

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT

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October 25, 2017  
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway-Committee Rm. 14<sup>th</sup> Fl.

B E F O R E: ANTONIO REYNOSO  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ANDY L. KING  
VANESSA L. GIBSON  
COSTA G. CONSTANTINIDES  
STEVEN MATTEO

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Kathryn Garcia  
Commissioner for the New York City Department of  
Sanitation

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[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Alright, I think we're, we're going to start, you ready?

KATHRYN GARCIA: We're ready whenever you are.

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Alright, good morning and welcome. I'm Council Member Antonio Reynoso, I am the Chair of the Committee... the Chair of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. Welcome to this oversight hearing about the Department of Sanitation's 2017-2018 snow plan and by the look of the turnout by Council Members it seems like you guys knocked it out of the park last year. So, I guess this year will be just as... just as well taken care of but Local Law 28 of 2011 requires the Department of Sanitation to submit to the council a snow plowing and removable plan for each borough and to make that plan available to the public on the city's website. This hearing will examine the draft snow plans that the council received from DSNY pursuant to Local Law 28 and the city's readiness for the 2017-2018 snow season. These plans cover the Departments planning, training, snow removal priority, designation categories, assigned equipment

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1  
2 and personnel and implementation of the plans during  
3 a snow event. During last snow season, season there  
4 was a significant issue with buildup of ice, which  
5 can extremely dangerous for New York City residents.  
6 I hope to discuss this with the DSNY and how the  
7 previous season influenced the current snow plan and  
8 how we are better prepared to handle the buildup of  
9 ice on sidewalks, street corners and bus stops for  
10 this coming up... upcoming season. I'm also interested  
11 to see how if at all Plow, Plow NYC has been improved  
12 to be more accurate, the, the usual questions and  
13 also look forward to hearing from DSNY and other  
14 interested groups and individuals about the draft  
15 snow plans. Thank you and I want to thank the  
16 Commissioner for being here. So, we have Steven  
17 Costas from DSNY here and DSNY Commissioner the  
18 Kathryn Garcia, you may begin whenever you are ready.

19 KATHRYN GARCIA: Good afternoon Chair

20 Reynoso and any members of the Committee on  
21 Sanitation and Solid Waste who may show. I am Kathryn  
22 Garcia, Commissioner for the New York City Department  
23 of Sanitation. With me here today is First Deputy  
24 Commissioner Steven Costas. I'd like to thank Chair  
25 Reynoso and the members of the Committee for this

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1  
2 opportunity to discuss with you the Department's  
3 Draft Snow Plans and our preparedness for the  
4 upcoming snow season. Our Draft Snow Plans detail the  
5 Department's snow-fighting procedures from the onset  
6 of precipitation to snow clearing operations after  
7 every snowstorm. The Plans identify how we will  
8 allocate personnel and equipment resources in each  
9 borough and district, the coordination of services  
10 among agencies, and customer service protocols. We  
11 will consider all comments and recommendations  
12 received by elected officials on our draft plans and  
13 then we will publish the Final Borough Snow Plans on  
14 the Department's website by November 15<sup>th</sup>. During the  
15 2016-2017 snow season, the city received 30.5 inches  
16 of snow. I am immensely proud of the dedication and  
17 determination with which our employees took on the  
18 task of fighting the 11 snow and ice events that  
19 occurred during the last snow season. After every  
20 snow season, the Department takes the time to review  
21 our response during the previous snow season in an  
22 effort to identify our successes as well as  
23 opportunities to continue to improve our planning,  
24 preparedness, and response. As you know last year we  
25 invested 21 million in capital funds to purchase

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1 additional snow equipment to more effectively remove  
2 snow from narrow streets, especially during storms  
3 with accumulations over 12 inches. This includes five  
4 additional snow melters purchased this year and  
5 distributed across the city. In total, the Department  
6 now has a total of 693 large and small spreaders in  
7 our snow-fighting fleet which is higher than it has  
8 ever been. This fleet not only makes us better  
9 prepared to respond more effectively to large snow  
10 storms but also improves our ability to respond to  
11 ice storms and other types of frozen precipitation  
12 where plows alone are ineffective. This year, the  
13 Department will also continue its successful Snow  
14 Sectoring Initiative, which was expanded citywide  
15 during the last snow season. This approach has  
16 improved the efficiency of snow-fighting operations  
17 by dramatically reducing redundant travel miles. The  
18 increased number of small spreaders, combined with  
19 the expansion of the Snow Sectoring Initiative  
20 allowed the Department to terminate the Tertiary  
21 Plowing Contracts previously used in large snow  
22 storms. These streets will continue to be plowed by  
23 Department employees and will receive the same high  
24 level of service that we have come to expect of all  
25

