

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO
PETER F. VALLONE, JR.
Chairpersons

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Elizabeth Crowley
Julissa Ferreras
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James Vacca
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Brian McCarthy
Deputy Chief
NYPD

Michael Dockett
Assistant Commissioner
Parks and Recreation

Liam Kavanaugh
First Deputy Commissioner
Parks and Recreation

Larry Scott Blackmon
Deputy Commissioner for Community Outreach
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Bob Reeves
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Edwin Rodriguez
Deputy Inspector of Park Enforcement Patrol
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Susan Petito
Assistant Commissioner for Governmental Affairs
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Joseph Puleo
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Geoffrey Croft
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Holly Leicht
Executive Director
New Yorkers for Parks

Bill Bayer
Former NYPD

Deborah Williams
Social Services Employees Union

Elaine Wong
Citizen

Adam Pratt
Citizen

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2 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Welcome
3 everyone. Welcome to today's joint oversight
4 hearing on safety and New York City parks. Parks
5 are an oasis for our residents. They are a place
6 to get away from crowds. But that same solitude
7 sometimes places people at risk. It's for that
8 reason that we are having this hearing today. I
9 want to thank my co-chair Melissa Mark-Viverito
10 for being the force and drive behind this. We
11 have been trying to get this together for a while.
12 But you really pushed to have this follow-up
13 hearing on some of our past hearings we've had on
14 this topic. In the past hearings we've learned
15 about the various interactions between the NYPD
16 and the Department of Parks. Additionally, we
17 realize the importance of being informed and
18 that's why we passed legislation requiring the
19 NYPD to report to the city council the number of
20 crimes committed in parks. This law was passed in
21 2005. I was the prime sponsor. And now the city
22 council's getting statistics for the top 31 parks.
23 Now initially this local law 114 required the NYPD
24 to report only on the 20 largest parks, but they
25 were supposed to increase that. And at this point

1
2 have been giving us information on just about
3 every park in the city. It's now six years at
4 least and we're getting information on 31 parks.
5 So we've moved from 20 to 31. Now there not in
6 violation of the law because the law gave them--
7 the law required that they give us this
8 information only when they were able to
9 technologically do so. And apparently they're not
10 even though it has been six years--able to give us
11 more information on anything other than 31 parks.
12 Again while that's not a violation of the law, I
13 think it's a violation of the spirit of the law.
14 We expected to have a lot more by now and we
15 don't. But hopefully we can continue to work with
16 the NYPD and achieve full compliance with local
17 law 114 in the near future. From the data that we
18 do get, we are able to see that some city parks
19 have experienced an uptick in crime. In 2010 a
20 total of 328 major felonies took place in the
21 city's 31 largest parks, up from 265 in 2009 for
22 an increase of nearly 25 percent. The data we
23 received so far for 2011 suggests that crime did
24 not decline back to the 2009 figures. This
25 increase is notable and not a fluke. Therefore,

1
2 it is a concern. And that rise, I believe, is
3 largely attributable to lower number of NYPD head
4 count and the fact that we just don't have enough
5 PEP officers. With less boots on the ground
6 there's even more of a need for more PEP officers.
7 I've always believed that crime in parks mirrors
8 crime on the streets, same way crime on the
9 subways does. I don't think we have trolls living
10 in our parks that only commit crimes near the
11 bridges in the woods. It's the same criminals all
12 over the city and the problem with crime in parks
13 is indicative of larger citywide problem with
14 crime in our streets. And that's why it's
15 important that we have this hearing today. And
16 again I want to thank my co-chair for making this
17 happen.

18 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
19 you Mr. Chair and good morning. I'm Council
20 Member Melissa Mark-Viverito. I'm the chair of
21 the Committee on Parks and Recreation. I thank my
22 co-chair as well for be willing to jointly chair
23 this hearing, which we believe is very important.
24 Today's hearing will focus on the issues relating
25 to public safety and whether or not there has been

1
2 an increasing trend in crime perpetrated in the
3 city's parks. Available data as indicated and I
4 think it is worth repeating suggests that there
5 has been a recent uptick in crime committed in
6 city-run parks. So again in 2010, 328 major
7 felonies taking place in 31 of the city's largest
8 parks, which is up by 25 percent. The parks that
9 saw the most crime increases are at Central Park
10 where the total major felony crimes rose by almost
11 50 percent. Flushing Meadows Park, Prospect Park,
12 Riverside Park and Katonah Park. As of October 1
13 of 2011, there were 259 major felony crimes in the
14 city's 31 largest parks for calendar year 2011
15 with third quarter of 2011 having 134 major felony
16 crimes, the highest single quarter total since
17 2008. And just quickly looking at and it is the
18 first time that I do meet the reps here from the
19 police department but reading quickly over the
20 testimony of Deputy Chief Brian McCarthy, where
21 there is not even an acknowledgement that there
22 has been an increase in crime. There are a lot of
23 questions that I think need to be answer. The
24 Department of Parks and Recreation and NYPD
25 coordinate and sometimes share responsibility for

1
2 ensuring public safety in parks. On DPR's part,
3 the Park Enforcement Patrol Program also known as
4 PEP consists of unarmed peace officers who enforce
5 the rules of the parks and are empowered to issue
6 summonses and even arrest those who violate laws
7 in parks. There are currently about 150 PEP
8 officers but that number has significantly
9 decreased from a height of 500 during the late
10 1990s over the last few years as a result of
11 budget cuts. This has the potential to create
12 difficulties in adequately responding to public
13 complaints and ensuring pedestrian safety in
14 parks. As mentioned earlier, NYPD and DPR
15 coordinate their efforts in enforcing the law and
16 park regulations. Chair Vallone went into detail
17 on some of these efforts, but I wanted to mention
18 some of efforts that the agencies make. For
19 example, park managers and NYPD precinct
20 commanders regularly meet - - parks and discuss
21 the issues that arise in and around parks. Park
22 managers and administrators maintain regular
23 relationships and conduct regular meetings with
24 their counterparts in the NYPD. Additionally, the
25 local NYPD precincts patrol their local parks on a

1
2 daily basis. Lastly DPR borough commissioners
3 regularly meet with their respective borough
4 command chiefs in the NYPD to discuss enforcement
5 strategies and seasonal priorities. These efforts
6 were kind of laid out in prior hearings, so I
7 guess the question here today when we have this
8 hearing and testimony is whether that continues or
9 there have been any changes in those efforts and
10 coordination. So there is infrastructure that
11 exists for ensuring public safety at our parks.
12 However, our committees want to make sure that
13 such infrastructure is being utilized to its
14 maximum potential to ensure safety at parks. With
15 the current weak economic environment, the
16 likelihood of more budget cuts and possibly
17 increasing rate--this will not be an easy task.
18 But hopefully this hearing will result in raising
19 constructive ideas and solutions that will keep
20 our parks safe despite the challenging climate we
21 live in right now. And also as indicated by the
22 chair in terms of the sponsorship of the
23 legislation with regard to local law 114 is what
24 efforts are being made to really capture that
25 information on crime in parks more expansively and

1
2 more thoroughly so that we can really address any
3 concerns. So I look forward to examining this
4 issue in greater depth today and I'd like to
5 welcome the administration and advocates who have
6 come here to testify.

7 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Thank you
8 madam chair. I want to welcome Council Member Dan
9 Garodnick. Thank you for joining us. Today we
10 are lucky to have with us Deputy Chief Brian
11 McCarthy who started back at the 114 precinct
12 almost when I started in this office and is now as
13 I said Deputy Chief Supatido (phonetic) who is
14 always with us at our hearings and we also have
15 Assistant Commissioner Michael Dockett of Parks
16 and First Deputy Commissioner Liam Kavanaugh. So
17 I believe Deputy McCarthy, you will be starting us
18 off.

19 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Yes, thank you.
20 Good morning committee chairs and members of the
21 council. I am Deputy Chief Brian McCarthy. I am
22 the Executive Officer of the Patrol Services
23 Bureau in the New York City Police Department. On
24 behalf of Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, I am
25 pleased to be here today to discuss the topic of

1 public safety in parks. In a dense urban setting
2 like New York City it is especially important for
3 people to be able to enjoy the open space, natural
4 landscapes, and recreational facilities provided
5 by our public parks. It is part of the mission of
6 the New York City Police Department to ensure that
7 the people of New York City feel safe in their
8 parks as we strive to ensure their safety
9 throughout the city. As you know, the police
10 department utilizes many strategies and
11 initiatives to prevent crime and improve the
12 quality of life in our city. A key element to all
13 of our tactics is flexibility. Using new
14 techniques and changing the deployment of
15 resources to address crime patterns and quality of
16 life problems as they evolve. Another key element
17 is commander accountability, giving local precinct
18 commanders the authority and responsibility for
19 making many operational decisions. And then
20 holding them responsible for the results,
21 evaluating their effectiveness on a regular basis.
22 These principles work for all aspects of policing
23 in New York City, including the ways we address
24 and prevent crime in parks. Our precinct

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2 commanders and their staffs keep close watch on
3 their crime complaints and patterns and it is
4 their responsibility to know whether crime is
5 occurring in a park for example as opposed to a
6 street outside. It is clear that based on the
7 knowledge and experience of our local precinct
8 commanders, crime in parks occurs at extremely low
9 levels city wide. Over the past several years,
10 the council has received quarterly reports from
11 the police department which provide data regarding
12 the incidents of major crimes in the city's
13 largest parks. This data confirms what our
14 precinct commanders already know on a local basis.
15 The continuing effort to ensure the safety of the
16 city's parks reflects the strong partnership
17 between the police department and the parks
18 department. You're probably already aware of the
19 many ways in which we work in partnership such as
20 policing major events in the parks, providing
21 extra deployment of officers during the summer
22 months including at the city's beaches and pools,
23 and conducting joint tours of parks to identify
24 problems. On an ongoing basis, the chief of
25 patrol, borough commanders, and precinct

1
2 commanders meet with their counterparts in the
3 parks department to plan for major events such as
4 concerts and the New York City Marathon as well as
5 to coordinate their strategies and discuss coming
6 needs especially for the summer months. In most
7 precincts the special operations lieutenant is the
8 point person for day-to-day park issues. And he
9 or she has a close working relationship with the
10 local parks manager. Because every public park in
11 the city falls within a precincts responsibility,
12 each is part of the precincts regular patrol
13 duties whether as part of a sector or assigned as
14 a particular beat. Depending on the size and
15 particular crime or quality of life problems which
16 may exist, the park will be patrolled regularly on
17 every tour. Deployment is tailored to need, which
18 may vary greatly according to the time of day, day
19 of the week, and season of the year. The
20 department has resources such as bicycle, two and
21 three wheel scooters, four-wheel drive vehicles,
22 which enable officers to reach every area within
23 their assignment. In addition, the resources
24 devoted to parks are not limited to local patrol
25 officers. Depending on the circumstances, a

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2 precinct commander may deploy anti-crime, plain
3 clothes, or other officers to address particular
4 conditions. Or the patrol boroughs may provide
5 additional personnel if needed. In addition,
6 precinct commanders maintain a constantly updated
7 summary of precinct conditions, which briefs all
8 of the personnel on special problems and
9 conditions to be addressed. On a broader scale,
10 problems such as entrenched truancy, narcotics
11 conditions, or graffiti vandalism may require
12 special attention by other department commands.
13 Extra help may be requested by the precinct
14 commander or maybe be provided by my office, the
15 Office of the Chief of Patrol, as a result of our
16 own independent and comprehensive review of crime
17 conditions and complaints city wide. To ensure
18 that the precinct commander and patrol personnel
19 are fully informed regarding local issues, part of
20 the precinct commander's responsibility is to
21 participant in community meetings of all types
22 where issues of particular concern to the local
23 residents and businesses are discussed in depth.
24 We continue to strongly encourage the community to
25 participate in precinct community council meetings

1
2 where information about crime and quality of life
3 issues including crime levels in the precinct
4 parks may be readily shared by the officers and
5 the community members who are most familiar with
6 them. In conclusion, we appreciate your interest
7 in the issue of safety in the city parks and will
8 continue to work closely with Department of Parks
9 and Recreation to enhance the safety of the city
10 parks for the enjoyment of all the people of New
11 York City. I would like to now turn it over to
12 Commissioner Dockett.

13 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Good morning
14 Chairs Mark-Viverito and Vallone. Thank you for
15 the opportunity to discuss how the parks
16 department alone with our partners at the NYPD
17 work together to ensure that park users are and
18 feel safe in our parks. My name is Mike Dockett
19 and I am the Assistant Commissioner for Urban Park
20 Service. Joining me is our First Deputy
21 Commissioner Liam Kavanaugh. Additionally, we
22 have with us our Deputy Commissioner for Community
23 Outreach Larry Scott Blackmon and our Director of
24 Government Relations, Karen Becker, as well as our
25 Inspector of Park Enforcement Patrol, Bob Reeves

1
2 and his deputy inspector Edwin Rodriguez. Over
3 the last three decades, crime is down dramatically
4 across the city. Keeping our parks safe requires
5 partnerships and involvement on many levels and
6 for many different entities. And we are proud of
7 the work we are able to accomplish together. We
8 are witnesses record attendance in our parks and
9 at the events that take place on park land. We
10 pride ourselves on providing a positive park
11 atmosphere by first and foremost ensuring that our
12 parks are clean and safe. Public safety in parks
13 and playgrounds is one of our major priorities.
14 And our Park Enforcement Patrol officers are where
15 the people are providing security where they are
16 needed the most. But we do not operate in a
17 vacuum and we rely on our partners in government
18 and the NYPD specifically and most importantly to
19 ensure public safety. I will first discuss in
20 detail how our two agencies work together on many
21 levels to make parks and playgrounds safe and
22 welcoming places and I will describe the role and
23 responsibilities of the Urban Park Service in
24 operating and maintaining the park system. The
25 coordination between our agencies in the interest

1 of public safety starts at the top. Parks
2 Commissioner Adrian Benepe has regular
3 discussions, calls, and meetings with Police
4 Commissioner Ray Kelly to coordinate on major
5 events that impact the public such as the New York
6 City Marathon the Thanksgiving Day Parade and
7 major contents like the Andrea Bocelli and Black
8 Eyed Peas concerts held this past summer. Each
9 season we meet with the NYPD at the highest levels
10 to discuss every special event occurring on park
11 land so that the police are prepared well in
12 advance and can provide sufficient security to
13 ensure crowd control. Our assistant commissioner
14 who oversees our large events and her entire staff
15 is in constant communication with all levels of
16 the NYPD from central to the local precinct before
17 during and after each event. First Deputy
18 Commissioner Liam Kavanaugh confers with the chief
19 of patrol before the start of each beach and pool
20 season to ensure that all areas are covered by the
21 public and the public can have a fun and safe
22 summer enjoying our beach and pool amenities. Our
23 PEP officers work extensively with the police
24 during the summer months when the NYPD has units
25

