

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES
Of the
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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September 30, 2013

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: ROSIE MENDEZ
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Margaret Chin
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Melissa Mark-Viverito
Robert Jackson

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

Tim Sullivan
Chief of Staff to Deputy Mayor for
Economic Development

Remilda Ferguson
Director of Housing Division
Teamsters Local 237

Ruben Torres
Secretary-Treasurer
Teamsters Local 237

Shirley Jones
Resident
Amsterdam Houses

Maria Pacheco
Resident
UPACA 6

Michael Noble
Resident
Elliott-Chelsea

Carmen Pineiro
Organizer
Community Voices Heard

1	COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING	4
2	CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: This hearing is	
3	coming to order. Good afternoon, everyone and	
4	welcome. I apologize for all the technical	
5	difficulties in terms of location, but we're ready	
6	to start. I am Councilwoman Rosie Mendez and I	
7	chair the committee on Public Housing, and at	
8	today's hearing we'll be focusing on the New York	
9	City Housing Authority's new Governing Board. Last	
10	week, the Mayor, in accordance with state law	
11	passed back in July, appointed new members or	
12	previously appointed members to the board. We see	
13	some new faces and again, there are some old ones	
14	that have returned to the Board. I look forward to	
15	the testimony of the Administration that clarifies	
16	the differences as to board composition, board	
17	structure and the powers if any that is granted to	
18	the Board. I would like the Administration to tell	
19	us a little bit about the previously and newly	
20	appointed board members, and lastly, I would also	
21	like to hear about the number of applicants and the	
22	process pursued by the Mayor and the appointments	
23	of the new board members, as well as getting the	
24	state legislation passed. We've been joined by	
25	Council Member Chin from Manhattan, who's a member	

2 of this Committee. I want to thank everyone for
3 being here today, and if you would like to give
4 testimony you need to fill out one of these little
5 forms with the Sergeant at Arms in the back, and
6 now I look forward to hearing from the
7 Administration. Thank you.

8 [Pause]

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you give me
10 one second? Sergeant, can you tell me if his
11 testimony's being captured?

12 [Pause]

13 TIM SULLIVAN: Thank you, Chairwoman.
14 Let me just start over. Good afternoon Chairwoman
15 Mendez and members of the Public Housing Committee.
16 My name is Tim Sullivan and I'm the Chief of Staff
17 to Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, Robert K.
18 Steel. On behalf of the Bloomberg Administration
19 and Deputy Mayor Steel, thank you for the
20 opportunity to testify this afternoon about the
21 recently enacted state legislature that transform
22 the governance inboard structure of the New York
23 City Housing Authority. The Bloomberg
24 Administrative believes that these reforms will set
25 NYCHA on a better path for decades to come and

2 enable NYCHA to better pursue its mission of
3 providing homes for more than half a million New
4 Yorkers despite continual dramatic cuts in federal
5 funding.

6 I would like to begin my testimony this
7 afternoon by thanking, on behalf of the
8 Administration, Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly
9 Housing Committee Chairman Keith Wright and State
10 Senator Martin Golden for their leadership in
11 passing this bill, as well as Governor Cuomo and
12 his administration for their support of the
13 legislation. The Administration is also
14 appreciative of US Housing and Urban Development
15 Secretary Shaun Donovan's support during this
16 process, including a letter of support sent to the
17 Governor and the leadership of both chambers in the
18 state legislature.

19 This afternoon, I would like to take
20 the opportunity to describe for the Committee why
21 the Administration sought to change NYCHA's board
22 structure, outline the details of the final
23 legislation and provide an overview of the newly
24 appointed members of the NYCHA Board. I will begin
25 by describing why we believe reform legislation was

necessary. The challenges facing public housing nationwide are well known to this Committee. For decades Congress has been steadily and dramatically reducing federal support for Public Housing Authorities. In the last 12 years alone, NYCHA has seen its annual federal capital support reduced by nearly 50 percent despite escalating needs for capital improvements to a public housing stock that is in many cases now more than 80 years old. Sequestration has only exacerbated these challenges. Unlike other cities such as Chicago, New Orleans and Atlanta, which have torn down tens of thousands of units of public housing in recent years, Mayor Bloomberg has refused to abandon public housing in New York City despite this fiscal crisis, but the Mayor has also recognized that NYCHA needs to adjust to this new normal of diminished federal support for public housing. And so in 2011 and 2012, at the Mayor's direction, the city and NYCHA under the leadership of Chairman John Rhea, undertook a comprehensive review of NYCHA's governance structure, operations and financial outlook. This review resulted in a series of critical initiatives including the

recently announced \$732 million Bond B Financing Transaction that will fund capital repairs at 24 NYCHA developments in all five boroughs, a plan to reduce NYCHA's central office costs and NYCHA's ongoing efforts to eliminate its Maintenance and Repairs Backlog by the end of 2013.