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city streets. additionally, during the 2016-2017 Snow Season, the Department and D... and D... and DoITT made PlowNYC available in near real-time to the public and software developers through the City's Open Data Portal. For the 2017-2018 season, the data will again be made available during snow events, with plow locations being updated several times per hour. the Department's snow budget for Fiscal Year 2018 is 84.1 million. The Department has adequate staffing, with over 6,400 Sanitation Workers available to manage this winter's snow and ice storms including 316 new Sanitation Workers inducted at a ceremony last week. On November 13<sup>th</sup> the Department will begin Night Plow organization by increasing manpower on both night shifts to ensure coverage for snow and winter weather responses as necessary and will perform a full-scale snow drill rehearsal in late November. We also have available at the onset of this snow season more than 340,000 tons of road salt stored at over 42 locations citywide with contracts in place to deliver an additional 550,000 tons as necessary. In closing, I want to assure you that snow-fighting is a core component of our agency's mission, and the Department's workforce understands that this

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1 performance is critical to keeping this city  
2 functioning 24 by seven. The Department is a dynamic  
3 agency with excellent staffing levels for this snow  
4 season and I am confident that the Department's  
5 workforce can and will respond quickly and  
6 effectively to any major snow event. As we approach  
7 the official 2017-2018 snow season, I look forward to  
8 your input and suggested comments on our Draft Snow  
9 Plans. My staff and I are now happy to answer your  
10 questions.  
11

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I, I want to  
13 also thank the hardworking men of DSN... men and women  
14 of DSNY for the work that they've done in the  
15 previous snow storms so far and like I said I get a  
16 lot of calls during snow season by Council Members  
17 and this year I got the least amount of calls  
18 regarding the work that was being done. So, I want to  
19 thank you for, for the, the work that you're doing. I  
20 also want to say that, that, that is also tied to the  
21 amount of resources that DSNY is also receiving,  
22 finally receiving to address the issues that we  
23 constantly are concerned about. So, seeing the  
24 equipment come in, seeing it's... it works makes us  
25 feel confident for the, the following snow season,



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1 the increase in manpower also helps and assists. So,  
2 I guess what... and also getting rid of the Tertiary  
3 Street Contracts is... I'm telling your I'm, I'm as  
4 happy as I can possibly be today in my third hearing  
5 on snow than I've been in, in my time here. So..  
6 that's just me, I'm just saying as the Chair I'm very  
7 proud of the, the work that we've done  
8 collaboratively in the City Council and, and the  
9 Mayor's Office but I do want to kind of move to two  
10 things that I want to get to. So, the, the PlowNYC  
11 situation seems to be a constant concern for folks, I  
12 think you've cleared up in the past that the GPS  
13 system itself, you know could show a truck across the  
14 street or a block over depending on where it is,  
15 depending on reception and in some cases make it so  
16 that one block is plowed over another and, and so  
17 forth so I, I guess I want to get to... even... does  
18 PlowNYC, the data that you get from PlowNYC does that  
19 dictate where you continue to move or move in the  
20 future or do you already have a plan that's set that  
21 will address every single street and that PlowNYC is  
22 just simply tracking that or mapping it?

23  
24 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, PlowNYC provides us  
25 with situational awareness, but we have 1,425 routes

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1 that we need to complete and if we are completing  
2 those routes then everybody is getting hit. So, it  
3 provides us situational awareness, we do not usually  
4 move vehicles based on the information from PlowNYC  
5 particularly not in the middle of a storm and then  
6 just to clarify on the GPS, I actually think the  
7 system is in really good shape... [cross-talk]

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Uh-huh... [cross-  
10 talk]

11 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...but there are certain  
12 places that we will never overcome it from a  
13 technology point of view particularly under elevated  
14 subways, it's just the amount of metal that's above  
15 us just bounces the, the signal all over the place..  
16 [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Uh-huh... [cross-  
18 talk]

19 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...and so it can create..  
20 go a little haywire but other than that I feel like  
21 in really good shape. One of the things we added for  
22 this snow season, which will make your colleague from  
23 Staten Island who ends up getting a lot of folks who  
24 don't usually work Staten Island get assigned there  
25 because they have more road miles than they... than

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1 many other communities, is that we turn by turn  
2 directions in the cab for the Sanitation Workers and  
3 the spreaders. So, I already... I know where they are,  
4 but this allows them to, in areas that do not have  
5 street grids to be able to find their way.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Alright, now last  
8 year was the year that... last year was the year of  
9 Staten Island not this year... [cross-talk]

10 KATHRYN GARCIA: Well... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I, I want to...  
12 so... [cross-talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: Similar, similar for,  
14 for someone who is from Brooklyn, I find a similar  
15 challenge in Queens.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, so speaking to  
17 the routes that you had last year because they were  
18 modified from the year before, were... do you feel that  
19 there is room for improvement or do you think that  
20 for more or less the routes that you were able to map  
21 out kind of assisted in being able to be more  
22 efficient in handling the plowing of the snow or the  
23 snow in general and are there any changes that you're  
24 going to make in the... in the... in this... in... any new  
25 routes that you will be taking on for this year?