1
2 patrolling our 14 miles of beach and stationed at
3 all of our outdoor pools. Every large pool is
4 assigned at least one police officer who assists
5 with safety in the pools and managing the crowds.
6 There is regular communication at our pool
7 locations and frequently more officers will
8 respond to assist with the large number of people
9 who are exiting our pools after closing for the
10 night. At our beaches, PEP and police officers
11 patrol to address illegal alcohol consumption and
12 other illegal activities. Their support during
13 the summer when our parks have the highest
14 attendance and our beaches and pools are open is
15 invaluable and we thank them for their presence.
16 We communicate regularly with the police
17 commanders that have parks within their precincts.
18 In addition, our borough commissioners have
19 instituted an additional forum entitled Park
20 Network Meetings where agency personnel meet on a
21 monthly basis to address park specific concerns.
22 These meetings are proven to be a valuable asset
23 to address park specific quality of life concerns.
24 It is important to note that many of our parks are
25 patrolled daily by the NYPD. Local communication

1
2 and coordination happens every day and in all
3 situations from special events to responding to
4 emergencies. All of the parks borough
5 commissioners routinely meet with borough and
6 precinct commanders to discuss coordination and
7 safety at the local level. There are regular
8 operations meetings with NYPD and other
9 stakeholders including the community board and
10 community groups to ensure that we all are working
11 together to protect the safety of the public in
12 parks. We find that the local communication is
13 our most important and effective tool for
14 combating crime. PEP and NYPD officers routinely
15 work together at the local level to respond to
16 specific incidents. This past fall there was
17 string of robberies that were occurring in Fort
18 Greene Park. Through constant communication
19 between our two agencies, PEP and NYPD officers
20 increased their uniformed visibility and the NYPD
21 sent in their anti-crime unit. With the full
22 participation and support of Deputy Inspector
23 Tasso of the 88th precinct, a successful arrest was
24 made and the suspect made a full confession of his
25 crimes. Daily cooperation with the NYPD is

1
2 paramount and central to securing our parks. NYPD
3 officers assist PEP officers with backup in the
4 event of a dangerous situation and they assist
5 with prisoner transport when needed. All of our
6 PEP officers' arrests are processed with the NYPD
7 at the local precinct. The police department
8 enforces parks curfew rules to ensure that our
9 parks our safe and people are not in our parks
10 when they shouldn't be there. Our PEP officers
11 work closely with NYPD homeless outreach unit and
12 department of homeless services outreach
13 coordinators to not only secure our parks but to
14 also provide aide and services to our homeless
15 population. We do not and cannot secure our parks
16 with PEP officers alone and we cannot understate
17 the importance of our partnerships with the men
18 and women of the NYPD who are charged with the
19 task of securing the safety of our residences not
20 only in our park, but across the city. Thanks to
21 their hard work the record numbers of New Yorkers
22 in our parks not only feels safe and secure, but
23 are safe and secure. Let me now provide insight
24 into our Parks Enforcement Patrol officers and
25 discuss their responsibilities. Full time PEP

1
2 officers are New York State peace officers and New
3 York City special patrolmen, a status granted by
4 the New York City Police Commissioner. Parks
5 Enforcement Patrol officers provide security and
6 safety to park patrons, provide information about
7 park rules and regulations, and protect the public
8 facilities, wildlife, and the environment. Their
9 uniformed presence provides the public with a
10 highly visible and identifiable resources at
11 concerts, pools, beaches, recreation centers,
12 parks, athletic events, and other special events
13 throughout the five boroughs. Shielded PEP
14 officers are empowered to enforce quality of life
15 regulations, issues summonses for violations, and
16 make arrests. A PEP officer can make an arrest
17 the same way a probation officer would. A very
18 important distinction, however, between a PEP
19 officer and an NYPD officer is that our PEP
20 officers are unarmed. They also do not focus on
21 or investigate what are classified as index
22 crimes, such as rape, felony assault, burglary,
23 grand larceny, and grand larceny auto. Their
24 focus is on quality of life crimes and enforcing
25 park rules and regulations. While NYPD in

1
2 coordination with our PEP officers protect our
3 park users, they are not the only entities that
4 assist with securing our parks and enforcing parks
5 rules and regulations. In addition to PEP, our
6 urban park rangers are sworn, shielded personnel
7 that supplement the role of PEP. Our sworn staff
8 is also supplemented by our non-sworn staff known
9 as the Park Security Service. The security
10 service is composed of city seasonal aides, work
11 experience participants, and job training
12 participants. Like our PEP officers, they are
13 tasked with focusing on quality of life issues.
14 I'd like to take a moment to go through the
15 different forms of park security enforcement in
16 our agency in more detail. First the urban park
17 rangers. Our urban park rangers have the same
18 training and authority as our PEP officers
19 although their focus is mostly on education, youth
20 programming, New York City's wildlife, and running
21 our nature centers. They are the Parks Department
22 law enforcement presence in the natural areas.
23 They issue summonses and make arrests in those
24 areas under their purview. Secondly, the Mounted
25 PEP Unit. This is a specialized unit of

1
2 equestrian officers trained in horse care and
3 stable management in addition to enforcing park
4 rules and regulations. Mounted officers patrol
5 New York City parks on horseback especially in
6 areas that are inaccessible by vehicles, providing
7 a visible presence to deter crime. In fact, one
8 mounted PEP officer is equal to ten officers on
9 foot in terms of patrol coverage and at special
10 events. Like other PEP officers, mounted PEP
11 officers have special patrolmen and peace officer
12 status and can issue summonses and make arrests.
13 Then there is the mounted auxiliary. In addition
14 to our mounted PEP, we have an additional mounted
15 unit comprised of auxiliary PEP officers. The
16 mounted auxiliary is a group of dedicated
17 volunteers who perform mounted patrols to assist
18 in preserving public safety and in protecting our
19 green spaces with a uniformed presence through
20 education. We recently held a press conference in
21 mid-December of 2011 in Staten Island to announce
22 our recruitment drive to increase membership in
23 the mounted auxiliary. We will offer multiple
24 training academies in 2012 and a streamlined
25 application process. During 2011, the mounted

1
2 auxiliary unit logged 554 patrol hours, 440 barn
3 hours, and 267 special event hours. The next
4 mounted auxiliary academy will begin the first
5 week of February. Our Central Communications
6 Unit. The officers assigned to central
7 communications, although they most work behind the
8 scenes, play a primary role in maintaining the
9 flow of information to the public through the
10 city's 311 call system and to the first responders
11 in PEP and the rangers as well as the forestry and
12 maintenance divisions. They are especially vital
13 in times of emergency. These law enforcement
14 officers work to ensure effective agency and
15 interagency communications. Our Harbor Patrol,
16 while they are not year around they provide a
17 unique, important, and specialized protection
18 detail during the warmer months between April and
19 November. This is a specialized unit trained in
20 swift water rescue, marina and harbor patrol, and
21 management of our nautical vessels. Harbor patrol
22 officers enforce park rules and regulations and
23 New York State navigation law. Harbor patrol is
24 essential in protecting our waterfront parks and
25 the marinas owned and operated by the parks

1 department. Harbor units work closely with the
2 NYPD harbor unit and the Coast Guard as they
3 patrol New York City waterways along the Hudson
4 River. The unit provides a visible present and
5 additional security both on land and on the water
6 working with the New York Field Intelligence
7 Support Team run by the U.S. Coast Guard, which
8 shares current intelligence with local law
9 enforcement entities. At the height of our busy
10 season, which runs from Memorial Day through Labor
11 Day, there are additional seasonal security
12 officers that supplement our year round compliment
13 of PEP and urban park rangers. These seasonal
14 security officers are crucial during the summer
15 months at our pools, beaches, and recreation
16 centers. In addition to promoting the proper use
17 of parks and ensuring the safety of our park
18 visitors, our PEP officers and rangers issues
19 summonses for violating health, traffic, and
20 sanitation codes. The top five summonses PEP
21 issues in order are for unleashed or uncontrolled
22 animals in the park, failure to comply with petty
23 cab restrictions, unauthorized vending, failure to
24 comply with directions or prohibitions on signs,
25

1
2 and the consumption or possession of alcoholic
3 beverages. Last year, PEP officers and rangers
4 issued 1772 unleashed animal summonses, 1187 petty
5 cab violations, 1097 summonses for unauthorized
6 vending, 936 summonses for failing to comply with
7 park rules and regulations stated on a sign, and
8 890 summonses for the possession of alcoholic
9 beverages. As I mentioned early, park central
10 communications unit plays a vital role in relaying
11 important information about what is happening in
12 the parks. What is important to note is that our
13 central communications staff regularly checks in
14 with their counterparts at the NYPD known as DCPI
15 so that any incidents are relayed and communicated
16 between the two agencies to ensure that everyone
17 has up-to-date information. Enforcement isn't
18 only the role the NYPD plays in supporting our PEP
19 officers. The police department also provides our
20 officers with crucial training for key skills.
21 This training equips our officers to assist the
22 police department with their larger mission and
23 provides additional means and methods for our PEP
24 officers to secure our parks and their patrons.
25 NYPD and parks work together every day to not just

1
2 keep our parks safe, but to keep them clean as
3 well. NYPD and PEP officers join forces to combat
4 graffiti and illegal dumping. There are weekly
5 graffiti vandal taskforce meetings known as
6 Graffiti-Stat to work on various strategies to
7 ensure that our users are able to enjoy a clean
8 and safe park. Besides joint enforcement and
9 patrols, parks has installed 23 high tech security
10 cameras across the city called Flash Cams, which
11 we have had for several years and have seen them
12 prove as an effective crime deterrent. Marcus
13 Garvey Park and Highbridge Park in Manhattan
14 particularly have seen a drop in vandalism and
15 crime due to the presence of these cameras. After
16 they are installed a timer is set for when the
17 park is closed, which can be customized. When a
18 person passes in front of the camera, a light goes
19 off and then is accompanied by an announcement
20 alerting the trespasser that the park is closed
21 and they are in violation of park rules. The
22 flashing light causes the person to turn around
23 and then the camera goes off once again and
24 captures the face of the person in our park after
25 curfew. These cameras are installed with the full

1
2 knowledge and support of the local community board
3 and the NYPD. The NYPD is able to use the
4 information captured on our Flash Cams to help
5 them solve crimes. They have become so popular
6 that we are now seeing requests pouring in from
7 park groups. Without the diligent work of PEP
8 officers, park rangers, and our park partners at
9 the NYPD, the park experience would suffer
10 greatly. Our PEP officers are unarmed peace
11 officers who are responsible for enforcing quality
12 of life laws, the New York City administrative
13 code, park rules and regulations, providing crowd
14 control, and acting as park ambassadors. But we
15 cannot do it alone. Every day the officers of the
16 NYPD and PEP work to ensure that people who enjoy
17 our parks are safe and we are truly thankful for
18 our partners at the NYPD. I would like to thank
19 you for the opportunity to provide this testimony
20 and welcome any questions you may have.

21 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: All
22 right. Thank you very much for your testimony. I
23 want to acknowledge that we have been joined by
24 Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer and Council Member
25 Helen Diana Foster, prior chair of this committee.

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2 So welcome to the both of you. I would like to--a
3 lot of words. We got to start getting into this.
4 I just have a couple of quick questions that I'd
5 like to start off with. Mr. McCarthy--and I know
6 it is the first time that we do meet, but I have
7 one simple question. Do you refute the fact that
8 there has been an increase of crime in parks?

9 BRIAN MCCARTHY: There's a lengthy
10 explanation.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: I just
12 want to want to understand because there is no
13 acknowledgement--obviously the issue and the top
14 here is about crime in parks. And obviously we
15 have information that has been made available to
16 us, not as comprehensively as we would like.
17 Hopefully we will get to that point. But I just
18 want to know whether or not there has been an
19 increase in crime in parks. Because I can read
20 the statistics to you based on the information if
21 you need me to. I just want acknowledgement.
22 That's all I'm asking for.

23 BRIAN MCCARTHY: From the third
24 quarter of 2011 as compared to the third quarter
25 of 2010, crime is down eight percent in parks, 259

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to 283.

CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So you're basically saying that the increase of 25 percent--when you look at 2010, a total of 328 major felonies take place in 31 of our city's largest parks, which was up from 2009. That was an increase of 25 percent. There was an increase in crime in Central Park. So you don't--that is in fact true, correct?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: Well, I'm trying to answer your question. The initial question was is crime up. And I explained to you that comparing the two third quarters, 2010 to 2011, it is in fact down eight percent, 259 index crimes in our parks for the first three quarters of 2011 as opposed to 283 for the first three quarters of 2010. Your other reference that you made, the 25 percent from 2009 to 2010, I'd be willing to outline and discuss if you wish.

CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: All right. So then what do you attribute that to?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: Approximately sixty robberies identified that occurred during a three year span covering 2009, 2010 and the first

1
2 three quarters of 2011 were associated with an
3 increase in reported major crime in the given
4 park. Further analysis indicated that over 75
5 percent of these robberies involved an electronic
6 device of some sort--a handheld electronic device.
7 The overwhelming majority being cellular
8 telephones. This increase in electronic-related
9 robbery is consistent with crime patterns
10 demonstrated in the city overall for the past
11 several years. In parks where grand larceny--or
12 high end thefts is better legal terminology if you
13 don't mind--are prevalent. Over 80 percent were
14 the result of unattended property left either out
15 in the open or visible in a park vehicle. Parks
16 that experienced an increase in usage, Randall's
17 Island, Flushing Meadows in particular have also
18 seen a corresponding increase in property crimes
19 particularly involving their sports facilities.
20 To further elaborate, from 2010 as compared to
21 2009, the parks you mentioned in your opening
22 Katonah Park experienced a significant increase 36
23 to 7. Twenty five of those 36 crimes that
24 occurred in 2010 were robberies. Out of those 25
25 robberies, ten of them were part of patterns which

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2 were solved with arrest. So I think in relation
3 to what I said about commander accountability, the
4 reports that came in were reviewed. They were
5 analyzed. Consistencies or commonalities were
6 identified and the suspects were identified and
7 apprehended in 10 of those 25 incidents. Katonah
8 Park after those robbery patterns were established
9 and action was undertaken, at the end of 2010 we
10 assigned a police officer steadily to Katonah Park
11 and we had weekly quote-unquote surges of
12 additional vehicles there, at least ten cars on
13 the day tour because that's when they were
14 happening, during the second platoon or from 8:00
15 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon. In
16 addition, for the conclusion of 2010, a mobile
17 command post, which in laymen's terms is like the
18 police bus that has the lettering outside was
19 placed in Katonah Park. As a result, in 2011 for
20 the first three quarters crime is at 17, which is
21 considerably on the right track to being corrected
22 for what was identified in 2010. Similarly, if I
23 may, Central Park. The increase from 2009 to 2010
24 was substantial in the park for the year. The
25 analysis shows that what tripled was unattended

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2 property that was left specifically in ball
3 fields. So as my counterpart said and as I had
4 tried to outline, these parks are used. They're
5 beautiful and people were at the ball fields in
6 Central Park were specifically leaving property
7 unattended, which resulted in its theft in 2010.
8 It went from 13 percent of their thefts to 42
9 percent of their thefts. In addition, robberies
10 increased in 2010 in Central Park precinct from 23
11 to 20 the year before. However, similar to what
12 happened in Katonah Park, one of the commonalities
13 that was identified was that there was a robbery
14 pattern that was solved with arrests. And overall
15 robberies in the precinct increased to 30, a
16 substantial increase from the year before. So
17 although there were 23 robbery incidents there
18 were 30 robbery apprehensions for 2010. And in
19 2011, Central Park at the end of the third quarter
20 was down 26 percent in crime. So there was
21 positive progress made.

22 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
23 you for the clarification, which I think you just-
24 -in talking about Central Park, it kind of just
25 leads me to my next segue in terms of questions.

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2 And obviously Central Park is a very unique
3 situation and has its own precinct.

4 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: How
6 many officer are based in that precinct at any
7 given time.

8 BRIAN MCCARTHY: At the time of my
9 research and preparation for today, 119 officers
10 were assigned.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: On an
12 average shift, how many officers do you have
13 available for Central Park?

14 BRIAN MCCARTHY: If I may, shift is
15 not the term that I would like to go with--

16 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: I'm not
17 part of this committee so I don't know the
18 accurate terminology but yes.

19 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I just want to
20 explain. Shift is correct in that--as everybody
21 knows we do three shifts. Midnight, overnight,
22 days, and then 4:00 to 12:00 or evening. But one
23 of our missions is to deploy when problems are
24 most evident. So although it is 24-hour coverage,
25 the primary emphasis and the primary deployment of

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2 personnel is during daylight.

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CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So

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let's say. What is the number that you would say

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are patrolling Central Park during the day? Just-

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-you have 119 officers based at that precinct for

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a park that I really don't know the acreage right

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now, which leads me to the issue about the PEP

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officers. And I value very much the work of our

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PEP officers. We had a hearing specifically

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talking about the challenges that a lot of our PEP

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officers feel that they have. They have certain

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responsibilities of patrolling parks, but clearly

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we don't have enough of them and some of them were

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concerned and expressing concern at that hearing

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about the lack of real collaboration--they felt--

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from the NYPD in particular when they were calling

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in for certain concerns or they needed backup to

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some extent. So the question is if you are

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talking about 119 officers in Central Park. How

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many--if the Department of Parks could please

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answer, how many--we said 150 PEP officers in

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total for the New York City. Is that an accurate

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number?

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MICHAEL DOCKETT: We have 96 tax-

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2 levy PEP officers, 74 grant-funded PEP officers,
3 for a total of 170. In addition, there are 31
4 urban park rangers.

5 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So 96
6 plus 31. For New York City in total, so how many
7 are assigned to Queens for instance? PEP
8 officers.

9 MICHAEL DOCKETT: There are 13 in
10 Queens.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So you
12 have 13 in Queens for a total number of how many
13 park acres?

14 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I'm not sure of
15 the Queens acreage.

16 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Over 7,000.

17 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Over
18 7,000 acres in Queens and you have 12 you said?

19 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Thirteen.

20 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO:
21 Thirteen assigned to all of Queens, which we need
22 to do the comparison. It's unbelievable in terms
23 of the support. So obviously, a lot of the
24 patrolling and enforcement is not going to fall to
25 the PEP officers, it's going to fall to NYPD.

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Correct?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes, ma'am.

CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: And that's a real challenge here. That maybe--again there's not enough coverage. I'm going to leave it there because I want my colleagues to ask any questions and I definitely will come back. But I appreciate you being here. I appreciate the information you're sharing and there's a lot more information that I think we will be getting out of this hearing. So I appreciate that. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Thank you, madam chair. Inspector McCarthy, again welcome and I can't emphasize enough the great job you did when you were at the 114 precinct. And I'm glad you are now where you are, but we do have some tough questions as you can see. Crime in parks as I said in my original opening statement, mirrors crime on our streets and you just said I think the same thing by saying most crime in parks--a lot of the increase was blamed on stealing cell phones, which is the same thing that is happening in our subways and the same thing that's happening in our streets.

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2 BRIAN MCCARTHY: There is a
3 consistency, Mr. Chair, but I don't like to just
4 generalize everything or put everything into the
5 same pool. But I definitely see what you're
6 saying.

7 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Crime in
8 2009, we had 265 of the felonies we keep track of.
9 And in 2010, 328 which is a 25 percent increase.
10 You explained some of that. And you said in 2011,
11 for the first three quarters, it's down a little
12 bit. But we don't have the fourth quarter, so we
13 don't know whether it is down for the year. In
14 fact the third quarter of this year was the
15 highest third quarter since we began getting these
16 records in 2008. And the fourth quarter actually
17 ended December 31. It is now the end of January.
18 Do we have those fourth quarter numbers so we know
19 for sure whether crime went up or down in parks in
20 2011.

21 SUSAN PETIDO: Mr. Chairman, Susan
22 Petito, Assistant Commissioner for Governmental
23 Affairs. We are in the process of compiling those
24 numbers and the council will be getting its
25 quarterly report including those numbers probably

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2 the week of February 6th, consistent with our prior
3 practice.

4 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I understand
5 your prior practice, but we all understood we had
6 a hearing today and this would be the topic. So
7 I'm aware of the practice and it would have been
8 helpful to have those statistics today so we
9 wouldn't have to guess about crime in parks in
10 2011, which we're doing now. But what we do have
11 is the statistics from 2009 and 2010 and there was
12 a 25 percent increase. You discuss some trends
13 and said most of that is attributable to
14 unattended property in our parks. I don't think
15 people are leaving more unattended property.
16 There's probably just more people stealing
17 unattended property. So I don't really see that
18 as an explanation. It's--we do have more theft--
19 we did have more theft in our parks. We had more
20 people stealing unattended property, correct?

21 BRIAN MCCARTHY: In Central Park
22 that was outlined, but what I tried to do in
23 preparing for this meeting was to look at every
24 park. Every park has its own individual issues
25 and individual crimes that occurred.

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2 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Did you
3 notice any other trends that the public should be
4 aware other than not leaving their property
5 unattended, which were aware of but with this
6 increase of people stealing, I think the public
7 needs to be made even more aware of.

8 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Yes, and we--as
9 part of our oversight of precinct commanders, what
10 we stressed to them is that--if I may--they review
11 the reports that come in and after they review
12 them they analyze them. And when they analyze
13 them they look for commonalities. And from those
14 commonalities they can identify patterns which
15 would be broadcast. But identifying them isn't
16 enough. From there they have to deploy correctly
17 as I was saying to madam chair. They have to have
18 more people when the crimes are occurring and at
19 specific times and days. And simultaneously they
20 have to develop a plan that will impact on it.
21 And that plan includes crime prevention as I think
22 you're alluding to Mr. Chair. And it also
23 includes community outreach as well as local media
24 outreach to make sure that it's--what has happened
25 is publicized so people can be aware especially

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when it's preventable.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I wasn't aware of that trend until just now. Is the police department or the Parks Department doing anything to alert the public to these trends.

MICHAEL DOCKETT: There has been an education campaign within Central Park about the lost property, unattended property while the folks were playing games. The conservancy has installed lock boxes for the teams to use. So while they're playing they can put their valuable in a lock box.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Speaking of playing games, when this property--this lost property happens in a park. Is it always recorded as theft or is it sometimes recorded as lost property?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: When someone puts their property down and it's taken, it's a theft.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I'm glad to hear that because that does not happen all over the city. So in our parks if property is reported in that way, it is listed as a theft.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: I believe that, you know, owing up to the increase from 2009 to

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2 2010 and spelling out that increase included a 42
3 percent increase in theft from unattended in ball
4 fields in 2010. And it's exasperated in 2011 when
5 you look at the crime that is available, 70
6 percent of the crime that transpired in 2011 in
7 Central Park was theft or grand larceny. And out
8 of that 70 percent, 70 percent was unattended
9 property. So that unfortunately continued in 2011
10 despite our joint crime prevention efforts.

11 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I think some
12 of that and this is a topic for another day, some
13 of that may be attributable to better record
14 keeping. I know in the past I received many
15 reports of lost property that was characterized as
16 stolen. And I know that the commissioner has
17 issued memos on that and that everyone is doing a
18 better job keeping track of that. So that may in
19 fact account for some of the increase, the fact
20 that we are doing better recordkeeping of stolen
21 property. And actually acknowledging that as lost
22 property, which would be a good thing. We talked
23 about the park enforcement officers and 13 in
24 Queens is just absolutely unacceptable. Can you
25 tell me out of the 13 assigned to Queens, how many

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2 would be in Queens parks on any given day, say at
3 3:00 p.m.

4 MICHAEL DOCKETT: You'd have
5 between 8 and 13. On the weekend, you'd have the
6 maximum staff. So that would be 13.

7 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: If you have
8 13 assigned to Queens, it would be a normal
9 assumption that not every one of them would work
10 every day. There are vacation days, there are
11 sick days, there are disable days, there are days
12 they get moved out. And you're telling me 13
13 people are going to be assigned out those 13 on an
14 average day. That can't happen. So give me the
15 average day in Queens for the number of PEP
16 officers in any given park.

17 MICHAEL DOCKETT: That's the eight
18 number.

19 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: The eight
20 number, not between eight and 13. Eight.

21 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Eight.

22 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. So we
23 have eight for the entire borough of Queens on any
24 given day. That's unacceptable. We're aware that
25 the police are there to watch out for crime while

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2 the park officers are there to watch for the
3 quality of life crimes like barbequing and
4 unleashed dogs and things like that. So we don't
5 have the park enforcement officers, who is doing
6 that. Who are giving those citations if there's
7 no park officers in Queens? Who's taking care of
8 our parks, the unleashed dogs, the barbeques,
9 things like that.

10 MICHAEL DOCKETT: The NYPD enforces
11 both quality of life laws, regulations,
12 violations, as well as the index crimes. They are
13 empowered to write against park rules and
14 regulations and they do.

15 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I'm aware of
16 that, but now we have 6,000 fewer officers in the
17 city who are charged with stopping the increases
18 that are going on in serious crimes likes rapes
19 and robberies. And you have them doing barbeque
20 violations because we have eight at most officers
21 in an entire borough. That is unacceptable. Do
22 we have plans to add more PEP officers in the
23 future?

24 MICHAEL DOCKETT: We are currently
25 in a hiring freeze. So there are not any

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immediate plans to hire tax-levy officers.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. You discussed mounted patrols. They must be nice. I've never seen one in Queens, but they must be nice have. You also discussed mounted auxiliaries, which as Public Safety Chair I'm not aware that even existed. Can you tell us more about this mounted auxiliary program you have? Do you need to own a horse? Do you need to know how to ride a horse?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: You definitely need to know how to ride a horse. You have to be a skilled equestrian. We'll bring you in. We'll evaluate you in the ring, your grooming. We evaluate you on patrol. If you pass our background check, you can come in and assist our mounted officers by patrolling. Currently, we have mounted commands in the Bronx and in Manhattan. And pretty soon we'll be opening up again in Staten Island. These mounted patrols can also trailer to other parks. So they do patrol Queens parks, especially parks with bridal paths like Forest Park. If there's an incident in any of the parks city wide, we typically trailer in

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2 our mounted unit to provide uniformed presence--
3 highly visible presence. So the auxiliary has
4 about 50 members now. And we're in a recruitment
5 drive to get more.

6 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: How would
7 someone get more information on that?

8 MICHAEL DOCKETT: You can go to
9 NYC.gov. It's on our website. Do a search for
10 mounted auxiliary. It will bring to an
11 application process and some background
12 information and I will be constantly recruiting
13 for that.

14 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: The three
15 other council members have joined us. We thank
16 them for that. Council Member Crowley, Dromm, and
17 Ulrich. I'm going to ask one last question before
18 we move on to Garodnick and Van Bramer. Statistic
19 wise, does the parks department keep any of its
20 own crime statistics or do you rely solely on the
21 police department for those numbers.

22 MICHAEL DOCKETT: We don't keep
23 crime statistics. We do have statistics on the
24 number of summonses that officers have written,
25 the number of arrests we've made, the types of

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2 parking violations we've issued, criminal court
3 summonses. So we definitely track the
4 productivity of the officers.

5 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Just the PEP
6 officers.

7 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Just the PEP
8 officers. And the park rangers as well.

9 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: And Mr.
10 McCarthy. The crimes we're discussing today are
11 five felony crimes. What about other crimes?
12 What about misdemeanor crimes and the felonies
13 that aren't part of the information you gave us?
14 Do those crimes generally match the statistics
15 you've given us or are they different?

16 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I'm sorry, Mr.
17 Chair, I didn't really follow that.

18 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Let's stay
19 with misdemeanor crimes. Those aren't reported to
20 us in parks. We don't have that information. So
21 I was asking you whether misdemeanor crimes from
22 09, 10 and 11. Have they gone up or down? Do
23 they generally match the five index crimes that
24 you give us? I just wanted some information on
25 those.

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2 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I have other data
3 with me, but that I would have to get back to you
4 on. I don't have that specific answer of you.

5 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. If you
6 can please provide that to the committees when you
7 get a chance. What is the other data you have?