One of the key areas in which this review focused was NYCHA's Board, which prior to the 2013 legislation, was comprised of three full-time salaried members and one resident member paid on a per diem basis. The review of NYCHA's governance structure revealed that NYCHA's Board was an outlier from nearly all of its Public Housing Authority peers, as well as from best-in-class, non-profit and corporate boards of directors. Non-profit and corporate boards of directors are often described as having four key responsibilities: 1. setting overall organizational strategy 2. Hiring and evaluating senior management 3. Overseeing the limitation of strategy, and 4. Consulting on key issues and challenges as they arise. In these best-in-class organizations, there is a clear distinction between oversight and management. Prior to the passage of

1 this legislation, NYCHA was the only public housing
2 authority in New York State and one of only a
3 handful of PHAs in the entire country with a full-
4 time salaried Board of Directors. As Secretary
5 Donovan said in his letter of support, this
6 structure presents a number of challenges to
7 maintaining the property fiduciary duty to the
8 residents and the community. In particular it
9 places board members in the untenable position of
10 having both oversight and management
11 responsibilities.
12

13 NYCHA's Board was also substantially
14 smaller than many other large city PHA boards,
15 which limited the number and diversity of
16 perspectives represented on it. Chicago has 10
17 members. Philadelphia has nine. Newark, Atlanta
18 and San Antonio have seven. In fact, of all the
19 large PHAs reviewed, NYCHA had the smallest board
20 of any PHA.

21 Finally, NYCHA's Board also did not
22 have the kind of resident representation that other
23 PHAs had adopted. While a resident member, Victor
24 Gonzalez, had been added in 2011, NYCHA still had
25 fewer resident members than many of its peers.

Philadelphia, San Antonio and Los Angeles have two resident members. Chicago has three. And so in August 2012, Mayor Bloomberg announced that the city would seek state legislation to reform NYCHA's board structure to bring it more in line with other large PHAs and adopt Governance Best Practices.

The Administration's approach was driven by three primary goals in seeking a transformation of NYCHA's Board. 1. Creating a clear division of responsibilities between the NYCHA Board and NYCHA management 2. Expanding the overall size of the board, and 3. Expanding the number of resident members of the board. In February 2013, a bill was introduced in the State Senate by Senator Golden, which embodies these principles. Through the winter and spring of 2013, the Administration worked closely, not only with Senator Golden, Assemblyman Wright and Speaker Silver, but also with community groups, public housing advocates and local elected officials to refine and improve the bill. The Mayor's office convened a formal meeting at City Hall with the New York City Alliance to Preserve Public Housing in April of 2013 and many of the alliance's suggested

2 amendments to the bill were ultimately incorporated
3 in the final legislation, changes we believe made
4 the bill even stronger. In June, large bipartisan
5 majorities in both the Assembly and Senate passed
6 the bill, and on July 3rd, 2013, Governor Cuomo
7 signed the bill into law.

8 The new NYCHA Board consists of seven
9 members appointed by the Mayor including a full-
10 time Chair. Of the six remaining seats on the
11 Board, three must be filled by NYCHA residents and
12 all members except the Chair will receive a monthly
13 stipend of \$250 for every four hours of work capped
14 at \$1,500 per month. The members other than the
15 Chair serve three-year terms, but the law creates a
16 staggered board structure so that new appointments
17 are made every year by the Mayor. To accomplish
18 this, initial members of the new board are
19 appointed for fixed terms of one, two or three
20 years. After the initial terms, all appointees
21 will serve three years.

22 Following the enactment of the
23 legislation in July, NYCHA launched a comprehensive
24 outreach process to let residents know that they
25 could apply to serve on the new board. On June

2 25th, a letter from Mayor Bloomberg was mailed to
3 each household in all 334 NYCHA developments
4 announcing the application process. Flyers were
5 posted in English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian in
6 all NYCHA developments, as well as in community
7 centers throughout the city. Applications were
8 available online, in NYCHA property management
9 offices and in NYCHA community centers. The
10 resident application period was open until August
11 2nd. 592 resident applications were received.