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2 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, very broadly I  
3 actually think that the conceptual way and most of  
4 the routes are basically the same but there are  
5 always changes in the city. DOT made a bunch of  
6 streets in Queens one way, we now have cashless  
7 tolling which is a little bit challenging when I have  
8 to do a U-turn where there used to be slower vehicles  
9 at those intersections... or those toll plazas. There's  
10 new construction constantly. So, we actually have  
11 been going out on Sunday and as part of snow training  
12 running the routes to make sure that we have all of  
13 the most current information about what's happening  
14 in the city street grid.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, so look out for  
16 my colleagues from Queens their concern regarding a  
17 fair share of equipment and making sure that... so, the  
18 equipment that was allotted in the past was, was it  
19 sufficient, what... did it work, do we have enough,  
20 enough equipment everywhere, was there one borough  
21 like Staten Island maybe getting more equipment than  
22 anyone else, did that happen or, or do you feel that...  
23 [cross-talk]

24 KATHRYN GARCIA: No... no, so the way that  
25 we allocate equipment is really by lane miles and so

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1  
2 the percentage of lane miles that a borough has is  
3 basically the percentage of the pieces of equipment  
4 that you're going to have which is why, you know in  
5 some places like Queens they have more lane miles  
6 than anybody else, they have more equipment than  
7 anybody else.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, also in regard  
9 to salt, some folks are concerned about salt and  
10 whether or not there's a more environmentally  
11 friendly way of, of melting or, or, or preventing the  
12 snow from, from, from sticking, have, have we done  
13 any work to try to see if something else might work,  
14 is there a study that's being done or, or have we  
15 done that already and concluded that salt is the only  
16 way to go?

17 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, we continue to look  
18 at new products. Last year we tried something called  
19 Ice Bite in... we actually used it on a bike lane, it  
20 was supposed to make it so that snow and ice wouldn't  
21 stick, it didn't particularly work and then we... this  
22 year we will try two other products; Magnesium  
23 Chloride and I can't remember what the other one's  
24 name is... but Sodium Chloride, both of them still are  
25 salts, anytime it's an i-d-e it's still going to be

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1  
2 corrosive so, so far we don't have anything better  
3 than rock salt but we're not opposed to continuing to  
4 try and find other more environmentally friendly or  
5 more effective products.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, just for next  
7 year I would really like to see, you know where that  
8 happened, how did it work out, is it too slow, is it  
9 too... is it burning too fast, is it... is it less  
10 corrosive just... or if you have it now just more  
11 details as to how the, the agents outside of salt  
12 worked in, in... [cross-talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: Sure... [cross-talk]

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...melting snow...  
15 [cross-talk]

16 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...we can provide that to  
17 you, yeah, that's not a problem.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, the, the  
19 Tertiary Street Contracts had, had... you know I'm... I  
20 was never a fan of them but in cases where the snow  
21 does get out of hand and we might not be able to... or  
22 we're falling behind, is there a contingency plan  
23 that, that DSNY has to, to make sure they can address  
24 the, the snow?

25

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1 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, if we think that  
2 we're going to be in a large snow storm not only are  
3 we full forced which means we're on two split shifts  
4 of 12 hours a piece, but we also bring in DOT and the  
5 Parks Department to supplement and DEP to supplement  
6 our, our plowing fleet. So, I feel like it's a very  
7 robust amount of equipment that we would be able to  
8 provide on the streets of New York.  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, so we have  
11 the capacity in house to, to handle almost any storm  
12 well... as large a storm as possible?

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: As large a storm as  
14 possible.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Right, we can't...  
16 not any storm, some, some can't be handled. I, I do...  
17 so, I want to get into where I think we have  
18 opportunities for growth, I think we've done a good  
19 job at, at doing what we do well... doing what we need  
20 to do well so I want to get to pedestrians and  
21 cyclists are two concerns that I have. The ice...  
22 folks, you know if it's cold then it's melted it's  
23 going to be ice, is there something that we, we could  
24 or should be doing to prevent ice buildup in  
25 sidewalks or on roads or is that just a cause of

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1 nature that, that is, is hard to, to, to work...

2 [cross-talk]

3 KATHRYN GARCIA: So... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...against...

5 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...so, I think you're,  
6 you're thinking of the March Storm, if you have melt  
7 off and then a very fast freeze there's... you know  
8 besides getting more salt down there is not much we  
9 can do about that but you know we do... once we are  
10 through and we know that all the streets are passable  
11 particularly for ambulances we do go and start  
12 addressing all of the quality of life issues whether  
13 or not that's bike lanes, crosswalks, fire hydrants,  
14 and bus stops and we did add skid steers as you know  
15 to our arsenal to be able to try and dig those out  
16 because while we did get quite a few snow laborers  
17 last year if you were out after that storm, you know  
18 ten of them would be on a street corner and they'd be  
19 on a street corner for a really long time because  
20 breaking up the ice was very hard. In terms of  
21 sidewalks, property owners are responsible for  
22 clearing those sidewalks...