8 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Well, you know, 12
9 of the 31 parks for 2009, 10 and 11 had no crime.
10 However, in relation to our presence, we did have
11 activity documenting our presence in every park.
12 And for 2011 alone, we had over 1,500 arrests and
13 over 10,800 summonses. So we're there and we're
14 paying attention to it greatly. Every park, in
15 relation to this forum, the 31 parks that we're
16 discussed. We research thoroughly and saw that
17 there was documented presence besides that
18 officers are--they are directed to patrol and do
19 patrol there.

20 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Commissioner
21 Dockett. You just heard we are getting
22 information on 31 parks. It's 31 out of how many
23 that would be covered by this law, which I believe
24 includes everything over one acre?

25 MICHAEL DOCKETT: About 1,500

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parks.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: So we're basing all this information on 31. Chief McCarthy, the--I'm going to get back to that in a second. You mentioned park rangers and PEP officers. What is the difference between the two?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: The training is absolutely the same. They are both peace officers, they are both special patrolmen. They go to the same academy. The rangers focus though when they come out of the academy on wildlife management, wildlife rescue, leading tours through the park, running our nature centers. So they get advanced training on the history of the park, the environmental interpretation. They wear the Smokey the Bear hat. So the uniform looks slightly different. But their a programmatic force as well as law enforcement.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Are the expected to and trained to do the same sort of law enforcement like a patrol officer?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah, they are absolutely trained to do the same thing. They just don't do it as much.

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2 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: We will be
3 hearing testimony by one of the union heads who
4 will explain to us that one of them got in trouble
5 recently for tracking down a pervert in one of our
6 parks and for going beyond his duties. What is
7 the duty of both a ranger and patrol officer when
8 it comes to a crime they see in progress? An
9 actual crime not a violation.

10 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Well, they are
11 New York State peace officers right? And they are
12 special patrolmen. So they should take action in
13 that. They have to use their discretion in taking
14 action and realizing that they are unarmed and
15 realizing the extent of their experience. So they
16 use discretion and would have to call into our
17 central communications unit, which would also
18 notify NYPD. They should get their supervisors to
19 respond, but to take action. They are expected to
20 do something about the crime. And it really
21 depends on the circumstance.

22 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay and the
23 last question I was getting to before. Chief
24 McCarthy, we passed this law in 2005. We were
25 getting 20 parks then. We were supposed to have

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2 all 1,700 parks by now. We have 31. Why is that?
3 And when can we expect to have information on all
4 the parks that this law intended us to have
5 information on?

6 SUSAN PETITO: Mr. Chairman. I'll
7 answer that question. In 2005, when we negotiated
8 the terms of the law. It was very clear to both
9 the administration and the council that--and we
10 put language in the law to the effect that it was
11 not technologically feasible to do anything but a
12 stick count at that point. And because the
13 fundamental way in which we capture crime data is
14 by street address and/or cross streets, that
15 information cannot be plotted and it cannot be
16 entered in what you would have hoped to be a GPS
17 type system or something that would be able to
18 place a crime within a park as opposed to outside
19 the park. So the technological limitations of our
20 database and the way in which we report crime is
21 still so limited. We did in 2008 increase
22 voluntarily the number of parks to 30 rather than
23 20. And we understand that the council is not
24 happy with that and we regret that we cannot
25 figure out a technologically feasible way to do it

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2 now. I believe that the number of parks over one
3 acre as listed in the legislation would be about
4 870 parks, not the whole 1,500 that are under the
5 jurisdiction of the park department. But, again
6 we regret the technologically impossible task at
7 this point.

8 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I'm aware of
9 all that. And that's the exact same thing you
10 said in 2008. It's not that it cannot be
11 captured. It's that it is not being captured
12 because you are using the same complaint forms
13 that you used at least in 2008 probably well
14 before that. So the question is, when will you be
15 able to capture this information? When do we get
16 into the computer age when we can actually figure
17 out without having your manpower go through each
18 individual complaint form and see where these
19 crimes happened? When will the complaint form be
20 changed--something as minimal as that--to say in a
21 park. We intended to have this information by now
22 and we don't. Do you ever intend to make that
23 change or any technological change that will allow
24 you to capture this information to give us what we
25 need to do what we're saying.

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2 SUSAN PETITO: At this point, there
3 would not be a reliable way to tell based on the
4 underlying fundamental way in which crime
5 complaints are reported, which is by street
6 address. So I cannot give you a timeframe for
7 when that would be increased.

8 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: So for the
9 people who are not aware of what we're discussing,
10 if there's a crime in the middle of Flushing
11 Meadow Park, the address is the closest address on
12 the side of the park. It is not indicated that it
13 occurred in Flushing Meadow Park. To get us this
14 information, they actually have to have somebody
15 go through every complaint report and figure out
16 where this happened, which is the most reliable
17 way to do it. It is not the most efficient way to
18 do it. And it definitely doesn't give us all the
19 information we need. And it's unacceptable. It
20 needs to be changed.

21 SUSAN PETITO: Well, Mr. Chairman,
22 if I can add. We're only talking about the crimes
23 that are reported to the council. On a local
24 basis, the precinct commander and the precinct
25 personnel are intimately familiar with the

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2 location of every crime in every park. In fact,
3 some parks do have addresses within them. For
4 example, there are cross streets that are mapped
5 in Central Park in the transfer - - the east
6 drive. So that you could actually assign it an
7 address. But the vast majority of parks, there
8 are no assigned addressed or cross streets. But
9 that is not to say that the precinct personnel
10 don't have complete mastery of this. Because they
11 do actually read the narratives. What you are
12 asking us to be able to do is to figure out a
13 technological way for the entire database that
14 crime complaints are based on to be able to read
15 and analyze the narratives and assign whether or
16 not that crime happened in a park. And that's
17 again something we don't find to be
18 technologically feasible at this point.

19 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Everything
20 you said is correct. I'm aware of--from working
21 with my commanders almost daily that they know the
22 location of every crime that's occurring and they
23 know when it's in a park. But basically you are
24 telling us right now they know what they're doing,
25 trust us. And I do. But we have our job to do,

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2 which is oversight. And we need the statistics to
3 be able to do that. And right now, not only are
4 we trusting that the commanders know what is
5 going, we're trusting that the statistics you give
6 us are accurate because we have no way to know
7 whether they are or not. And that's not a proper
8 way to do oversight. So we do need to continue to
9 work--and we don't want to pass new laws on this
10 but we can. That's what we do. We're like
11 Fritos, we can make more. We can pass a law that
12 doesn't give you the technological out and then
13 you'd have to. We don't want to have to do that.
14 We'd love for you to actually just give us the
15 information, figure out how to give us the
16 information we need. We have the most
17 technologically advanced police department in the
18 entire world with real time crime centers. I've
19 been down to see the cameras you have. It's
20 amazing what you have going on. But we can't
21 accurate crime in parks statistics on more than--
22 New York City parks estimate about five percent of
23 the parks in New York City. I've gone on longer
24 than I wanted to. So let me now go to questions
25 form Council Member Dan Garodnick.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank
3 you very much Mr. Chairman. And I certainly
4 appreciate your commentary about accurate
5 statistics and my questions are directed at Deputy
6 Chief McCarthy. I just wanted to roll through
7 some of the numbers that you articulated before
8 because I am not certain that we have a conclusion
9 here today that crime is up or down in the parks
10 for calendar year 2011. We simply don't have the
11 numbers yet. You haven't reported them to us. So
12 it might not even be fair for us to actually make
13 a conclusion. But I wanted to go to your comment
14 that crime is down by comparing the first three
15 quarters over the last two years, which is what
16 you did in response to Council Member Mark-
17 Viverito. Is that correct?

18 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I compared the
19 first three quarters of 2011 versus the first
20 three quarters of 2010.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: So let's
22 make sure we nail down that number for a second.
23 The first three quarters of calendar year 2001, we
24 agree with you that according to the numbers that
25 you gave us, that was 259. That is the number you

1
2 gave to Council Member Mark-Viverito. I don't see
3 any issue with that. On the first three quarters
4 of calendar year 2010, however, give us the number
5 one more time that you quoted.

6 BRIAN MCCARTHY: 283.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.

8 Can you help us how you got to that number? Our
9 numbers are not that far off, but they are
10 different. So we just want to make sure that we
11 have them right.

12 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Well, I have the
13 numbers from each of the 30 parks plus Central
14 Park--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: What do
16 you have for quarter one, 37?

17 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Quarter one for
18 2010. I have 26 for 2010.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.
20 And what do you have for quarter two.

21 BRIAN MCCARTHY: However, these
22 numbers that are here. These numbers are the 30
23 parks and Central Park is different. So what I
24 have here, 26 is for the 30 parks that we report
25 on. And then Central Park is on top of that

1
2 number. So I would have to research what Central
3 Park had for the first quarter.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: We have
5 Central Park. We have Central Park as 11.
6 Meaning that the total here was 37 for quarter
7 one.

8 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I honestly did not
9 look at that number in my preparation, so I can't
10 confirm that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: You
12 included Central Park in your calculation of 259.

13 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Yes, because I
14 totaled Central Park for the first three quarters.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Right.
16 But why wouldn't you have totaled it for the first
17 three quarters of the year you were comparing it
18 to.

19 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I did my best to
20 prepare. I have a book here.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I don't
22 mean to quibble you. But I think that the--

23 SUSAN PETITO: If I could explain.
24 What happened was Chief McCarthy researched it by
25 researching it as of the Comstat (phonetic) date

1
2 of the end of the third quarter. So he did not go
3 back and look at each successive quarter. He just
4 took the aggregate for the first three quarters of
5 2010.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I
7 understand Ms. Petito. I came to the hearing and
8 looked at the numbers that the police department
9 has given to us, added them up by hand and I just
10 come up with a different number, which is why I
11 point it out to you. I think that the correct
12 answer is that the first three quarters of 2010
13 represented 278, not 283. And that the first
14 three quarters of 2011 were in fact 259. Again,
15 it's not a big difference, but I just want to make
16 sure that we are comparing apples to apples. And
17 by the measure of three quarters to three
18 quarters, you would be right. But we don't know
19 what the fourth quarter of 2011 had in store for
20 us. Is that correct?

21 BRIAN MCCARTHY: The final data is
22 still being put to print, so to speak, by the unit
23 that oversees that in the police department. I do
24 not do that.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Do you

1
2 know whether the fourth quarter of 2011 was higher
3 than the fourth quarter of 2010.

4 BRIAN MCCARTHY: No, I don't.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: If the
6 fourth quarter were the same as the third quarter,
7 we would be up another 25 percent in crimes in
8 those parks that you sighted. I have no reason
9 that the fourth quarter was the same as the third
10 quarter, but if you had another 134 crimes
11 reported in the fourth quarter of 2011, you would
12 have a total of 293 for calendar year 2011.

13 SUSAN PETITO: Well councilman, I
14 think because this is such a seasonal measurement,
15 it would be highly unlikely that the fourth
16 quarter would equal the third quarter.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I
18 believe that the way it has borne out over time, I
19 think that is probably right. But we also don't--
20 and the reason I point that out to you is we don't
21 have the ability to say that here today that crime
22 was down in calendar year 2011 from 2010 because
23 we just don't have that data. You know, we could
24 be seeing an additional 20-25 percent increase.
25 If third quarter and fourth quarter, which they

1
2 have not historically, but if they did then we
3 could see a dramatic increase in calendar year
4 2011. That correct, right?

5 SUSAN PETITO: Sure.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Now
7 let's just talk about that for a second. And by
8 the way, let's say it was comparable to historic
9 data and the fourth quarter looked more like 2010
10 or 2009, you'd still be looking at let's say
11 around 310 total major crimes in these parks,
12 which is still considerably higher than 2009. Is
13 that accurate?

14 SUSAN PETITO: Yes, it is higher.

15 Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: In
17 response to the question by Council Member Mark-
18 Viverito, when she asked why is crime up. The
19 answer was crime is down. But clearly between
20 2009 and 2010 and between 2009 and 2011, it
21 appears we have jumped to a higher threshold, a
22 higher base level for crimes in parks. Do you
23 want to address that in any way as to what you
24 think is attributable there or whether it is
25 personnel changes or you noted flexibility for the

1
2 officers, that's a good thing but... Is there
3 anything that you can point to that you think we
4 should be considering and evaluating why that may
5 be.

6 SUSAN PETITO: Well, I think Chief
7 McCarthy was very clear when he was discussing the
8 trends in the crime levels with madam chair, that
9 yes there was an increase between 2009 and 2010
10 and he discussed the various things that might
11 have been associated which is the vast
12 proliferation of handheld electronic. There were
13 also new facilities opened up on Randall's Island
14 in mid 2009 that generated a huge new number of
15 people entering the park. I mean, there are
16 situational changes that bear on whether or not
17 more crime is being committed in a particular
18 park, but I think what Chief McCarthy also
19 described was the efforts of the police department
20 to address crimes as they occur and to mirror or
21 target the resources appropriately. So he also
22 discussed the arrests that had been made, the
23 identification of patterns, which has no led to at
24 least for the first three quarters of 2011 a drop.
25 So I don't think that anyone was trying not to

1
2 acknowledge that fact, but we are trying to put
3 the crime numbers in context and to explain what
4 the police department does in response when they
5 see a crime spike. And as we've noted most of the
6 crime increase is attributable to a very small
7 number of parks with very specific new or changing
8 usage. For example, as I said, Randall's Island
9 was a huge change that contributed to a great
10 crime spike from 2009 to 2010 because of the
11 opening of several new facilities there. So
12 that's just one example of how the police
13 department actually looks at where and why the
14 crime is occurring and tries to address it.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Let's
16 just talk about Randall's Island for one second
17 because when I look at the numbers from 2009 to
18 2010, I get 21 in 2009 and I get 20 in 2010. So
19 to me it looks like crime actually went down in
20 Randall's Island so that wouldn't be the point to
21 attribute the increase.

22 SUSAN PETITO: Well, it went up and
23 then it went down because--we're talking about
24 spikes. When we calculate spikes, we calculate
25 how many crimes occurred in that quarter versus

1
2 the same quarter of the previous year because it's
3 so seasonal.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.
5 Well, if you did that then the first two quarters
6 saw increases and the second two quarters saw
7 decreases. But overall when you are comparing
8 2009 and 2010, crimes were down in Randall's
9 Island at least by the numbers that the New York
10 City Police Department gave to this committee.