12 Last week, Mayor Bloomberg announced
13 the appointment of six members of the new NYCHA
14 Board including John Rhea, who will remain in his
15 role as NYCHA Chairman. This new board includes
16 individuals with significant experience in housing,
17 finance, community development, real estate
18 development, economic development, education and
19 resident leadership. We believe that these seven
20 individuals bring an outstanding collection of
21 perspectives, experiences and backgrounds to the
22 NYCHA Board, and I am pleased to share with the
23 Committee a brief description of each new member.

24 Diahann Billings-Burford serves as the
25 nation's first-ever municipal Chief Service Officer

charged with leading NYC Service, New York City's initiative to promote a new era of service and volunteerism in New York City. Prior to her appointment, Miss Billings-Burford served as Deputy Executive Director of External Affairs for City Year New York. Prior to joining City Year, she served as the New York Director of External Affairs for Achievement First, a charter school management organization. Miss Billings-Burford spent most of her career with Prep for Prep, a New York based leadership development organization where she served in various capacities including Director of College Guidance and Director of Leadership Development Opportunities. A graduate of Yale University, she also holds a J.D. from Columbia University School of Law.

Beatrice Byrd is the former President of the Red Hook West Resident Association. Previously, Miss Byrd served in various capacities within the former New York City Board of Education including as an 8th grade English and Social Studies teacher, an Assistant Principle and a Neighborhood Literacy Coordinator for Community School District 15. She has attended various

institutions of higher learning; Hunter College, New York University, Cornell University and Columbia's Teachers College, where she pursued a doctoral degree in History and Philosophy of Education.

Victor A. Gonzalez was the first public housing resident to be named a member of the Board of the New York City Housing Authority. Mr. Gonzalez, who has lived in NYCHA housing for 50 years, currently resides in the Rabbi Stephen Wise Towers on Manhattan's Upper West Side. He is a tireless public housing resident leader and advocate and has served as president of the Wise Towers Residence Association since 2003, and is an alternative member of NYCHA's Resident Advisory Board. Mr. Gonzalez also has done extensive work with advocacy groups, organizing workshop meetings for tenants and supporting activities that impact not only his development, but also the community around him. Born in New York City to Puerto Rican parents, Mr. Gonzalez received his Bachelor's degree from Mercy College and served for five years in the U.S. Air Force, honorably discharged after reaching the rank of Sergeant of Security Police.

Following his military service, he spent 33 years working for UPS, retiring as international Team Leader in Customer Service in 2005.

Kyle Kimball is President of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. Since joining EDC in 2008, Mr. Kimball has helped to develop and implement EDC's strategy to strengthen the city's economy. EDC's economic transformation agenda includes an aggressive slate of programs aimed at helping legacy industries transition to 21st Century business models, attracting promising new industries and expanding entrepreneurship to ensure that the city is well positioned to thrive in the 21st Century economy. Beyond working to overhaul and grow the city's economy, Mr. Kimball's efforts have included overseeing billions of dollars of capital investments ranging from basic infrastructure improvements to new parks and streetscapes across the city, as well as implementing several of the Administration's most ambitious area-wide redevelopment projects, bringing new housing, infrastructure and job opportunities to neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. Prior to joining EDC, Mr. Kimball worked

2 at Goldman, Sachs & Company as a Vice President and
3 at J.P. Morgan, also as a Vice President. Mr.
4 Kimball is a graduate of Harvard College where he
5 majored in Government. He received his Master's
6 degree in Public Policy from Harvard's Kennedy
7 School of Government.

8 Willie Mae Lewis is the former
9 President of the St. Nicholas Houses Resident
10 Association. After her early involvement in the
11 lunch-counter demonstrations of the Civil Rights
12 Era, Miss Lewis came to New York and became deeply
13 involved in her community. She has worked for the
14 Department of Education since 1989, currently at
15 P.S. 197, just a few blocks from her home. Miss
16 Lewis is also a deeply involved supporter of the
17 new Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter
18 School at St. Nicholas Houses, where she serves as
19 a member of the board of directors. She completed
20 her education at the College of New Rochelle.