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Of, of ice, of  
24 course. And then the bike lanes, after we're done  
25



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1  
2 plowing the streets and, and, and doing the work that  
3 we expect the Department of Sanitation to do, bike  
4 lanes it seems like a lot of this snow accumulates on  
5 bike lanes and, and it's almost like waiting for it  
6 to dry or waiting for it to melt before we can  
7 actually see... have access to the bike lanes.

8 KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah... no, we do send out  
9 as soon as we are done with the streets we do send  
10 particularly the holsters out to do the bike lanes to  
11 be... do the, the ones that are wide enough for us to,  
12 to put equipment into and so, you know our intention  
13 is to try an open those up as quickly as possible.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: With better  
15 equipment do you feel you would be able to, to handle  
16 almost all the bike lanes in the city of New York,  
17 can we get you smaller plows or smaller... [cross-talk]

18 KATHRYN GARCIA: I'm, I'm pretty small  
19 right now, I mean like when you're... we're going to  
20 look at a new piece of equipment called a Multi-Hog  
21 that they're going to give us to experiment with for  
22 free this winter season. The challenge with very  
23 small equipment is getting that very small equipment  
24 to the place where it actually has to work, that just  
25 takes more time so, you know it, it's really most

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1  
2 helpful if we can use a motor vehicle plow and so we  
3 didn't... we also will use pick up plows for really  
4 tight areas.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, so just, you  
6 know folks need... eventually the city gets back to, to  
7 moving of course the vehicles, the emergency vehicles  
8 are the most important, the vehicles get to work  
9 closer to, to, to when you're done with your work and  
10 then the bikes kind of just... we, we got to wait a  
11 week or two before we can get on them, I have no...

12 [cross-talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: I think it... [cross-talk]

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...vehicle... [cross-  
15 talk]

16 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...I don't think it's a  
17 bad... I don't think it's as bad as a week... [cross-  
18 talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I, I don't know I,  
20 I... so, the thing is that you're right some lanes you...  
21 I can get through but then there's certain blocks or,  
22 or streets where there's completely clogged up and I  
23 have to either take a detour or actually walk off my  
24 bike. So, I'm just saying for the folks that are  
25 looking to, to, to stop the congestion on our streets

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1  
2 and are actually looking for alternatives to vehicles  
3 that we also got an opportunity to, to, to get to  
4 work the same way we traditionally do in a... in a  
5 short amount of time. So, I just really want to focus  
6 on that given that we're doing so well on everything  
7 else maybe we have a little more time to really try  
8 to plan out and map out exactly how we're going to  
9 address the, the, the bike lane issue. So, that's  
10 just a request I guess that I'm making on behalf of  
11 the biking community and I'll... I don't... [cross-talk]

12 KATHRYN GARCIA: They, they are some of  
13 my most vocal twitter... [cross-talk]

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yes... [cross-talk]

15 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...folks.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay... [cross-talk]

17 KATHRYN GARCIA: After a snow storm.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Alright, that's,  
19 that's good, they're doing good work, they're,  
20 they're your eyes and ears, I want to... I want to say  
21 that they're working with you not against you to make  
22 that happen.

23 KATHRYN GARCIA: Maybe, maybe we're on  
24 different feeds...

25

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CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Well my folks are... all my folks... they're right but I'm... I'll make sure when I get it I'll call you and, and see if we could... if we could get something going but it's, it's a concern for folks, their primary means of transportation is a bike if, if its... if the bike lanes are clogged up. I don't want to take all the time, I want to make sure that I get the Council Member from Staten Island Steven Matteo an opportunity to ask questions, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you Chair Reynoso. Welcome Commissioner, you know I've, I've said it on the record last year the men and women of Sanitation Department did a fantastic job last year, I thank you for your constant communication especially taking my four in the morning calls...

KATHRYN GARCIA: See this is what happens when you have a new baby, you call me, I'm up but like... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: The baby's older I'm still calling you at four in the morning...

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And I, I have a baby on the way in December 26<sup>th</sup>... [cross-talk]

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KATHRYN GARCIA: Oh so you won't be  
sleeping... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Congrats... [cross-  
talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...either... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, so I'll be  
calling... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...great... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...you two o'clock in  
the... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: We'll just a  
conference call... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, conference  
call... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...we'll do a  
conference call... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: We'll just do a  
conference... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...at two in the  
morning... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...fair enough,  
four in the morning conference calls. So, generally  
speaking how, how long does it take to finish the

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1  
2 Staten Island route from start to finish when you  
3 start... [cross-talk]

4 KATHRYN GARCIA: For a regular... for... if  
5 we're in the middle of a snow storm the way we  
6 designed them is that they should be able to get  
7 through the routes if we're all on full plow in two  
8 hours... [cross-talk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Two hours...  
10 [cross-talk]

11 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...that's, that is the way  
12 that they are designed. They do run into obstacles...  
13 [cross-talk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Of course...  
15 [cross-talk]

16 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...but that is what  
17 they're designed to be...

