
9 us to do our job, allow us to get in
10 and do what we have to do, put hands
11 on people if we have to. But it
12 allows us to intervene, but also
13 there's no backend consequences for a
14 lot of people.

15 So the whole issue of
16 criminalizing some low-level behavior
17 has kind of been taken away, so it's
18 actually kind of a win-win. We see
19 this specifically when we have large
20 crowds and disturbances, but we've
21 seen for the RN -- or I'm sorry, for
22 the DNC, we were able to do what we
23 need to do, clear scenes, clear
24 people, but there was no lasting
25 impact on their lives, so it was a

1 win-win, which was diametrically
2 opposed to what happened in 2000, the
3 2000 RNC. We didn't have that
4 option. We had to arrest people.

5 And so, there was a lot of
6 lawsuits, there was a lot of money
7 spent and there was a lot of ugliness
8 that now the CVN actually has
9 prevented, so it's been a real win
10 for us to have that as I guess in our
11 arsenal. So I appreciate
12 Councilmember Phillips providing
13 this. It will give us a tool to
14 intervene and hopefully stop some
15 criminal activity from happening.
16 But I don't think we're necessarily
17 going to be overly citing people for
18 wearing a ski mask, but it allows my
19 officers to take some proactive
20 action.

21 Like I said, every stop that
22 we make has to be documented, fill
23 out the report, it's checked out by
24 the ACLU folks. So this gives us the
25 lawful authority to do that in these

1 cases and hopefully intervene and
2 stop a crime from happening. I hope
3 I answered your question. You
4 probably asked me --

5 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HEALY: --
7 how to make a watch and I told you
8 how to make a watch.

9 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes, it
10 does. It does, it actually does.
11 And I mean, I want to be clear. I'm
12 100 percent supportive of what
13 Councilmember Phillips is doing here.
14 You know, there's just a lot of
15 frustration. When you talk to
16 different officers about different
17 policies that are put in place, that
18 at the end ultimately end up being a
19 waste of time to them.

20 And so, what I don't want to
21 do is add to that frustration but
22 allow for my colleagues and our
23 viewers, right, and the residents of
24 the City of Philadelphia to
25 understand what the purpose of this

1 is and how this tool actually helps
2 and supports your officers. So thank
3 you for that explanation.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HEALY:
5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
7 Member Lozada.

8 Real quick, I want to applaud
9 the author of this bill for the
10 courageous step to draw the
11 distinction from a massive mask ban
12 to particular areas where this kind
13 of mask would be kind of scrutinized
14 and create probable cause. It's a
15 good balance to not overstigmatize
16 young people but enough of a balance
17 to create probable cause.

18 I remember -- as a young
19 person you won't remember this,
20 Member Phillips. A lot of guys in my
21 generation used to walk with these
22 industrial screwdrivers, these thick
23 screwdrivers in the back of their
24 pocket. Now, either, A, they were
25 going to go fix their bikes or, B,

1 they were getting ready to break in a
2 house and not knowing that that was
3 considered at the time a burglary
4 tool and that cops had the ability to
5 stop us and question where's your
6 bike you're fixing or we want to stop
7 you from doing what you might have in
8 mind. And it is a delicate, tight
9 rope walk that we do in order to try
10 to keep reasonably us from being
11 prejudicial, stereotypical and
12 keeping the public safe. So thank
13 you for your courage in this regard.

14 Any other questions,
15 Mr. Glass?

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I have a
17 brief, brief statement.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
19 Johnson, please proceed.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah. My
21 statement is again I want to thank
22 Councilmember Phillips for the
23 balance, but I also -- and I thought
24 about how we need all the tools on
25 the table in terms of law enforcement

1 and protecting people around the
2 issue, specifically gun violence,
3 right. And as an elected official,
4 I'm probably in a unique perspective
5 and probably not more than other
6 folks, but I still pretty much have
7 my ear to the streets, right, as a
8 Councilperson.

9 And I know firsthand, folks
10 telling me, at least two years ago
11 that one of the key reasons why we
12 aren't wrapping our arms around the
13 gun violence issue, this is from the
14 streets, not somebody in academic
15 towers at Penn or Drexel. This is
16 like actually people that are on the
17 ground living day-to-day either in
18 the lifestyle or know people close to
19 the lifestyle what's going on in the
20 streets.

21 And they said, well,
22 Councilman, I know you're an elected
23 official or as they say, Yat, I know
24 you elected, but this is what we know
25 that's going on in the streets

1 regarding the homicides and the
2 shootings and how the masks are
3 playing a critical role, and people
4 just pretty much doing brazen
5 homicides knowing that if you only
6 can see my eyes, right, pretty much
7 it's going to be a tough time for you
8 to solve their homicide based upon
9 you having to have identified the
10 actual culprit. And so, hopefully
11 this will be a key tool to help us.