21 And finally, Emily A. Youssouf is a
22 veteran in the fields of finance and housing with
23 an extensive background of more than 30 years of
24 leadership positions and strong results in the
25 private and public sectors. Miss Youssouf is

currently a clinical professor at NYU's Schack Institute of Real Estate, a master's program in real estate, where she teaches courses in Real Estate Capital Markets, Affordable Housing Finance and is the curriculum coordinator for the finance Track. Previously, she was a Managing Director at J.P. Morgan Securities, where she was head of the Housing Finance Department. Prior to her time at J.P. Morgan, Miss Youssouf was President of the New York City Housing Development Corporation or HDC. Under her direction HDC became the largest issuer of multi-family affordable housing bonds in the country for 2004 through 2007. Miss Youssouf is a graduate of Wagner College with Honors and holds an MA in Urban Policy Analysis and Management from The New School for Management and Urban Policy.

Let me conclude my testimony by saying that the Bloomberg Administration believes that this new NYCHA board structure will help put NYCHA on a more sustainable path for decades to come as it continues to grapple with federal defunding. By streamlining decision making and creating a clearer division of responsibilities between the NYCHA Board and NYCHA management, this new structure will

2 result in enhanced operations and improvements to
3 resident quality of life for the more than half a
4 million New Yorkers who make their home in NYCHA
5 communities. Thank you for the opportunity to
6 testify today. I'd be glad to answer any questions
7 from the Committee.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you. I'd
9 like to add that we've been joined by Maria del
10 Carmen-Arroyo from the Bronx. Let me just... and
11 none of the board members are here today. Is that
12 correct, Mr. Sullivan?

13 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, just one
15 thing on Miss Youssouf's blurb you forgot to
16 mention that she was a member; she was Vice Chair
17 of the board and served in that capacity I don't
18 know for how long.

19 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct. Since
20 2011 I believe.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

22 TIM SULLIVAN: That is correct.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So when did the
24 Administration decide that you should start looking
25 at an alternative board structure?

2 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, we announced we
3 were going to seek legislation in late summer of
4 2012. I think it was August of 2012.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So that's when the
6 Administration decided that based... it wasn't
7 prior to that. It was at that time.

8 TIM SULLIVAN: That was when we... I
9 mean we had been studying it for several months
10 prior to that and looking at...

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Several months.

12 TIM SULLIVAN: At public housing
13 authorities around the country, looking at non-
14 profit and corporate boards of directors, you know,
15 doing the analysis that...

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing] Mm-
17 hm.

18 TIM SULLIVAN: Drove the decision to
19 seek legislation.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, 'cause in
21 2010 the state passed legislation, which gave us
22 our first resident member. At the time, the
23 resident member was in a different pay scale than
24 the other members, but since there was fear that
25 the Democratic Majority wouldn't hold, the state

2 passed the legislation. Did that trigger any
3 thought on the Administration that maybe we should
4 be changing the board structure at that point where
5 there was this inequality?

6 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I think surely the
7 experience of having a resident member on the board
8 was a very positive one, and I think one we thought
9 was something to build on. I think having Victor
10 on the board was... he was you know, a strong
11 contributor to the board, as were his other three
12 peers and I think that certainly gave us confidence
13 that expanding resident membership on the board
14 would be a good thing; that that was something
15 positive to build on. Also, we did think it was
16 important that all the non... you know, aside from
17 the Chair that all the board members be treated
18 equally; be paid equally, be given equal status on
19 the Board and so we thought that was an important
20 priority to focus on as one of the principles for
21 our reform effort.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And it was
23 basically just trying to streamline decision making
24 and creating a clear division between the oversight
25

2 responsibilities and the management
3 responsibilities.

4 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah, that was our
5 number one priority, expanding the board and
6 bringing more voices to the table, and specifically
7 bringing more resident voices to the table were
8 also you know, almost equally as important, but
9 certainly the most important priority was bringing
10 a clearer distinction between management and the
11 board.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So I'd like to ask
13 you a question, Mr. Sullivan. When this
14 legislation was first introduced, the Mayor wanted
15 this legislation to take effect you know, December
16 of 2013, January of 2014, so why introduce
17 legislation last year to take effect so much later?

18 TIM SULLIVAN: I think the bill that
19 was introduced in February, and I'd have to go back
20 and check, but I think the original draft had it
21 effective some number of days post signature. We
22 had originally discussed perhaps having it take
23 effect later, but the original draft of the bill
24 from February I believe was 60 days from signature.