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, aside... will  
19 you do the main streets twice or three times during  
20 that two hours or you're... or is that just... you're  
21 just doing the whole sector, two hours and then you  
22 start hitting everything again or will... [cross-talk]

23 KATHRYN GARCIA: Right... [cross-talk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...you Highland  
25 Boulevard twice... [cross-talk]

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1  
2 KATHRYN GARCIA: Well Highland's going  
3 to... is going to be out the door, they're going to get  
4 salting equipment first and so they, they will have  
5 plows on the road before we're moving into the  
6 sectors because I need the... I need the accumulation  
7 before I'm moving the plows out and then everybody  
8 just keeps going on their route until basically  
9 they're at the end of the shift, we flip them, and  
10 they go out again.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, did you  
12 foresee any... making any changes on, on Staten Island  
13 this year or...

14 KATHRYN GARCIA: No, big... one doing...  
15 we're tweaking things and it's like trying to figure  
16 out how to do the turn at the Verrazano, you know  
17 stuff... [cross-talk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right... [cross-  
19 talk]

20 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...like that but nothing  
21 big.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay. When it  
23 comes to the neighborhoods of New Dorp Beach and  
24 Wesley last year... [cross-talk]

25 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...we changed the system where we've had the smaller... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...equipment just... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Yep... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...making sure we're... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...you've got your small... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...continuing to do... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...equipment... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, good. School, when priority is around schools as well when you're doing the sector plan or is it just... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: No, schools are on critical routes.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay and the critical routes are how... different how?

KATHRYN GARCIA: Well the critical routes are basically the same as what primary routes used to be.



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COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay...

KATHRYN GARCIA: So, they're going to be the highways, the Highlands, the Victories, and they're going to also take into account any fire house, precincts, school, and then we also... if we know that school is going to... you know we have instructed all of the superintendents to go meet with those principals and custodians so that everybody knows how we're working through snow when it finally comes so the custodians don't put it over here and then we put it back and then they put it over here which sometimes happens... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...to make sure that we're more coordinated and that folks can get in and out easily.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, just, just because... and I know you know this already but... and a lot of my schools are, are not on a main street...

KATHRYN GARCIA: No, I know... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...and they're within the... you know the neighborhood on these smaller streets and it's just better to use I think

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1  
2 the smaller equipment than... and go that route so,  
3 thank you for that. I want to talk about the shift  
4 changes... [cross-talk]

5 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...because I think  
7 that's where last year I think you... the, the  
8 complaints that I did get were about well we didn't  
9 see anybody from whatever, you know two to four or...  
10 and I think it was a Saturday was the big... the most  
11 complaints I got on a Saturday storm and I think it  
12 was because of shift changes so... [cross-talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: Well we also weren't  
14 split, it was also the forecast...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, that's what  
16 I'm trying to ask, so, so can you explain the normal  
17 shifts and then how you have to prepare to avoid a  
18 split change where I think it's... [cross-talk]

19 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, this... there, there...  
20 so, when we are in full snow ops we are split 12...  
21 seven to seven...

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, it's not then  
23 seven to two or... [cross-talk]

24 KATHRYN GARCIA: No, on... if we are in  
25 full snow ops we are... we are split seven to seven.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: On that Saturday... we don't split normally if I have under a three-inch forecast.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, so if, if there is a problem with shift changes because the forecast was different than what you planned for?

KATHRYN GARCIA: So, we brought people early... in early on that particular Saturday to ensure that we could continue to have coverage, but it was not as straightforward as a normal full plow operation which is the 12-hour shift.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay...

KATHRYN GARCIA: Yes, it was zero to three and then... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right, no I... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...at 10:30 it was eight inches...

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: I agree and so I'm just trying to clarify on the record of... you know about that. So, if, if you... but if you're in full you're going seven to seven?

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KATHRYN GARCIA: We're going seven to seven, I mean shift changes still... is still... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: But that exists... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...tough... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...right?

KATHRYN GARCIA: Yes, now shift... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, so can you... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...and if you are far from a garage and they're... I mean like this is my challenge in areas that have a lot of traffic and it's going to take them a long time to get back to their routes...

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, are they... are they finishing the route, or they have to get back by... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: No, they have to get back... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...say seven... [cross-talk]

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KATHRYN GARCIA: ...they have to get back,  
they have to fuel up, they have to add salt.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, what time  
are... so what time for a seven o'clock shift change  
would they leave the route?