12 And I also want to -- I'd like
13 to say to Francis Healy, thank you
14 also though for saying, listen, we're
15 not trying to overcriminalize and
16 just be going after individuals just
17 for the sake of going after them.
18 This will just allow us if need be
19 with probable cause to address the
20 situation. And so, I just want to
21 state that for the record and thank
22 Member Phillips for his leadership
23 around a very, very critically
24 important issue. Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,

1 Member --

2 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Thank
3 you, Chairman Jones. Thank you,
4 Vice-Chair Johnson.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And let
6 me -- I have one small part I want to
7 wrap up with. Because there would be
8 some critics that will say, well,
9 this is not going to stop gun
10 violence, right. And I just want to
11 say for the record as a body over the
12 last few years we have invested more
13 than \$100-plus million, right, in
14 rather it's violence prevention
15 initiatives, rather it's making sure
16 that we have a mental health
17 component when the police respond to
18 issues, making sure that boots-on-
19 the-ground organizations have
20 funding. And so, we've always taken
21 a comprehensive approach. But we
22 must not shy away recognizing that
23 the law enforcement is a part of how
24 we address public safety here in the
25 City of Philadelphia, so that's

1 another tool that we have to address
2 and we can't shy away from it.

3 So to Francis Healy, thank you
4 always for your leadership and
5 stepping up to the plate and making
6 sure there is a balanced approach
7 with the things we're working on here
8 in City Council around public safety.
9 Thank you very much.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
11 Member Johnson or Yat, as they call
12 you. I frequent a barbershop where
13 they talked about this issue as well,
14 and I found out there was a game that
15 some of the young boys used to play
16 and particularly victimizing older
17 gentlemen where they would run up on
18 them and pull down what is called
19 pooh shiesty and try to scare them.
20 They wouldn't rob them, but they were
21 trying to see if they were jumping.

22 And one of the instances,
23 Member Johnson, where it happened,
24 you know, one of the old heads
25 actually pulled a gun on the young

1 boy thinking he was getting robbed,
2 and they panicked and ran. But I
3 point out the fact that that's not a
4 a game that should be played. It is
5 very dangerous. And the regulation
6 of where these masks should be worn
7 and creating an issue where you can
8 step to people for probable cause I
9 think will go a long way like you
10 said to deal with holistically the
11 situation we face on our streets
12 every day dealing with crime
13 prevention. So thank you again,
14 Member Phillips.

15 Mr. Glass.

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
17 Councilmember Harrity would like to
18 be recognized.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
20 Harrity, please proceed.

21 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank
22 you, Mr. Chair.

23 Again, I'd just like to thank
24 Francis Healy for giving us the
25 straight truth about how you will go

1 about those things because it is a
2 tool. I was so happy when Councilman
3 Phillips put this bill in because I
4 had put in a bill, not similar
5 because mine they said was wildly
6 unconstitutional. I wanted to ban
7 them everywhere and I was so glad
8 that one of my colleagues actually
9 got into the nuances of it and made
10 it work because I was told that it
11 was not allowed to be done with the
12 way I wanted it to be done. So I
13 thank you for that and I thank you
14 for your honesty, Commander Healy,
15 for letting us know that, you know,
16 listen, it's going to be at the cops'
17 thing, it's a way of maybe
18 questioning people to find out what's
19 going on but if they're not doing
20 anything, then just letting them go
21 about their daily business, which
22 doesn't do anything but tie up a
23 little bit of their time. But to be
24 safe, time is okay with being
25 things -- so, you know, listen, I'm

1 happy with Anthony Phillips' bill and
2 this is a good bill and this gives
3 you another tool to be able to do so.
4 I was proud to support it then, so
5 thank you both.

6 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: And I
7 just want to say thank you to
8 Councilman Harrity for co-
9 introducing this and supporting this
10 initiative as well.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

12 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Oh,
13 you're on -- Chairman, you're on
14 mute.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Some of my
16 best comments are when I'm on mute.

17 Mr. Glass, who do we have next
18 to testify?

19 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
20 next witness is Cecil Hankins.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES:
22 Mr. Hankins, are you connected?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN JONES:
25 Mr. Hankins?

1 MR. HANKINS: (Muted).

2 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Just
3 come off mute, Mr. Hankins.

4 MR. HANKINS: Good afternoon,
5 everyone. My name is Cecil Han --

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
7 afternoon. State your name for the
8 record and please begin your
9 testimony. Thank you for your
10 patience.

11 MR. HANKINS: My name is Cecil
12 A. Hankins, Sr. I thank you for this
13 opportunity to address this Committee
14 on a subject that is of great concern
15 to me, full-face covering or
16 disguises to hide one's identity. So
17 let me give you my personal
18 experience. Just this summer while
19 I'm walking my puppy Sam in the
20 Barrett Playground in the Logan
21 section of the City, three young men
22 were dressed in all black with ski
23 masks on in 90 degree weather.

24 They parked their car on the
25 basketball court area talking to

1 young females. Immediately I could
2 feel my adrenaline flowing to fight
3 or flight. Of course, my puppy and I
4 chose flight. Although the death
5 rate from gunfire is reported as
6 being less than that of the last two
7 years, the Controller reported an
8 increase in gun deaths for those less
9 than 21 years old.