11 SUSAN PETITO: Again, we compare
12 spikes quarter to quarter.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I
14 understand. But then let's compare quarter to
15 quarter. I mean the first quarter of 2009 was
16 one. The first quarter of 2010 was three.

17 SUSAN PETITO: Can I tell you what
18 I have?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Well, if
20 we don't have the same thing, we've got a much
21 bigger issue here, but yes, go ahead tell us what
22 you have.

23 SUSAN PETITO: I believe we have
24 the same thing. In the fourth quarter of 2008 to
25 the fourth quarter of 2009, the number went from

1
2 zero to ten, okay. That reflected the opening of
3 lots of new facilities on Randall's Island.

4 That's what I'm using as an example. In 2009--the
5 second quarter of 2009 versus the second quarter
6 of 2010, it went up eight. It went from two to
7 ten. So again, that's what we look at because it
8 is so seasonal we have to not compare the second
9 quarter to the third quarter, but the third
10 quarter to the previous third quarter.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I
12 understand..

13 SUSAN PETITO: So that's what I was
14 referring to in Randall's Island.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay. I
16 think we see the spike from 2008 to 2009, a year
17 in which the major crimes overall went down in the
18 parks that are cited on this chart from 320 to
19 265. What I was pointing out was in the year
20 where the crimes went up, from 2009 to 2010 and
21 try to dig a little deeper as to what might have
22 been the cause. One of the points that you cited
23 was Randall's Island. But in fact for Randall's
24 Island the number of crimes went down from 2009 to
25 2010 and if you were too look at it quarterly,

1
2 went up in two quarters and down in two quarters.
3 But did not really reflect any major differential
4 for the overall number between those two years.
5 So I just don't think we can point to Randall's
6 Island as the cause of crimes going up between
7 2009. In fact, to Randall's Island's credit it
8 reduced the number crimes by one between those two
9 years. Am I missing something?

10 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I didn't say
11 anything, sir.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Well,
13 all right. It looked like you were about to. So
14 I'm not missing anything. Okay. So third quarter
15 crimes are regularly up. I assume that's because-
16 -

17 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I wouldn't say
18 that they are up.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I'm
20 sorry, they're up compared--

21 BRIAN MCCARTHY: I would say that's
22 the most quote-unquote high time of year.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Right.

24 BRIAN MCCARTHY: That's when the
25 pools, the beaches, the parks are being filled and

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being used by people who love them in this city.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: So more activity, more likelihood of criminal activity.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: The more likelihood of an incident.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Last question I have is on the subject of NYPD working with park conservancies. There are a number of park conservancies out there obviously. What do you do to work with the park conservancies to ensure that there is safety in the parks.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: Looking at the 31 parks, 15 of them have a conservancy of some type. Some have different names for them like in Staten Island. And in each of the instances where there is a conservancy, the precinct commander is expected to regularly communicate with the conservancy as well as regularly meet with the conservancy. And that does happen. When a precinct commander assumes that position or in laymen's terms is appointed to the position of precinct commander, he meets with the chief of patrol, my immediate supervisor Chief Hall. I'm physically present for these meetings and I've

1
2 been there when he's instructed by Chief Hall that
3 all community contact is imperative and being
4 accessible is imperative. So we expect the
5 conservancies to be pro-actively reached out to
6 and we expect when they want to reach out to him
7 or her that that transpires. And we make sure
8 that happens by having him or her, the precinct
9 commander, report on that. And we check on them
10 to make sure--to make double sure that that
11 happens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: All
13 right. Thank you. The chair has been very
14 generous with her time and I thank her. And we
15 look forward eagerly to see those fourth quarter
16 2011 statistics.

17 BRIAN MCCARTHY: You're welcome.

18 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
19 you. I want to recognize we've been joined by
20 Council Member Greenfield. I'm sorry I have to
21 take just a moment to update on this local law 114
22 and get some clarification. I'm really kind of
23 like flabbergasted that here we are in New York
24 City and that we have six years of dragging feet
25 and not making this issue a priority of how do we

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2 capture this information in a way that can be made
3 available and readily available. Understanding
4 that the precincts are going to know the areas
5 that they command and that they patrol. But the
6 fact that we still can't capture this information,
7 it really--to me is unwillingness on the NYPD's
8 part because I see the mayor going out there and
9 asking people to compete, to submit apps, and to
10 do innovative things and submit their ideas and
11 technology is a big issue for this city and
12 wanting to get the latest up-to-date--so to me the
13 fact that we can't figure out a way or tap into
14 the mindset, the skillset that is out there to see
15 if there is a way that we can really an effective
16 way of capturing this information to me just
17 doesn't fly. Question. You indicated that in
18 Central Park, Ms. Petito, there are certain
19 addresses that are specifically identified with
20 the park. Is that correct?

21 SUSAN PETITO: Addresses or cross
22 streets, yes..

23 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: And how
24 have those--is that something that has been mapped
25 by city planning?

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SUSAN PETITO: I assume they have.

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I think they are publicly mapped streets.

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CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So is

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there maybe an idea that maybe we could talk to

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city planning and maybe map some streets for every

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single park so that we have--maybe have a physical

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address to which we can identify if a crime

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happens. I mean, what I'm saying we've got to be

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outside of the box because I think there is just

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an unwillingness here. So my question is that if

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that is the case, are those addresses used by the

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Central Park precinct when a crime happens in the

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park? Is that the way that it is identified by

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that or is it just because of--I mean I'm just

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trying to understand.

17

SUSAN PETITO: Actually it is

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because it happens in Central Park which has its

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own precinct.

20

CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Has its

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own precinct. But I think that it may be mapping

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addresses to parks might be something to think

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about. I don't know. This is something obviously

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we'd have to consult. I don't understand why as a

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city and as NYPD we can't understand the benefit

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2 that it would bring to us to be able to say a
3 crime happened specifically in this park. And
4 being able to capture that information and have it
5 available. I mean there is an incredible benefit
6 to it in the work that has to be done by NYPD. So
7 I really still don't understand the reasons why.
8 I'll leave it there, but I wanted to also
9 recognize Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank
11 you very much madam chair. I have a few
12 questions, but first I heard you just say that
13 there have been crime spikes in a small number of
14 parks, a relatively small number of parks. But
15 given that we're only able report the numbers in
16 31 of the parks, can we actually say that?

17 SUSAN PETITO: Well the discussion
18 that we're having is about the 31 parks. I,
19 again, it's the precinct commanders who know
20 whether there are spikes in their particular
21 parks. That's why Chief McCarthy was talking
22 about the way in which they can request additional
23 resources from Chief of Patrol's office or other
24 commands. But we don't have a centralized
25 repository for the rest of the parks in the way

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that we have for the 30 parks.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Sure.

I understand. I just wanted to be clear that we can't say definitively one way or the other if crime has spiked in our parks because we don't yet have the technology to accurately report that for the 870 or so that are one acre or larger, correct?

SUSAN PETITO: Well, we don't have

the technology to report it on a city wide basis to the city council. This is handled very thoroughly by the precinct commanders.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I

absolutely believe that and have great trust in our precinct commanders and I work very closely with mine. But I do think that it is a problem and Council Member Garodnick and Chair Mark-Viverito both referred to this. It is somewhat disturbing that we can't yet accurately reflect these numbers for the 870 parks if not all of them. I wanted to then turn to the PEP situation in Queens. Chair Vallone talked about the numbers. We have eight PEP officers for the entire borough of Queens most of the time. And

1
2 I'm wondering how we assign those eight. And how
3 you rotate them. How you prioritize where they're
4 going in the borough.

5 MICHAEL DOCKETT: The eight are
6 typically on a mobile patrol so they would pair up
7 and patrol the parks in Queens. They would
8 respond to 311 requests for complaints that come
9 in. So they go out and investigate those
10 complaints and follow up. They can be dispatched
11 over the air similar to 911. So if someone calls
12 in a condition, they will get dispatched to it
13 from our central communications office. And then
14 they have just regular patrol patterns that their
15 borough captain would assign.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Do you
17 rotate them at all to make sure that they are
18 going through each community board equally or
19 touching all the various parts or do you find that
20 they are--those eight for the most part are
21 assigned to or spend the majority of their time--
22 for example in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, which
23 obviously is a very large park with a lot of--

24 BRIAN MCCARTHY: All 13 report out
25 of Flushing Meadows park so by default there is a

1
2 lot of attention to that park. That's where they
3 report in the morning and at the end of their
4 shift. But their mission is to patrol the entire
5 borough. So it's really driven by complaints, and
6 conditions, and issues and what gets dispatched.
7 But the local captain would make sure that they
8 are hitting the problem sites. They are familiar
9 with where the issues are. So they should be
10 equally distributed throughout the borough.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So you
12 wouldn't be able to tell us, for example, what
13 percentage of the time those eight are spending in
14 Flushing Meadows Corona Park versus Windmuller
15 Park or...

16 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah, I couldn't
17 tell you today, but we could go back and try to
18 figure that out, run the reports. They track
19 their patrol hours, where they are, which parks
20 they're in--in and out of those parks.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I think
22 that would be worthwhile because I'm not saying
23 it's true or not, but I think there's the
24 perception among some that the larger parks get a
25 disproportionate amount of attention and then

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2 those of us who have wonderful parks and great
3 parks and Windmuller and Ladoti and Torsney and
4 Noonan and they're all just--they're wonderful,
5 but they're not as substantial in size. Somehow
6 they get less attention and less traffic from the
7 PEP officers.

8 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah, that would
9 be the case. There's also less traffic from the
10 public, so if their complaints about the parks
11 that you mentioned, the PEP officers will come
12 there to investigate it and to respond. So a lot
13 of it is complaint driven.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: The
15 commissioner mentioned there are 96 tax-levied PEP
16 officers and I think it was 74 that are
17 conservancy funded.

18 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Privately funded.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER:
20 Privately funded. There are no privately funded
21 PEP officers in Queens, is that true?

22 MICHAEL DOCKETT: That's correct.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: And
24 where you have privately-funded PEP officers at
25 parks. I'm assuming most of those are in some of

1
2 the Manhattan and maybe Brooklyn parks, do you
3 also have tax-levied PEP officers assigned to
4 those parks.

5 MICHAEL DOCKETT: For the most
6 part, not at the same parks. So our grant sites
7 in Manhattan are Battery Park City, Hudson River
8 Park. Those are both state entities that have
9 decided to use urban park rangers as their law
10 enforcement division instead of using for example
11 state park police. So we don't have any tax-levy
12 officers in those sites.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So
14 Central Park, Prospect Park, they have no tax-
15 levied PEP officers.

16 MICHAEL DOCKETT: They have tax-
17 levy PEP officers.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: And
19 then do they also have privately-funded PEP
20 officers.

21 MICHAEL DOCKETT: They do not. They
22 have--they may have hired privately-funded like
23 our park security service. These are folks that
24 cannot issue a summons or make an arrest, but they
25 are there for access control like the Central Park

1
2 Conservancy hires two of our security officers
3 just to patrol the conservatory gardens to force
4 issues there. But they are not PEP officers. So
5 those are over and above your count that you gave
6 earlier before.

7 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah, right.

8 Those are the no-sworn staff. The park security
9 service folks.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I guess
11 what I'm asking is is there a way for you to
12 redeploy away from some of those parks that the
13 beneficiaries of generous private funding.

14 MICHAEL DOCKETT: That's what
15 happens when it is a city park. So if we have
16 private funding for Madison Square Park, for
17 Washington Square. So we don't have to station
18 officers there. So tax-levy officers typically
19 don't control those parks because there is private
20 funding there.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Right.
22 So maybe you can redeploy some of those to Queens.

23 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Okay.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Was
25 that an okay you will deploy more to Queens?

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2 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Well, there are
3 12 that are city wide that do patrol Queens. And
4 if there is an issue in Queens we detail from the
5 other boroughs to handle it. So if you have a
6 particular spike or issue, we have the ability to
7 bring staff from around the city to address a
8 concern. That routinely happens around the city.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Yeah, I
10 mean I think we understand some of the challenges
11 that you face, but I think you could probably
12 understand our feeling that eight PEP officers for
13 the entire borough...

14 MICHAEL DOCKETT: No, I agree. We
15 have 22 officers that are on some type of leave at
16 the moment. When those officers return to the
17 agency, they will more than likely go to the outer
18 boroughs. So there will be an increase there.
19 There are folks on maternity leave, worker's comp,
20 that type of thing.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Okay.
22 We're only one of the four outer boroughs though
23 so that's... How many urban park rangers in Queens?

24 MICHAEL DOCKETT: There are eight.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Out of

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how many?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Eight out of 31.

So there's a total of 21 shielded officers in Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Also based out Flushing Meadows Corona Park?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: No the rangers are based out of Forrest Park, Alpine Park, or Taunton. And then seasonally at Rockaway Beach.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Right. The flash cams. Are there any of those in Queens.

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah, there's one in Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: One out of 23. Where's that?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: It's at Steven Gable's (phonetic) playground.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Okay. Are you considering expanding that or how would you expand that?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: It's geared on complaints. So if we have an issue of vandalism or people violating trespassing or curfew then we will consider additional cameras.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Who's

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they? Parks?

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MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So we

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can work with you to maybe to request that if it's

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determined to be needed.

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MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: That's

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great. I think I'll allow some of my other Queens

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colleagues to follow up on those. Thanks a lot.

12

CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank

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you Council Member. We have also been joined by

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Council Member Gentile and Council Member

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Halloran. Next is Council Member Greenfield that

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has questions.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank

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you. So just to follow up on a couple of quick

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issues. What are the costs of the flash cams.

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MICHAEL DOCKETT: The flash cams

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are about \$5,000.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Per

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flash cam?

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MICHAEL DOCKETT: Per flash cam.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Got it.

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Would you be open to having council members allocate some of their capital funding towards these flash cams for your parks. Is that something that you would consider doing?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: I don't know if \$5,000 is capitally eligible. But we are-- definitely would be interested in assistance in purchasing.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Well, I think it's around 30 or 35, but I imagine you don't have just one camera, right?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: No, a lot of the locations there is just one camera because they are addressing one specific problem.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Oh okay.

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Or entrance or part...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So you could do it with discretionary funds potentially.