KATHRYN GARCIA: It depends on what the  
supervisor calls in, we also will stagger it because  
we don't want... you know we don't want all of the  
trucks trying to line up and get fuel at the same  
time, so we'll try an stagger them coming in but that  
is the, the trickiest challenge in snow is to get  
everybody in and everybody out. What they do is on  
the route is they mark where they got to... [cross-  
talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right... [cross-  
talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...so that the next person  
starts at that point and then continues on... [cross-  
talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, do you think  
a... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: So, it's not everybody...  
[cross-talk]

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, do you think  
3 a shift change is a... is a two-hour delay or less or...

4 KATHRYN GARCIA: It can be a two-hour  
5 delay.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: And is there  
7 anyway of staggering the trucks from coming back  
8 earlier... [cross-talk]

9 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, we do stagger some  
10 of them, usually we, we keep the spreaders out longer  
11 and bring them in an hour later but that is the most  
12 challenging... [cross-talk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Yeah because... I  
14 mean I think... it, it has mostly to do with the big...  
15 the storm that maybe we weren't expecting or that,  
16 that just all the sudden coming down, it always seems  
17 to happen during, you know where we're starting with  
18 the shift change and then we look like... well and then  
19 I'm getting the calls well my street wasn't plowed  
20 and it was plowed it's just they're on a shift change  
21 they may not have gotten to you yet for the second...

22 KATHRYN GARCIA: For the second round, no  
23 that's, that's true.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, they'll go  
25 back to where exactly they left off or... [cross-talk]

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KATHRYN GARCIA: That is what they're... that is what the orders are is that they go back to wherever the last person left off so that we... so we don't keep starting at the beginning and never get to the end.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right. So, it's still the two-inch rule before we get a plow out?

KATHRYN GARCIA: Oh yeah... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...on the street, okay... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So, what are the challenges in... and, and, and dealing with an ice storm over a snow storm and is there anything to how we... I mean last... I think last year we had the... we had a pretty bad ice storm and I think it made it a little bit more challenging I think than a regular snow storm, would you agree with this... that assessment and how... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: So... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...how we are doing for... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...there, there... [cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...with that...

[cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...so, I hate ice. The only thing that I can tell you about the, the March storm which is that it was snow and then ice, it was snow... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...freezing rain and then ice so you basically have the same water content as a 12 or 14-inch storm that you have to physically weight wise move, it's just much, much, much harder and so to the extent that we've added additional skid steers and that we have a lot more salting equipment probably more than 50 percent more salting equipment than we had when I started in this job, those make us more effective against ice storms but they are very challenging.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Yeah. The... I, I saw you had an announcement you're looking to hire day laborers already, still on Staten Island we seem to have, you know a problem getting day laborers, I mean do you... do you see an increase... [cross-talk]



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1  
2 KATHRYN GARCIA: We have... we have... we, we  
3 have less of a problem in Staten Island, one... [cross-  
4 talk]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay... [cross-  
6 talk]

7 KATHRYN GARCIA: They do come into the  
8 Jersey Street Garage... [cross-talk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Because they're  
10 coming from the ferry or...

11 KATHRYN GARCIA: No, because there are  
12 people... [cross-talk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...or they're  
14 Staten Island... [cross-talk]

15 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...around there who will...  
16 [cross-talk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay... [cross-  
18 talk]

19 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...who will sign up.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay... [cross-  
21 talk]

22 KATHRYN GARCIA: But we will move people  
23 around if we need to, I mean we've used MTA buses in  
24 the past to move around the daily burst.  
25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay. The... my  
3 last point and again this is... and you know I've  
4 talked about this a lot but I think this has more to  
5 do with the other agencies and the MTA and quite  
6 frankly Cemusa who runs the bus shelters, I don't  
7 think that, that the rest are doing good enough at  
8 the bus stops, with the bus shelters, we have a lot  
9 of city parkland so those sidewalks aren't being  
10 addressed and you guys are doing your part and Chief  
11 Montanino sends the trucks when we ask him to do as  
12 much as he can. So, what I'm asking for you is as we  
13 get into the snow storm is, is... [cross-talk]

14 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...are you having  
16 those interagency meetings and quite frankly... and I  
17 will... I will address this on my end, they need to be  
18 held much more accountable because in... like in Staten  
19 Island if you have Willowbrook Park no one's cleaning  
20 that sidewalk and that has... that has bus stops...  
21 [cross-talk]

22 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...and then my  
24 constituents are on the street and again I'm... I know  
25 this isn't sanitation but what sanitation does, does

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1  
2 is go... is pick up the slack so if you... my point is if  
3 you're going to have interagency conference calls, I  
4 mean if you could stress that... [cross-talk]

5 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: ...for Staten  
7 Island because... and I... and I'm, I'm actually going to  
8 reach out to every agency, I'm going to reach out to  
9 Cemusa, make sure DOT is doing their job but I... you  
10 know especially along these sidewalks that are city  
11 owned properties and you know we're, we're forcing  
12 then riders who are getting on buses in the streets  
13 and that's, that's always an issue but as I said from  
14 the start you guys have been doing a tremendous job,  
15 I, I, I appreciate the, the constant communication  
16 and just keep up the good work.