2 I'm not 100 percent sure about that, but it was
3 some number of days from when we got...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Because that...

6 [crosstalk]

7 TIM SULLIVAN: Our signature.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, but that was
9 not the... well, I don't know if it's the original
10 draft. It was the original request that... which
11 I'm assuming would've been the original draft. I
12 know my colleagues have a lot to do, so I want to
13 see if they want to ask questions now. Council
14 Member Arroyo?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you,
16 Madam Chair. Good afternoon. Thank you for your
17 testimony. There's a quote from Secretary Donovan
18 in your testimony that in particular it's the
19 second page.

20 TIM SULLIVAN: Mm-hm.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Almost down to
22 the bottom. The third paragraph from the bottom,
23 "In particular places board members in the
24 untenable position of having both oversight and
25 management responsibilities." So what's going to

2 be the board's role and how do you see the culture
3 of the institution changing given this new board
4 structure?

5 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. Well, I think I
6 mentioned in my testimony we sort of see there
7 being four key roles for the board to play and none
8 of them are management roles. So first of all, you
9 know, setting the strategy for the organization.
10 2. Hiring the senior management, the General
11 Manager and his or her direct reports 3. Overseeing
12 the implementation of that strategy, so more of a
13 oversight and monitoring responsibility versus a
14 management responsibility and fourth, being able to
15 consult on issues. We have a lot of expertise on
16 the board. There was a lot of expertise on the
17 board previously, but there's even more expertise
18 on the board in a variety of fields, whether that's
19 housing, education, community development, economic
20 development so that when there are issues that the
21 NYCHA management seem... wishes to seek some
22 counsel on, the board will be available to them. I
23 think the board will meet a minimum of 10 times a
24 year, but a bit less frequently than they do now,
25 and so they will have more... the management will

2 have more responsibility for implementing the
3 strategy and the board will have responsibility for
4 setting it. You know, similarly I think the
5 previous board structure has each of the members
6 having offices and staff inside the offices of
7 NYCHA. That won't be true anymore, so that will I
8 think clarify some of the division of
9 responsibilities between the board and management.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Now the
11 residents in the developments that I... that are in
12 the 17th council district, you management
13 differently than what you're describing, and I want
14 to kind of go down into weeds a little bit. The
15 management of the development and management of the
16 system you see as two different things?

17 TIM SULLIVAN: No, I think they're
18 closely related. I think the Board of NYCHA and
19 the board of any large organization needs to set
20 the overall strategy for the organization and set
21 its overall priorities, but it has to give
22 responsibility to the management team, in this case
23 the general manager or the chairman or the general
24 manager to oversee operations, to have a reporting
25 structure where each of the development you know,

2 property management offices report up into a
3 central operations staff and so that there's sort
4 of clear lines of responsibility and clear lines of
5 accountability. I think one of the important
6 things is any large organization should have clear
7 lines of authority and clear lines of
8 accountability for when things go right for people
9 to give you a pat on the back and when things don't
10 go right for you to know who you're going to get
11 questions from, and so the property level rolls up
12 to the borough level that rolls up to the central
13 level.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So the
15 bureaucracy doesn't really change for the tenants.

16 TIM SULLIVAN: As it relates to the
17 piece of the legislation that was passed and signed
18 in July, that doesn't have... there is no specific
19 prescription for how to change or leave exactly as
20 is, the bureaucracy of the organization, by which I
21 mean the staff of the organization. I didn't mean
22 to use the work bureaucracy. But certainly the
23 new board will have the authority, just as the old
24 board did, to ask hard questions. Do we have the
25 right structure of how we're managing our

2 properties? Do we have the right structure and
3 processes in place to do maintenance and repairs or
4 capital projects? They won't be responsible for
5 doing those projects and for doing those processes,
6 but they'll have the oversight responsibility to
7 get regular reports from the professional staff and
8 the management team at NYCHA on how those projects
9 are going and how the strategy is being
10 implemented.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYA: The concern is
12 always on the ground level; the experience that the
13 residents have.

14 TIM SULLIVAN: Of course.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: And that I
16 think sets the tone for the conversation, so that a
17 change at the top doesn't necessarily guarantee
18 that the experience the tenants are having
19 regarding repairs or the maintenance of their
20 development are going to really change and how do
21 we believe that their experience is going to change
22 given this new structure?