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: And you would be open to doing that?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I do
3 want to acknowledge just for the record that I
4 think overall--if you look back over the last few
5 years--clearly we are seeing improvements in terms
6 of park safety and so on. I want to thank you for
7 that. I'm just curious about a couple things.
8 When we talk about bigger parks versus smaller
9 parks, obviously we track the bigger parks. Do
10 you think there is a difference in the types of
11 crimes that we're seeing in the bigger parks--sort
12 of the seven major crimes versus minor crimes--in
13 smaller parks. Have you folks ever looked at that
14 in terms of trying to have an understanding of
15 what happens in bigger parks versus smaller parks?

16 BRIAN MCCARTHY: We look at the
17 crimes in the 31 parks that are being discussed
18 today, but in relation to the smaller parks and
19 commissioner Petito from my department is here
20 with me today discussed, we rely on the local
21 precinct commanders to be all over that. And I
22 feel confident that they are through both the
23 selection process of how to get that assignment as
24 well as the oversight they received initially from
25 their borough. And then secondarily from the

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2 office of the chief of patrol itself. Every week
3 there's a comprehensive review that I participate
4 in of the 76 precincts, which would include the
5 parks and any outstanding trends that are pending.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I feel
7 confident as well that they are doing their jobs
8 and I know that at all of our local precincts NYPD
9 is working very hard. I'm just curious as to
10 whether you sort of track those statistics in
11 terms of the differences between the kinds of
12 crimes that are happening in smaller parks versus
13 the kind of crimes that are happening in the
14 larger parks.

15 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Council member,
16 that is something that I'd like to take back and
17 review and get back to you on.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I think
19 it would be helpful data. If you could take a
20 look at it and maybe just send the committee
21 chairs a letter that they could distribute to us
22 just that we have the knowledge. I think that
23 would be helpful.

24 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Yes sir.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: What

1
2 about the smoking summonses, right? You can't
3 smoke in parks anymore. How many of those
4 summonses have been given out since the law has
5 passed? You're smiling. I don't know what that
6 means.

7 MICHAEL DOCKETT: In 2011, we've
8 written about 85 of those.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Eighty-
10 five?

11 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Right.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.
13 Odds are pretty good if you're smoking in a park,
14 you're probably not going to get busted or New
15 Yorkers are so law abiding that no need to give
16 out those tickets. I'm just curious.

17 MICHAEL DOCKETT: We do a
18 combination of--not everyone gets a summons.
19 There's a combination of education. We have a lot
20 of tourists in our parks that may not be aware
21 that you can't smoke in the parks. And they can
22 smoke in the places that they came from. So down
23 in Battery Park, you'll see a lot of tourists--
24 Central Park. So it's a combination of education
25 and enforcement. The local officer has his

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2 discretion to go either way. We did--initially
3 when the law rolled out, we did a lot of education
4 work. A lot of promoting it. And we really began
5 the enforcement after Labor Day last year.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: What's
7 the enforcement like? What's the ticket for
8 smoking in a park?

9 MICHAEL DOCKETT: \$250, the fine.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Wow,
11 that's a lot of cigarettes.

12 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Right.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: And so
14 you do--you're saying for tourists you will give
15 them a warning or you'll try to work with them.

16 MICHAEL DOCKETT: The discretion is
17 left with the local officer. So a lot of times
18 the officers are within their rights to educate
19 the public about the law, have them put it out,
20 and get compliance and that's fine. When the
21 person doesn't comply, won't put it out, they'll
22 definitely get a summons. But it is up to the
23 local officer.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: They
25 have to produce ID. What happens if they don't

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have ID? Do you take them down to the precinct?
How does the process work?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: No one been taken down to the precinct for not producing ID, but you do need to produce some type of ID to get an environmental control board summons.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Right.
So they don't have ID?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: If they don't have ID, either you go with the education route or you escalate it and make an arrest and take them to the precinct to verify their identification.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Got it.
What about the quality of life crimes? Do you keep stats on that? I mean, we know sort of what's going on with the seven major crimes, but sort of the minor crimes, shall we say. Aside from the numbers you've given us in terms of ticketing and things like that. It seems like the number one issue you guys seem to have is the unleashed animal summonses, right?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: But do you sort of in general--I mean that's sort of

1
2 reactionary in terms of the summonses that you
3 actually give out, but do you keep track of the
4 quality of life issues that are happening in these
5 parks.

6 MICHAEL DOCKETT: We keep track of
7 all of the violations that we issue, so we issue
8 violations in the 35 different categories or more.
9 So we have specific numbers for any park rule
10 violation where we issued an environmental control
11 board summons, a criminal court summons, moving
12 violation or parking violation.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: But not
14 necessarily for complaints, right? I mean you're
15 working it just based on the violations that are
16 issued, is that correct?

17 MICHAEL DOCKETT: On the complaint
18 side, we do track the 311 complaints that come in
19 for different categories.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Is
21 there any way you might be able to share that with
22 us as well. So that we sort of have a sense in
23 terms of both the complaints that are coming in on
24 311 and also the violations that are being given
25 out. I think it would be interesting to see the

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2 match up if the two are matching up and whether
3 there is some sort of need for focusing on the
4 quality of life stuff that I like frustrates--a
5 family goes out to the park and someone is doing
6 something and I think that is sort of the typical
7 daily occurrence that we get as elected officials
8 as well. So might you have that? Or might you be
9 able to send that to us as well.

10 MICHAEL DOCKETT: We could send it
11 to you, yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Great.
13 Thank you folks, appreciate it. Have a good day.

14 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Thank you
15 council member. As I said before, we have the
16 room until 1:00. We have one more council member
17 to ask questions. It will be Liz Crowley. And
18 then we will get to two panels. We will be
19 hearing from in the first panel will be New York
20 City park advocates and New Yorkers for Parks and
21 some others. So we'll be looking forward to that
22 testimony. Any information I got earlier came
23 from New York City park advocates. I may have
24 misidentified that. So now we'll go to Elizabeth
25 Crowley for the last set of questions. And then

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we'll go to our panels. Council Member Crowley?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you.
Thank you to both our co-chairs. I've been hearing during this committee hearing that there's a spike in crime that happens to go up in the third quarter of the year when the parks are the most active. Is that correct?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: That's the busiest season and the time when crime has been documented as being most prevalent. But comparing 2011 to 2010, in fact, the first three quarters of 2011 were down compared to the first three quarters of 2010.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: All right. But does it make sense to have more PEP officers working during the height of the season as opposed to when you don't have as many visitors in the parks.

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Well, for us it's flat because we're in a hiring freeze. So we have a set number of PEP officers.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And what's their training?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: I'm sorry.

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2 There's also seasonal staff that we bring in
3 during the height. So we hire over 294 additional
4 staff will come in--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But they
6 can't--that staff is not able to act as peace
7 officers.

8 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Right. They are
9 not peace officers, but they do access control.
10 They are uniformed presence. They are the
11 security at all of our city pools. They are the
12 security at our beaches. They are assigned to
13 regional parks. They are assigned to our
14 recreation centers.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: In your
16 opinion they're deterring crimes?

17 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Oh absolutely.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Now, your
19 flash cameras. Are they high tech? Can they see
20 a distance?

21 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: At what
23 distance?

24 MICHAEL DOCKETT: I'm not sure the
25 exact distance.

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COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: How do they compare to police cameras?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: Well, I believe that the police cameras that you see around a park or a video. So these are still images on the flash cams. They are taking individual shots. They are not video.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Do you have NYPD video cameras in any of your parks?

MICHAEL DOCKETT: There are some cameras around Central Park that I'm aware of.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: The only park that has cameras inside is Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village and there are 13 cameras there and they were basically placed there because of numerous community complaints about drug dealing and that's what the cameras are primarily used for.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: And has crime gone down since you installed those cameras?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: I don't have the statistics in relation to Washington Square Park. That's not one of the parks that are one of the 31 for today. I apologize. That is something we can

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look at and get back to you on.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: What about the cameras around Central Park? Has that deterred crime around Central Park?

BRIAN MCCARTHY: There are 30 cameras that line the periphery of Central Park. Basically, in my opinion, they act as both a deterrent and an apprehension tool. They are able to record and they have a 30 day retrievable capability.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Right. Those are high tech police cameras. They can see like 150 yards.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: I apologize. I'm not really technologically savvy but they are state of the art and the unit that oversees them is--I have full confidence that they are expert in their field.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Let's say--we're council members. We want to install those particular cameras around the area of our park. Would we go to the NYPD or would we go to the parks department.

BRIAN MCCARTHY: May I? Those type

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2 of cameras, the jargon for them is Argus Cameras.
3 You can discuss that with your local precinct
4 commander. Your request would be evaluated
5 because what we actually do is we send out surveys
6 within patrol services bureau to each of the 76
7 precincts for them to look at potential locations
8 where the cameras would be effective. And they go
9 through channels in the police department where
10 they ultimately go to the unit that analyzes the
11 data as well as the unit which has the technology
12 and the capability to install the technology and
13 so those units would evaluate the request.

14 SUSAN PETITO: If I could just add
15 something. You could also make a proposal to the
16 police commissioner directly if you have an idea
17 for where you would like to put cameras. And he
18 would take it under advisement and it would go
19 through the same process that Chief McCarthy
20 described. But you could, you know, initiate that
21 by writing to the police commissioner as well.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay.
23 Thank you. No further questions.

24 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. There
25 are a lot more questions I would like to ask and

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2 so would my co-chair, but we want to get to our
3 other panels and we only have the room until 1:00.
4 I want to thank you all because we have to keep
5 this--the proper frame of reference here. Parks
6 are so much safer than they used to be, just like
7 our streets. And we're talking about an uptick
8 that is occurring in the parks, but that's
9 occurring in our streets and on our subways and
10 everywhere else too. And it's because of depleted
11 resources and I'm sure that all of you up there
12 would rather have more officers and more PEP
13 officers if you could, but you are doing the most
14 with resources that you have. Deputy Chief
15 McCarthy, I want to personally thank you again.
16 We worked together almost on a daily basis back
17 when you were at the 114. And I can personally
18 attest to the great work you did there. And I'm
19 sure you're doing the same here. And I look
20 forward to working with you in this position. And
21 all of you as we follow up with the information
22 that we're awaiting and hopefully get some new
23 information and do some real oversight on this.
24 And anything we can do when it comes to writing
25 laws or changing some laws you let us know because

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2 if we can be of any assistance to you, we'd like
3 to do that. So thank you all for coming down
4 today.

5 BRIAN MCCARTHY: Thank you.

6 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: The next
8 panel will be Holly Leicht from New Yorkers for
9 Parks, Geoffrey Croft from New York City Park
10 Advocates, Joseph Puleo, DC 37, and William Bayer,
11 the former PEP officer who has some interesting
12 testimony apparently.

13 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: We've
14 been joined by Council Member Gennaro. I
15 mentioned Council Member Gentile before. All
16 right. So then thank you for being here and
17 testifying. So feel free anyone can start and
18 take it away.

19 HOLLY LEICHT: Good morning. My
20 name is Holly Leicht. I am executive director of
21 New Yorkers for Parks, the city wide research and
22 advocacy organization championing quality parks
23 and open spaces for all New Yorkers in all
24 neighborhoods. We've been very involved in the
25 issue safety in parks for decades and we're also

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2 very involved with Council Member Vallone in
3 getting the 2005 legislation passed. You have
4 testimony, but I'm actually going to speak a
5 little more extemporaneously based on what we've
6 heard today. We are a dated drive organization.
7 We are not here to talk about what the best means
8 of enforcement is necessarily. That's not our
9 expertise. But our expertise is looking at data
10 and understanding what that says about a situation
11 in parks. And as Garodnick said earlier today I
12 think very well, we simply don't have enough data
13 at this point to draw conclusions about the
14 situation of crime in parks. Not only that, even
15 on top of that, we don't have enough data from
16 parks individually but we don't even know how it
17 compares to precinct individually or to the city
18 as a whole. This leaves us at a tremendous
19 disadvantage to figure out how resources should be
20 deployed and what kind of enforcement actually is
21 the most meaningful in different parks and
22 different situations. The police department
23 indicated earlier that we have to understand all
24 these statistics in context. I don't think we
25 have the information at this point in order to do

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2 that. The legislation allowed for phased
3 implementation beginning with the city's largest
4 parks as has been said in 2008. The tracking
5 requirement was then expanded to 30 plus Central
6 Park. It was intended to then go to 100 parks a
7 year later and 200 parks two years later. And by
8 now we should be looking at all the parks. The
9 reality has fallen short in many respects. Most
10 significantly that no expansion of parks has taken
11 place since 2008. So we're still just looking at
12 31 parks. And the idea of the technological
13 concerns, while I'm very sensitive to that. I
14 came out of a city administration. I know there's
15 nothing that agencies hate more than unfunded
16 mandates. But this has been a very gracious
17 implementation time frame. Six years to only be
18 at 31 parks is a serious problem. This glacial
19 implementation is really--as Council Member
20 Melissa Mark-Viverito said--it really has to be an
21 indication that this has not been a priority to
22 get this technology in place. It is time to get
23 this technology in place. The second issue is
24 that this is not even publicly available other
25 than on our website, which a couple weeks ago was

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2 hacked. So maybe your next hearing can be about
3 crime in cyberspace. So right now you can even
4 find this data publicly. We get it from Council
5 Member Vallone's office. We put it up publicly in
6 a forum that the public can then access and
7 interpret. But that's the only way it is
8 available. We think it's essential. And we do
9 appreciate that the NYPD has worked with us, that
10 we get this data, that we can make it available,
11 but we would like to be working with the police
12 department more closely in order to interpret
13 this. So first of all we want to see a serious
14 prioritization to make more parks and eventually
15 within some time frame that's agreed to between
16 the council and advocates and the community and
17 the NYPD and park department to get all these
18 parks tracked. And to find a way to fund the
19 technology to do so within a reasonable time frame
20 in the next year or so. On top of that, we'd also
21 like to be able to work more closely with the
22 police department to help interpret this data, not
23 just within the 30 parks, but also--how does this
24 compare to precincts and how does it compare to
25 crime in the city as a whole. So that we really

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2 have an understanding of is crime a problem in
3 parks. If so, what parks and how to deploy
4 resources bases on that. The information that we
5 have shows that there are seasonal trends. Some
6 parks are safe enough that there are no crimes.
7 That information all needs to be understood so
8 that we can be sure we are deploying things as
9 effectively as possible. Thank you.