17 KATHRYN GARCIA: Thank you... [cross-talk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you...  
19 [cross-talk]

20 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...and you know as... if you  
21 have any locations you need Montanino.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Yeah, I'm, I'm  
23 just going to send it to him.

24 KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah... that's fine.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Yeah... okay.

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KATHRYN GARCIA: He's ready.

3

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: He's ready.

4

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you Council

5

Member Matteo and we have been joined by Council

6

Member Vanessa Gibson from the Bronx and Council

7

Member any questions?

8

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Just one. Hi

9

Commissioner, good... [cross-talk]

10

KATHRYN GARCIA: Hi, how are you... [cross-

11

talk]

12

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...afternoon. Thank

13

you very much, I appreciate that in the early part of

14

the fall season we're already talking about our snow

15

removal plan... [cross-talk]

16

KATHRYN GARCIA: We could have talked

17

about it in August if you wanted to... [cross-talk]

18

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: That's true, yes,

19

I know even with the hot weather. Well I always,

20

always ask the question and I always want to make

21

sure DSNY never forgets about the step streets that

22

we have in Northern Manhattan and the Bronx, I have

23

two dozen in community district four and a little bit

24

of five that I share with Fernando Cabrera and

25

obviously they're heavily used, it's the only part of

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1 the district that has three levels of oversight so  
2 it's Parks, Sanitation, and DOT; lighting, the  
3 maintenance as well as the snow removal. So, I wanted  
4 to further understand because they're so heavily used  
5 and because they're really concentrated in certain  
6 parts of the city is there anything that we're doing  
7 different than what we've already done because the  
8 job and the response is always great but as the  
9 population grows for me in the Bronx going through a  
10 neighborhood rezoning and looking at the future of  
11 the district specifically the Jerome Cromwell area  
12 I'm always interested to find out how we're working  
13 with our counterparts in the other agencies to make  
14 sure that the step streets are covered but also I  
15 won't forget my underpasses and my overpasses because  
16 I have near Yankee Stadium, 161<sup>st</sup> Street, 167<sup>th</sup>  
17 Street, 170<sup>th</sup> and Mount Eden all on one strip of  
18 Jerome Avenue so I, I definitely need to make sure  
19 that those are covered and, and some of the  
20 pedestrian walkways that we have as well. So, how do  
21 you make sure that DSNY is having a conversation with  
22 the other agencies and we're getting to those points?

24 KATHRYN GARCIA: So, we, we actually  
25 exchange and make sure that everybody's very clear

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1 about who's doing what, some are D, DOT  
2 responsibilities, some are our responsibility, the  
3 step streets are our responsibility. We have  
4 purchased off of our budget equipment for DOT to  
5 handle some of those overpasses and, so it is clearly  
6 on the radar of the Bronx Borough Chief, he knows  
7 that the step streets and the overpasses and  
8 underpasses are as important to your constituents as  
9 the cross Bronx's are Jerome Avenue... [cross-talk]

10  
11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Uh-huh... [cross-  
12 talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...and so I think that  
14 they've stayed focused on that the last few snow  
15 seasons and so for the step streets we use a  
16 combination of sanitation workers and snow laborers  
17 in terms of doing... which is very manual labor, you  
18 know they got to shovel and salt every... I don't  
19 understand how those are actually streets but, but I  
20 know that they are... [cross-talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Uh-huh... [cross-  
22 talk]

23 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...and so that they, they  
24 know that they have to get to them.  
25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay and the  
3 other question I wanted to ask is about the tracking  
4 mechanism that the Department uses to determine which  
5 streets have been plowed. So, often times what  
6 happens is, you know we have a, a street sweeper, we  
7 have a sanitation plow will go through an area, the  
8 primary streets obviously I have like the Concourse,  
9 Jerome Avenue, you know main thoroughfares those...  
10 [cross-talk]

11 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...always get  
13 covered but I think a distinction that I have and  
14 many of us do in the outer boroughs we have the  
15 narrowest streets that are too way streets and cars  
16 park on both sides of the street and traffic runs on  
17 both sides of the street, it's amazing and some of  
18 these streets they're not primary, they can be  
19 considered secondary and so they get a morning sweep  
20 during like the morning rush hour but then by the  
21 afternoon sometimes people will call and say well  
22 these streets haven't been done and a lot of times  
23 it's because it's still snowing and, you know we've  
24 already taken care of it so how do you determine what  
25 mechanism do we use to determine a secondary street

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that needs to get covered again on the next shift or  
the third shift. So, I think if NYPD platoons...

[cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...the different  
platoons that we have the morning, afternoon, and  
then overnight how does that work?

KATHRYN GARCIA: So, we... when we're split  
we continuously do the route that would include... I  
don't... that... there are also DOT in Queens is making  
some of those types of streets one ways, which I  
think would be... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: We are too...

[cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: We're turning  
into... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...really... I don't... you  
know also for us when we're plowing if we have a  
decent sized piece of equipment and you have another  
car coming... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Uh-huh... [cross-  
talk]



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KATHRYN GARCIA: ...it's... you both end up in like a face off. So, they stay... they stay on their route so they're going to continuously come through so once we say we're 100 percent done and it's... that's after the snow has stopped falling and we've made another pass then we will start taking information from the public about what they think we haven't gotten to but we're using not only the PlowNYC data, we have our own internal data to look at how we're doing and where we need to go back to and we also use... even before we start taking the complaint to formerly to go do a readdress we're looking at where we're getting calls from the public and where our concentration of areas are that could be problematic and we also... you know we have supervisors in the field and their job is to be checking and making sure that what we think is happening via the computers is actually happening. I have to say that Jerome Avenue is tricky with the GPS system because as I said before when we are underneath an elevate sometimes the trucks that are going by their GPS signals go a little haywire so on the Grand Concourse it's never going to be a problem but underneath... [cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: ...the Jerome Avenue with that overhead subway line it, it could... the metal is challenging for the GPS signals.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay and then the last comment I wanted to make, and I think our Minority Leader alluded to it, the bus shelters and bus stops I can't tell you how many times that we will see an entire bus stop where there's one walkway and everyone that's getting off the bus and getting on the bus has to travel through that little stretch of area that's been plowed, that happens quite a bit... [cross-talk]

KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...and, and so I know there are companies that DSNY works with and, and certainly I, I really employ and emphasize to please stay on these companies because there are a lot of places throughout the city and I'm not just talking about my own borough but throughout the city where bus stops are not plowed and crosswalks so that people can travel and then the train... oh well that... I think that's an MTA issue but I'll raise it anyway,

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1 subway stations, the stairwell, stairwells getting  
2 onto the platform, so I covered Jerome Avenue and we  
3 only have two elevators on the whole line from Yankee  
4 Stadium to Fordham Road so every stop in between my  
5 office has a train stop, 170, its two flights of  
6 stairs and the outside stairs are not always plowed  
7 as they should be so I don't know if that's DSNY or  
8 if that's MTA... [cross-talk]

10 KATHRYN GARCIA: That's MTA.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, so we need  
12 to definitely talk to MTA because that's also been a  
13 challenge moving forward. So, I hope... you know while  
14 you can't necessarily regulate but we can certainly  
15 have a conversation with them about their train  
16 stations and their subways and stairwells. Thank you,  
17 thank you... [cross-talk]

18 KATHRYN GARCIA: You're welcome... [cross-  
19 talk]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: ...Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. I just  
22 have one... just last comment, on the BQE... [cross-talk]

23 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...on... in between  
25 Rodney and Marcy Street from Broadway to Borinquen

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1  
2 Place in Brooklyn those, those overpasses... [cross-  
3 talk]

4 KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...are... they get iced  
6 out and they're there for a long time and, and we...  
7 you know it's traditionally been a problem for a long  
8 time but there's enough foot traffic that kind of  
9 melts it but recently in South 5<sup>th</sup> and South 4<sup>th</sup> we've  
10 seen that they've just been straight out iced, and it  
11 doesn't look like anybody takes care of it so I just  
12 want to make sure that we pay... [cross-talk]

13 KATHRYN GARCIA: Well, we'll, we'll,  
14 we'll... [cross-talk]

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...attention to that...  
16 [cross-talk]

17 KATHRYN GARCIA: ...we'll go back and make  
18 sure that we're clear about who's responsible and  
19 when we'd be getting out there.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, but outside  
21 of that I think again... I want to say when it comes to  
22 the work that you're doing in DSNY and, and just  
23 working with this committee, we have very quick and  
24 efficient hearings but probably the most productive  
25 and, and I want to say effective meetings as well

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1  
2 because you... we seem to improve every single year on  
3 the work that we're doing and it just shows that you  
4 actually listen to the Council Members, listen to  
5 community members and actually put it into practice  
6 so I really appreciate everything that you've done as  
7 Commissioner and... especially when it comes to these  
8 snow storms and other issues but I think be... we're  
9 done here. So, thank you very much for your time,  
10 this meeting... [cross-talk]

11 KATHRYN GARCIA: Thank you... [cross-talk]

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: ...is adjourned.

13 [gavel]  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date

November 14, 2017