23 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I think it's
24 important to reiterate. I think... I agree with
25 what you just said. It's important to reiterate

2 that the effort to transform the board structure is
3 only one component of a strategy to focus on
4 resident quality of life and improve the operations
5 of NYCHA and improve the Capital Spending Program,
6 improve the degree to which repairs are done in a
7 timely manner, all of that kind of stuff and so
8 this is only one component of it. If we say we're
9 just going to change the board and everything else
10 we hope goes well, I think that would not be a
11 sufficient strategy. I think you're correct.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So what are you
13 going to advise me I say to my residents about what
14 they can hope to see happen as a result of this
15 change?

16 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I think surely one
17 of the things that will be... and I don't know
18 exact... this is a change that's a structural
19 change that has nothing to do with the people
20 involved or it has to do with the people involved,
21 but the fact that there are going to be three
22 residents on the board who are making big decisions
23 about NYCHA and making big decisions about how the
24 organization operates I believe will be a positive
25 thing and have more perspectives that are truer to

2 the resident experience on the board in forming the
3 big decisions, and so hopefully that will... now
4 how that is actually... how that is implemented and
5 how that is actually seen by any individual
6 resident I can't say for sure, but I think having
7 more people who are you know, residents of NYCHA
8 and in the case of these individuals long time
9 residents of NYCHA, who know the organization and
10 know the developments in the community as well will
11 serve all the residents better.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: 'Kay, so I know
13 that this hearing is about this new structure, but
14 what are you going to tell us about what experience
15 the tenants ought to be having regarding repairs
16 and that interesting process that people still are
17 experiencing some very, very difficult things with?

18 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. I won't comment
19 in great detail on it 'cause that's really a
20 question for the NYCHA management, but I will just
21 reiterate the comments that the Mayor made earlier
22 this year.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing]
24 And NYCHA's not here because, Madam Chair? We
25 didn't invite them? NYCHA's not here because...

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The Committee and
3 the Speakers Office was in conversation because
4 this is state legislation that was requested by the
5 Mayor and the Mayor makes the appointment;
6 appointments to the board. These were not
7 questions that NYCHA, the board members or the
8 general manager could answer so...

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: He's here
11 representing the Deputy Mayor that covers...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing]
13 'Kay, well...

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: NYCHA.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: You know, at
16 the end of the day, when I got to the Melrose
17 Resident Association meeting and continue to hear
18 the same complaints that we were told were going to
19 be dealt with in the backlog of repairs and you
20 know, their complaints or whatever you call them
21 get called in and they have to be called in three
22 and four times because they get lost, that to me is
23 more important at the ground level than at this
24 point who's sitting on the board 'cause the
25 residents are really frustrated, angry and are

2 tired of hearing, "Don't worry, they're working on
3 it. They're going to take care of it." So I
4 recognize that you're not in a position to answer
5 those questions, but I recognize that you are in a
6 position to take a question back. What's the story
7 with repairs and the ongoing challenges that
8 residents deal with every single day?

9 TIM SULLIVAN: Yep.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Whether it's
11 urine in the stairway or mold in the ceiling.

12 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah, so I'll reiterate
13 the comments that the Mayor made and that Chairman
14 Rhea made and I think it was February of this year
15 when the Maintenance and Repair Backlog
16 Reduction...

17 [crosstalk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Mm-hm.

19 TIM SULLIVAN: Plan was announced. The
20 status quo at that time was unacceptable and that's
21 why the Mayor has been you know, and Deputy Steel
22 and the leadership of NYCHA have been focused on
23 this issue. There were 422,000 outstanding work
24 orders in January. It's down to under 190,000 now.
25 That's, again, still too high, but significant

2 progress and I understand that people are
3 frustrated and the patience is thin or gone, but
4 the plan is...

5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: 'Kay, I...