10 GEOFFREY CROFT: Good afternoon.

11 My name is Geoffrey Croft. I'm President of New
12 York City Park Advocates. Today we are
13 concentrating our testimony on crime and demand
14 that the city comply with the 2005 local law 114
15 that mandates the tracking and reporting of crime
16 in parks. By 2008, the city was supposed to
17 complete data for all parks and playgrounds one
18 acre in size or greater in size, which they are
19 clearly not doing. The NYPD currently tracks
20 crime in only 31 in the city's more than 1,700
21 parks and playgrounds and 4,000 properties. We
22 estimate that the city is reporting less than 5
23 percent of existing park crime in its quarterly
24 reports to the city council. This is completely
25 unacceptable. City park land occupies 14 percent

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2 of the city's land. Crime in parks increased by
3 24 in 2010 including the NYPD figures that only a
4 fraction of the crime committed on park land is
5 tracked and released to the public. Additionally,
6 crime data compiled by the parks department
7 upstart program is not being publicly released.
8 Community members, elected officials, park
9 advocates, and crime victims have been pushing the
10 city to highlight the city's severe underreporting
11 of crime in city parks. On May 30th, 2011, Council
12 Member Vallone, chair of the safety and park
13 committee, sent Ray Kelly a letter and Ray Kelly
14 stated that they do not have the necessary
15 resources or technology to comply with the law.
16 We've heard that repeatedly over here, which is
17 outrageous. Quote, our current technology
18 configuration still does not permit the type of
19 reporting you are requesting. To do so would
20 require a major technological upgrade at a time
21 when our resources are considerably strained. The
22 law was passed in 2005. It should be noted that
23 during this time the city had a more than \$3
24 billion surplus. The commissioner also questioned
25 in his response to Council Member Vallone the

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2 usefulness of tracking such data in his letter.
3 This is irresponsible as well as strange
4 considering how much both he and the mayor tout
5 the benefits of crime statistics. We can assure
6 you this information will be very useful for a
7 variety of reasons. First and foremost, the
8 public including its elected officials have a
9 right to know if their parks are safe, what if any
10 crime patterns exist, and how to allocate the
11 resources. Every single one of the city's 1,700
12 parks and playgrounds are located within a
13 precinct, yet the NYPD is currently tracking only
14 a few of these parks. And only one park, Central
15 Park, has data available on a weekly basis and
16 that's online. Basic park crime information could
17 easily be contained on the NYPD's 61 reports,
18 which is what Council Member Vallone was getting
19 to, if they want it to be. Clearly this coding
20 can be accomplished if the political will existed.
21 Unfortunately, politics is controlling this. As
22 I've been told time and time again from law
23 enforcement personnel and city officials, the city
24 does not want these figures made public. In 2003,
25 four kids died in a horrible drowning accident off

1 the waters of City Island. News quickly
2 resurfaced that 911 calls could not be traced. At
3 the time, there were renewed calls to develop the
4 technology to trace 911 calls from cell phones.
5 Unfortunately, once again politics played an
6 important role in delaying implementing such a
7 tracking system. The way the current 911 system
8 works, a street address is needed for a report as
9 we've heard today. Many parks do not have street
10 addresses. As a result, the incident is often
11 listed outside the confines of the park, which
12 makes it extremely difficult to compile accurate
13 information. This not only creates huge
14 impediments for collecting and reporting crimes
15 accurately, but the current archaic 911 system can
16 make it very difficult for personnel to respond in
17 emergency situations. These delays can be the
18 difference between life and death. Not only do we
19 have--and we make available--the city council
20 data, but we actually track the other park crimes
21 in New York City parks. Because a lot of these
22 park crimes are not listed as being in parks, it
23 makes it virtually impossible. And it is a very
24 hard job to do. It is not only vital that the
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2 city be made to comply with existing law, but to
3 expand it. While the law specifies they collect
4 data for parks one acre or greater, most
5 playgrounds are less than one acre in size. Some
6 parks--they are collecting data for - - landfill
7 are a park in name only. I would like to read a
8 few examples of parks that are not being reported
9 by the city council. In just a two-minute search
10 of our new site, A Walk in the Park--just a two-
11 minute search. In November, tens of thousands of
12 dollars were stolen and vandalism in city--in
13 Coney Island boardwalk including a lifeguard
14 station torched. These were in November. Two 11
15 year olds rob and bloody a 75-year-old tourist in
16 Battery Park. Two teen brothers were attacked at
17 Midland Beach soccer field. Prospect Park, a very
18 courageous park ranger apprehended and took a 9
19 millimeter gun away with and an illegal 15 foot
20 clip away. And not only was he not told he was
21 doing a good job, but he was actually--one of the
22 first things that his supervisor told him is,
23 quote, why did you get involved. Again, a woman
24 had come over to him, flagged him down, and said
25 that this person was doing sexual things in her

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2 presence. So the parks department retaliated
3 against this hero park ranger after taking a
4 dangerous gun off the street. In October, a
5 homeless woman slashed a man in Battery Park. In
6 Morningside Park, sexual assaults, shootings.
7 Gang activity in Brooklyn's Washington Park. Gang
8 activity is through the roof in our parks.
9 September, a man prevents a rape in the Cross
10 Island expressway wooded area property. Also in
11 September, a playground in Alley Pond Park was set
12 on fire, arson, hundreds of thousands of dollars
13 in damage. The Brooklyn DA warns again of gang
14 activity in Brooklyn parks. Also in September, a
15 22-year-old man was raped at gunpoint in French
16 Charley's Playground in The Bronx. In August, 56
17 gang members arrested in a Brooklyn park, a gun
18 was recovered. Also in August, a man was murdered
19 in Rosewood Playground, shot twice. A 24-year-old
20 woman was raped in Raymond Bush Playground in
21 Brooklyn August 20th. A project I worked on and
22 spent many hours, 98 arrests in Washington Square
23 Park in the first few months of this year--98
24 arrests. Unfortunately, I can go on and on. And
25 what do all of these incidents have in common

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2 besides occurring on park land, not one of these
3 crimes show up on the NYPD reporting system that
4 the city council receives. Compare these
5 instances to the reports NYPD produces to the city
6 council. So what this means is that unless you
7 are regularly monitoring A Walk in the Park, the
8 public is getting information from the city on
9 only a fraction of crimes in parks. And I can
10 assure you that the budget of New York City Park
11 Advocates is many billions of dollars less than
12 the NYPD and the parks department. Yet we are
13 providing the public with much of the park crime
14 data occurring in parks. I just want to close.
15 Let's be very clear. The tracking and reporting
16 of park crime in city parks is not an option, it's
17 the law. The mayor and the city council must
18 begin to hold NYPD and the parks department
19 accountable. The city must correct any
20 technological issues they claim they have and
21 begin to comply with this law. They've been allow
22 to avoid complying with the law for far too long.
23 Thank you.

24 JOSEPH PULEO: Good afternoon city
25 council people. My name is Joe Puleo, a vice

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2 president of local 983. I represent the urban
3 park rangers, the PEP officers throughout the city
4 of New York. I'd like to begin by saying that the
5 system that's in place is now is antiquated. I
6 mean, there's only 31 parks. We have a total of
7 1,700 parks in New York City. From what I'm told
8 800 of them meet the criteria. All 800 of those
9 parks should be equipped to have the data. PEP
10 officers as you know have declined in number. As
11 to the parks own admission, they said there's 96
12 tax-levied PEP officers. That means that these
13 PEP officers that patrol our parks, that are
14 allowed to answer calls and go outside the
15 perimeters of where they are unlike the officers
16 that are assigned at the authorities, like Battery
17 Park City, Hudson River. These maintain security
18 at these facilities. They are not all out to go
19 beyond their scope of where they are assigned. So
20 I don't want the public to get confused when these
21 officers head counts are used--that they're out to
22 do the same work that other PEP officers do
23 because they don't. They are specifically there
24 to handle the tasks and needs of these people that
25 pay for them. When I started 20 years ago--over

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2 20 years ago as a PEP officer, we did not have
3 these distinctions. When I was hired, I was told
4 that you are hired by the City of New York to do a
5 job and that is to enforce park rules and
6 regulations and deter crime. The number one thing
7 to deter crime, which I'm surprised was not
8 mentioned, was visibility. People are not going
9 to commit crimes if they see PEP officers rolling
10 back and forth in their vehicles. Or if they see
11 them on foot. Crimes occur when they see that
12 these parks are abandoned. You can place as many
13 cameras as you want, it's not going to deter crime
14 as would a patrol officer, a police officer, a PEP
15 officer in the park. You know, these cameras,
16 they're subjected to breaking down. People find
17 their way around them. Once they get caught, I'm
18 pretty sure how these people figure out how not to
19 get caught the second time. We went from 500 PEP
20 officers to 450. Geoff corrects me. I heard you
21 say 500. Down to 96. This has to have a dramatic
22 impact on crime in parks. And especially when
23 they're told to do more and more. I mean we have
24 a harbor patrol. Do we really need a harbor
25 patrol when you only have 96 officers? Mounted?

1
2 How many horses do we have? Two horses? I mean
3 this is ridiculous. I'm glad that we have them
4 out there. I wish we would have more of them that
5 are equipped to do the job. But when they only do
6 one hour's worth of work a day. I mean these
7 resources could be better utilized. Anyway, I'm
8 not here to take up all your time. I'm going to
9 let the experts speak. I have with me Bill Bayer
10 who used to be an NYPD inspector. He turned later
11 on to be a New York City Deputy Inspector for
12 parks. So he's seen in both hands. He's seen it
13 from the NYPD perspective and he's seen it from
14 the parks perspective in an administrative
15 capacity. So I think if there's one expert on
16 this issue it's Bill Bayer. Because he's seen it
17 from NYPD and from parks. I think he can probably
18 weigh in from his observations what is best for
19 PEP and crime as they pertain in parks.

20 BILL BAYER: Thanks Joe. Morning
21 everybody, or I guess it's afternoon now. Mr.
22 Chairman, Madam Chair, I'm Bill Bayer, William
23 Bayer. I did 32 years in NYPD. My last
24 assignment was commanding officer of the Central
25 Park precinct. At that time, we got a lot of

1
2 resources and a lot of support from headquarters
3 and in my 30-month tenure at Central Park before I
4 retired, crime was down 64 percent. Then I went
5 to Nashville. I was police chief at Vanderbilt
6 University for a short time and I came back to New
7 York at the request of Commissioner Benepe to be
8 an inspector in the park enforcement program for a
9 couple of years. The hearing here, I hear the
10 experts particularly from the parks department
11 saying that there is so much coordination between
12 the parks department and NYPD. You'd think that
13 everybody was sitting around a campfire singing
14 Kumbaya with all these chiefs and deputy chiefs
15 and commissioners. That's not the case. One
16 example that stands out is the Harbor Patrol Unit
17 that park department has within PEP. How they
18 routine coordinate with the Harbor Patrol. I
19 invite all the council members here to go out to
20 your local NYPD Harbor precinct and ask, number
21 one, if they've ever heard of PEP harbor patrol
22 and number two if they've ever seen them. I'm
23 glad that the parks--it's lucky that the parks
24 commissioner isn't here under oath.

25 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: They must

1 hang out with the mounted police in Queens.

3 BILL BAYER: Same thing, yes. So
4 you get a lot of disingenuousness here. But I
5 would like to just talk about the mission of the
6 parks department and the mission of the police
7 department. The mission of the parks department I
8 think they accomplish. They plan, develop park
9 properties. They get involved in maintenance and
10 operations, botanical gardens, and so on and so
11 forth. But one of their missions is not
12 enforcement. That's not the mission of the parks
13 department. The mission of the police department
14 is enforcement--preserve, protect, enforce, and
15 that kind of thing. So you have a--as this
16 committee and the testimony is illuminating is
17 that it is a bifurcated system. You have on one
18 hand who's is responsible for crime in the parks.
19 Is it PEP? Is it the parks department? Is it the
20 police? Who is it? So we have an inefficient
21 system. It is a wasted effort. Lack of
22 accountability. Duplication of effort. And all
23 this leads to dangerous conditions, particularly
24 in the parks. My recommendation and I've been
25 talking about this for the last five or six years

1
2 whenever I got the opportunity to--whose ever ear
3 I can catch anyplace. Park Enforcement Program,
4 PEP, should be moved lock, stock and barrel under
5 the NYPD, period. We have history for this. In
6 the mid 1900s, we all know that NYPD absorbed
7 housing police. It absorbed transit police. It
8 absorbed the department of transportation traffic
9 enforcement. It absorbed school safety, yes, all
10 that. And it has made it work. And we've gotten
11 more revenue from the department of transportation
12 traffic enforcement. We've gotten subway crime
13 down, housing crime down--in fact when it started
14 in 1994, as opposed to what one of the
15 commissioners from parks said, crime hasn't gone
16 down over the last 30 years, it has gone down
17 about over the last 16 years because that's when
18 NYPD started to absorbing all those enforcement
19 agencies. And that's what makes it more
20 efficient. Now you can go to one agency and say,
21 what's happening in the parks. You don't have to
22 have the parks department here because that's not
23 their mission. The mission of NYPD is to keep
24 safety in the parks in addition to the streets.
25 So that's what I would recommend. I hope I

1
2 planted a bee in somebody's bonnet saying maybe
3 the mayor would get involved. And that would
4 require a mayoral decision. Just move it over.
5 And the police department has more resources.
6 There's an organization chart of the eight
7 administrative borough commands, a captain, a
8 lieutenant, and couple of sergeants. And move the
9 PEP officers with an NYPD logo, NYPD nomenclature
10 on their uniforms--that this is an enforcement
11 agency. Not ambassadors of good will, not eyes
12 and ears, but actually jumping into the parks and
13 taking enforcement action when it has to be taken.
14 And that's my statement. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
16 you all for testifying. Obviously we totally
17 agree with you in terms of the wanting more
18 information and the need and the importance of
19 having it. I'm going to take--if I could ask the
20 Assistant Commissioner Dockett. I think it was
21 you. Maybe you could come back up one second, if
22 someone could allow him the mic. I wanted to get
23 clarity on something. Considering that right now
24 we're only getting statistics on 31 parks, one of
25 them being Central Park, which has its own

1
2 precinct. I heard somebody say--I'm not sure if
3 it was you or if it was the deputy chief--that 15
4 out of those 31 parks have conservancies. And my
5 understanding is that for the most part when you
6 talk about the 96 tax-levy, you talked about 75 to
7 80 PEP officers that are under contract. Most of
8 them are contracted through conservancies,
9 correct?