10 As I give my testimony, I
11 cannot forget the young man 15 years
12 old shot to death on Barrett's
13 basketball courts years ago as well
14 as Nicholas and Elazada who was shot
15 to death by a group of young teens
16 wearing ski masks. Let us not forget
17 the other four teens who were wounded
18 by gunfire. The mental health of
19 these young youth will probably
20 resemble PTSD.

21 In fact, Children's Hospital
22 of Philadelphia's data shows a 134
23 percentage increase in emergency room
24 mental health admittance of young
25 children living in the vicinity of

1 gun violence. I am a believer in the
2 Constitution, but I also believe that
3 there was a reason for amendments.
4 To address issues relevant to the
5 rights of law-abiding citizens to
6 live in peace, this ban on ski masks
7 will contribute to providing safe
8 havens for children to grow without
9 fear and intimidation of being shot
10 to death by those who choose to wear
11 ski masks to conceal who they are. I
12 thank this Committee again.

13 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: (Muted).

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Chairman,
15 you're on mute.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Once again
17 thank you. What strikes at me is 90
18 degree weather wearing a ski mask,
19 and everybody has a constitutional
20 right to do what they feel
21 comfortable with fashion-wise, but
22 this constitutes enough of a threat
23 that we need to be taking the actions
24 that we're taking.

25 Mr. Glass, are there any

1 others to testify?

2 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, our
3 final witness is David Simms.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Simms,
5 thank you so much for your patience.
6 Would you please state your name and
7 begin your testimony.

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Simms?

10 (No response.)

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, it
12 looks like Mr. Simms logged out and
13 is not currently in the meeting so
14 that was our final witness to
15 testify.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
17 so very much. This concludes the
18 public hearing of the Committee on
19 Public Safety dealing with Resolution
20 No. 230640 and Bill No. 230510.
21 Thank you for your comments and
22 please feel free to disconnect as we
23 will begin to proceed with our public
24 meeting to take actions on Bill No.
25 230510. Will give everyone a couple

1 of minutes to disconnect.

2 At the point where we have,
3 Mr. Glass, will you please call the
4 roll to bring to order our public
5 meeting.

6 THE CLERK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
7 Councilmember Gauthier.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
9 Present. Sorry.

10 THE CLERK: Councilmember
11 Harrity.

12 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: I was
13 pulling a Jones there. I am present.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. It's
15 a verb now.

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Lozada.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Present.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Thomas.

21 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
22 afternoon. I'm present. Did you
23 hear that?

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

25 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay.

1 Thank you. I'm having some
2 (inaudible) trouble. Thank you.

3 THE CLERK: Vice-Chairman
4 Johnson.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Present.

6 THE CLERK: And, Chairman
7 Jones.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Present. A
9 quorum is present for our public
10 meeting.

11 And with that, I recognize
12 Vice-Chair Johnson for an amendment
13 to Bill No. 230510.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: One
15 second.

16 THE CLERK: Member Johnson,
17 I'm sending over the script to you
18 right now.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
20 you, Mr. Glass.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
22 offer an amendment to Bill No.
23 230510. A copy of the amendment has
24 been circulated to all members of the
25 Committee. I move that the amendment

1 be approved.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is there a
3 second?

4 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
5 Second.

6 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Second.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: It has been
8 properly moved and seconded that an
9 amendment to Bill No. 230510 be
10 approved.

11 All those in favor will
12 signify by saying aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: All those
15 opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: The
18 amendment carries.

19 I again recognize Vice-Chair
20 Johnson for a motion on Bill No.
21 230510 as amended.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
23 you, Mr. Chairman.

24 I move that Bill No. 230510 as
25 amended be reported from this

1 Committee with a favorable
2 recommendation and further move that
3 the rules of Council be suspended to
4 permit first reading of this bill at
5 the next session of Council.

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Second.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: It has been
8 appropriately moved and seconded that
9 Bill No. 230510 as amended be moved
10 from this Committee with a favorable
11 recommendation and further move that
12 the rules of Council be suspended to
13 permit this bill's reading at our
14 next session of Council.

15 All those in favor?

16 (Aye.)

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: All those
18 opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: The bill
21 passes out of Committee and will be
22 recognized at our next session of
23 Council.

24 This concludes the business of
25 the Committee on Public Safety and I

1 thank all the Members for their
2 endurance and patience. I want to
3 thank Member Phillips and
4 congratulate him on being passed out
5 of Committee, his bill dealing with
6 face coverings. And with that, that
7 concludes our business for today.

8 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Thank
9 you team.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good job.
11 Good job.

12 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Thank
13 you. Thank you guys.

14 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
15 you everyone.

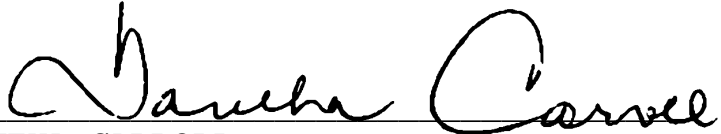
16 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: See you
17 everyone.

18 (Hearing concluded at
19 12:57 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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



TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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