10 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So of
12 these 15 parks that have conservancies out of the
13 31, how many of them have contracted PEP officers
14 in those parks? The reason I'm getting to that is
15 because it may be skewing the actual information
16 we're getting even further if there's dedicated
17 PEP officers in a park patrolling and having a
18 constant presence.

19 MICHAEL DOCKETT: I don't believe
20 any of those parks have dedicated PEP officers.

21 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: They
22 don't?

23 MICHAEL DOCKETT: That are
24 privately funded. Other than Central Park.

25 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Well

1
2 other than Central Park, which has its own
3 precinct. It's a very unique situation. But of
4 those 15--well 14 in this case one of them is
5 Central Park I'm sure. So out of those 14
6 conservancies, none of them do contract?

7 MICHAEL DOCKETT: One second.

8 Yeah, Randall's Island, Ward's Island on a
9 seasonal basis, there are two officers there.

10 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: So
11 there's only two.

12 MICHAEL DOCKETT: Yeah.

13 MALE VOICE: Central Park also has
14 PEP...

15 CHAIRPERSON MARK-VIVERITO: Right.
16 In addition to the precinct. So I just wanted to
17 clarify because I was concerned that might be
18 skewing the information even further in terms of
19 the statistics. So thank you for clarifying.

20 MICHAEL DOCKETT: You're welcome.

21 Can I just say one thing about--as we've heard the
22 special privileges. We just kept hearing that
23 over and over again about how these conservancies
24 from the NYPD, how they are getting special
25 privileges. Also, just a point of correction,

1
2 it's a \$50 ticket, not a \$250 ticket for smoking.
3 Just so you guys know that.

4 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I wanted to
5 especially thank Holly and Geoff for the help in
6 passing this bill in the first place. Decades--it
7 seems like decades ago. And monitoring it every
8 time--I get the information and I give it to you.
9 It does seem silly. I have to give it to you to
10 have posted so that the public knows about this
11 information. In fact, I've asked my staff to
12 research whether we can amend this bill to require
13 the NYPD to post it. Back when we did it, we
14 didn't think we had that power. But since then, I
15 think we've done it a few times. So something has
16 changed. I'm going to look into whether we can
17 actually amend it so that they can do it also.
18 Not that you shouldn't do it anyway because I like
19 what you guys are doing. And you actually break
20 it down a little bit and do a great job for the
21 people of New York so they can look at this
22 information. Did you want to say something Holly?

23 HOLLY LEICHT: I would say all
24 things being equal, I'd rather us keep putting
25 that up. If that means they have the ability to

1
2 take the time to try to figure out how to do more
3 parks.

4 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Oh, okay.
5 We'll save them some work. Mr. Puleo, when did we
6 have 450--about what year?

7 JOSEPH PULEO: Back in the early
8 90s, 92, around there. Then also too we had round
9 the clock coverage. You know like NYPD has a
10 Central Park, we were able to--in all the
11 boroughs--able to monitor the parks around the
12 clock.

13 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: How many did
14 we have in 2001?

15 JOSEPH PULEO: That's when the
16 numbers started to decline. The numbers have been
17 going down, you know, each year. And as Mike
18 Dockett had pointed out to you that they are in a
19 hiring freeze. So we've gotten some money back
20 actually under Gifford Miller. I don't know if
21 any of you were around back then. We actually got
22 \$3 million to reinstate for 70 officers, but we
23 don't where that money went. We thought that
24 money was earmarked for it to be consistent year
25 upon year. But since then obviously that's been

1 depleted. So it's been a constant struggle.
2
3 Things have gone from bad to worse to where we are
4 now. There has to be more PEP officers back on
5 the beat in order for crime to go down. No matter
6 how you divide these numbers--I see these numbers,
7 you know, they go up in peaks and stuff. But
8 ultimately, the end result is there that people
9 are less safe because PEP officers--

10 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Do you have a
11 position as the union as to whether or not you
12 should be under the police department?

13 JOSEPH PULEO: I think that being
14 that they are law enforcement people, which
15 sometimes differs from the opinion of their
16 superiors. I feel that they should be under a law
17 enforcement heading, which would be the police
18 department. Also, mind you that it was also
19 mentioned that they don't carry firearms. The
20 reason that they don't carry firearms is because
21 the commissioner doesn't want them to carry
22 firearms. They can carry firearms tomorrow if the
23 commissioner agreed up it.

24 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Also, just to
25 dovetail on that. William Bayer is not saying

1
2 that there should not be a dedicated police force.
3 It could be under the police department because
4 going back to the 19th century--again was a
5 political decision to move the park police--we've
6 had a park police since the inception of our
7 parks.

8 JOSEPH PULEO: Are you aware of how
9 other cities do it?

10 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Yeah, because
11 our city and our state--just in New York City we
12 have dedicated federal police, which are all armed
13 by the way. Our state police--

14 MALE VOICE: I just wanted to find
15 out whether or not other cities have their parks
16 enforcement officers under the auspices of the
17 police department or the parks department, if you
18 have any information on that.

19 BILL BAYER: Well they do. There
20 are other agencies that do have parks department--
21 other states and federal and so on. And generally
22 speaking they are enforcement agencies. They are
23 police officers. They're not peace officers.
24 They are police officers. There's a distinction.
25 And every state has it. Every city has that when

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they have significant park area.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: But are they under the control of the parks department or the police department?

BILL BAYER: Under the police department.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Police Department, okay.

BILL BAYER: If you go to San Antonio, the river walk. These guys are under auspices of the San Antonio Police Department but they are dedicated to the river walk - - high visibility area.

CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I'll bring it up with Commissioner Kelly. I understand why the park rangers would be parks. They're more historians. They're doing a different sort of duty. But enforcement, that's an interesting question. We need to get out of room and we have one more panel. So I want to thank you all for your ongoing help and I look forward to working with all of you. Next panel will be Deborah Williams from Social Service Employee Union, Elaine Wong, and Adam Pratt who is a citizen of

1
2 Battery Park City. Deborah, you go first and then
3 for citizens we usually put a three-minute time
4 limit. But Deborah since you are representing the
5 union, you get a little bit more.

6 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.
7 My name is Deborah Williams. I'm here
8 representing Anthony Wells and the offices and
9 staff of Social Services Employees Union local
10 371. I was asked to speak today by the vice
11 president of 983. Social Services Employees Union
12 local 371 has over 700 members that work in the
13 department of parks. With respect to the hearing
14 that was conducted today concerning public safety,
15 it is my members that are the park enforcement
16 captains who are the supervisors of the PEP
17 officers. Also, to just add to that, recently
18 local 371 and district council 37 has been
19 conducting workplace violence risk assessments at
20 the department of parks in an effort to assist
21 that agency in creating a workplace violence
22 prevention program. How that ties in to the topic
23 today is this. As a result of us going to the
24 various parks throughout the boroughs and we just
25 started the bottom of Manhattan and parts of

1
2 Brooklyn. As we go to determine whether or not
3 our members, the employees are safe, we're walking
4 through the parks. And as a result we can
5 conclude or draw assumptions or make decisions as
6 to whether or not or how the public is impacted as
7 well. So what I've initially observed in those
8 assessments is one that there is not enough
9 security in the parks so we are requesting that
10 the number of PEP officers be increased. That's
11 number one. Number two, what was also observed is
12 that in numerous parks and green spaces and
13 playgrounds, the lighting in the area is not
14 sufficient. That may in fact be due to vandalism
15 on the lights. I'm not sure. But with respect to
16 the safety of the public and also our members, the
17 parks employees, what I cited was an increase in
18 the number PEP officers, enhanced lighting. We
19 also looked at and saw some of the facilities that
20 they had. They did not have proper cameras or
21 security cameras. And some that they did were not
22 working or functioning. Those are issues. And
23 the cameras would not just capture employees
24 coming in and out of their facilities but would
25 also capture the area where the public is. So if

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2 you have the ability to record in the event that
3 incidents did in fact occur, you would be able to
4 capture that or be able to have more specificity.

5 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: How many park
6 captains are there?

7 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: Right now my
8 understanding is that there is eleven. It's
9 eleven. Let me see. So that was increase the
10 number of PEP officers. Also, when went into the
11 comfort stations. Those restrooms that are in the
12 rec centers. Those restrooms that are in the
13 playgrounds. What was observed was that those
14 playgrounds during the eight to four hours were
15 empty--were vacated. So if someone from the
16 general public had to use the facility, they would
17 just randomly walk into the restroom and they have
18 no protection going in the restroom. So what am I
19 saying? Maybe a security mirror at some strategic
20 point would allow the person entering into that
21 space to take a look to see whether or not they in
22 fact would be alone in that restroom. That's
23 something that could be considered as well. That
24 would be it for me. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: I guess we'll

1
2 hear from--actually Ms. Williams. So it's 11 out
3 of the 96. Is that the breakdown for captain per
4 officer.

5 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: That would be
6 the captains. Eleven, yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: And the other
8 members you represent consist of who?

9 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: Those are the
10 community titles, community associates, community
11 assistants. They work in the various offices.
12 Some of them may be found in the rec centers.
13 Some of them may be in some of the facilities or
14 buildings that are in the parks.

15 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. And
16 the captains themselves. How are they assigned?

17 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: My understanding
18 is that the majority of them are assigned by
19 borough and they also--there's one I believe that
20 has a special project or a special command. And
21 they're responsible for all of the PEP officers
22 that are underneath them.

23 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: And would you
24 know how many are in each borough?

25 DEBORAH WILLIAMS: At this time,

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2 no, I don't have any specific information
3 regarding that because I came here today just to
4 get better awareness as to what's going on with
5 the parks department from their perspective as it
6 pertains to safety, so that as I continue to do my
7 assessments, I would be able to have a better
8 understanding of how that agency works.

9 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: We'll get
10 that information. Thank you. Elaine.

11 ELAINE WONG: Hi. Council people
12 and chairs. My name is Elaine Wong. I used to be
13 a New York State department of transportation city
14 planner in research and development. Currently, I
15 am a realtor and a building owners and managers
16 association member working on the preparedness
17 committee group. So my concern about public
18 safety has been long. And it's of great concern
19 to me because as a realtor I get questions every
20 day concerning safety in various neighborhoods.
21 What I've heard today concerning testimony is
22 keeping the status quo of not acknowledging that
23 there has been an increase in park crime. And
24 thereby if we don't acknowledge that the
25 deployment of resources won't happen. And crime

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2 may very well increase having our neighborhoods
3 deteriorate thereby making my job harder to sell
4 New York to investors from overseas, mainly
5 Chinese money--families coming from across the
6 country to have their new graduates come and
7 settle in New York. I get these questions every
8 day concerning the safety of our neighborhoods.
9 What I also see as troubling is that the testimony
10 today seems to be very Manhattan-centric. Because
11 Manhattan is increasingly becoming too expensive
12 for new families and new graduates to settle in
13 Manhattan I get so many more inquiries concerning
14 the outer boroughs, mainly Queens and Brooklyn.
15 It becomes a harder sell when I hear from parents
16 that they've heard about crime in various
17 neighborhoods. So I'd like to conclude that I
18 think it is very important that we have to
19 acknowledge that there has been an increase in
20 crime in our parks and that increase in crime in
21 our parks spills onto our neighborhood streets
22 thereby decreasing in the end values and the
23 ability of the city to regenerate and keep its
24 vibrant self.

25 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Thank you

1
2 Elaine. Adam.

3 ADAM PRATT: Hi, good morning. My
4 name is Adam Pratt. I'm an owner and resident in
5 Battery Park Place--actually excuse me in Battery
6 Park City on Rector Place. Thank you Mr. Vallone
7 for asking your questions in regards to the parks.
8 Their numbers for many years are usually very
9 miscalculated. I ask what is the definition to
10 harass, the subject of aggressive pressure and
11 intimidation, make repeated small scale attacks on
12 an enemy. Am I an enemy of the parks department
13 because I issue many, many complaints of video
14 tapes and photos of the PEP officers abusing their
15 jobs. Too bad Mr. Dockett's not here. Mr.
16 Dockett makes a lot of false statements. And I
17 challenge him on every one. The PEP based on
18 variable facts and documented evidence, is riddled
19 with systematic structural problems that quite
20 literally not merely allow corruption and abuse to
21 exist but also and most importantly projects and
22 thereby encourages the wrongdoing PEP officers.
23 In other words, PEPs structural problems allow
24 abuse to flourish. The Inspector General in 2010
25 did an investigation of Battery Park City

1 authority and also the area. Scathing abuse Mr.
2 Vallone. Just to let you know, Mr. Vallone, of
3 what they do in Battery Park City. Do you realize
4 we have over 40 PEPs in Battery Park City, not
5 including captains and other people? Forty when
6 you look at the whole numbers. We have an
7 abundance of staff. Abusive behavior? They drive
8 their golf carts on the sidewalk at night without
9 any lights. Nothing identifies them. They don't
10 even come to the job in the uniform, but they show
11 up in the NY Jets though. Thank God we are Jets
12 fans right? They also park their vehicles on top
13 of fire hydrants and handicapped ramps to block
14 access so they can go get snacks. Is that a
15 common practice by the PEP department I ask? What
16 about smoking? I'm glad that was brought up
17 because all the PEPs including your sergeant smoke
18 directly in front of the PEPs office in Battery
19 Park City. Mr. Vallone, I would provide a car
20 service, lunch, anything you want--photos. You
21 can watch these guys. They abuse and abuse.
22 That's all they do. So I'm glad to hear about the
23 summons that were written because none of them
24 were written in Battery Park City because they are
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1
2 the ones who are the abusers. It's a wild west,
3 Mr. Vallone. Please investigate. Also back in
4 2003, the PEPs put down a memo about having a dog
5 summons and watching the length of leashes. And
6 then they gave away a week's vacation for the most
7 summons written. This is how they operate. We
8 have a copy of the memo. So we also have the
9 numbers. And I ask you, Battery Park City, 3,000
10 summons were written in Battery Park City out of
11 8,300. So what do we do? Just write tickets in
12 Battery Park City fellas? Thirty six percent of
13 all PEP tickets are written in Battery Park City.
14 Thank you for your time and I hope the council
15 investigates the parks.

16 CHAIRPERSON VALLONE: Okay. Well
17 thank you. That is the final panel for today.
18 And I want to thank everyone for remaining to the
19 very end. We learned a lot today. This is our
20 second or third hearing on this topic and we
21 intend to follow up on all the matters that we
22 discussed today. So thank you all for your
23 ongoing help. This meeting is adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Matt Williams, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

Date 2/9/12