7 TIM SULLIVAN: Having effect and I
8 shouldn't comment...

9 [crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So I'm going to
11 challenge you. On those orders that have been
12 closed we need to examine because the work still
13 has not been done on many orders that have been
14 closed, so your numbers tell a completely different
15 story than what the tenants are experiencing at the
16 development. So that we can play with the numbers
17 or make them look like whatever we want, but the
18 reality on the ground level is that work is not
19 getting done and that the number of orders compared
20 last year to this year are not a true reflection of
21 what's happening at the developments. So that
22 message has to go back because numbers for the sake
23 of numbers mean nothing to the people that are
24 experiencing the challenges of the work that they

25

2 need to get done in their apartments that's not
3 being done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
5 Chin?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Madam
7 Chair. Mr. Sullivan, in your testimony, you said
8 that there were 592 residents applications. I know
9 that some of the resident leaders in my district
10 also applied so there were a lot of interest, so
11 can you walk us through what were some of the
12 criteria that was used to select the resident board
13 member and also can you also share with us the
14 process that you went through to select the board
15 member?

16 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. I think in terms
17 of qualifications or experiences I think we were
18 looking at the board as a whole and what we wanted
19 to have was a diversity of backgrounds and
20 experiences and skill sets, and what we were hoping
21 to get, which is what we did get, was a collection
22 of people from lots of different... who've worked
23 in lots of different areas who have lots of
24 different skill sets and experience. Specifically,
25 we wanted people with experience in housing, real

2 estate development, economic development, community
3 development, education, resident leadership, so
4 experience in resident leadership positions was
5 important for us as we were thinking through the
6 resident member appointments. And again, so the
7 outreach process I think was quite comprehensive.
8 As I mentioned, you know, in July... I'm sorry, in
9 June there was a letter sent to each of the
10 resident households in all 334 NYCHA developments
11 from the Mayor announcing the resident application
12 process. There were flyers in four languages in
13 every development. There were applications
14 available not only online, but in each of the
15 property management offices and in each of the
16 community centers. There were FAQs available on
17 the city's website and also by dialing 311, and so
18 we were encouraged by the very strong interest in
19 the positions.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So what was the
21 criteria that you... did you use to select the one
22 that you finally did select? I mean there were
23 three people that were selected, three people who
24 are public housing residents.

2 TIM SULLIVAN: So again, the criteria
3 we were really looking for was a combination of
4 experience and skill sets that brought... that
5 could be brought to bear for NYCHA residents, not
6 just for the... by the residents but by all the
7 members and again, it was experience in resident
8 leadership, experience in community development, in
9 housing and service in education was a strong
10 qualification and a number of people had that
11 characteristic and any time you have 593
12 applications for three seats you're going to have
13 more qualified and talented people than you can
14 select and we were fortunate to be in that
15 situation with this process.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Did you invite
17 people in for interview? Was there a process how
18 you've... from 592; now we're down to three?

19 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah, there was an
20 extensive review of all the applications, which the
21 Chairman's office at NYCHA led in conjunction with
22 the Mayor's Office of Appointments to narrow it
23 down to some finalists and then a selection was
24 made at the latter part of the summer based on
25 interviews with a number of candidates and then the

2 final three were selected. Obviously, Mr. Gonzalez
3 was well known to us, having been on the board
4 already, and so that was a bit... he was far better
5 known to us a member of the board than some of the
6 folks who had not served, but so we had more
7 qualified candidates and excellent candidates than
8 we could accommodate on the board and so that
9 process... that decision making... that decision
10 was finalized in September.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So based on that
12 I guess it really shows that we have a lot of
13 really qualified people and good people with a lot
14 of skills living in NYCHA and maybe the
15 Administration and NYCHA Administration should
16 really look at periodically surveying the residents
17 to see how they can really help build NYCHA and
18 improve the quality of life in there.

19 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah and from our
20 perspective having three resident... three of seven
21 members of the board be residents we thought was
22 strong... was really empowering and intentionally
23 trying to be empowering to the residents of NYCHA
24 to have a significant voice in the board. Compare
25 that to three years ago when there were... four

2 years ago when there were no resident members and
3 then one and now three, and three of seven, which
4 is a substantial percentage of the board, and so
5 yeah, I completely agree with you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So can you share
7 with us the other non-resident board members; how
8 were they selected?

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
10 Chin, let me just go back before we get to that.
11 Mr. Sullivan, you said did interview. You took the
12 list and wind it down and you interviewed... the
13 Mayor's office interviewed. How many people were
14 actually called in for an interview?

15 TIM SULLIVAN: With the Chairman's
16 Office of NYCHA I would have to get back to you,
17 but we interviewed less than half a dozen people
18 for the position I think.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Half a dozen
20 people.

21 TIM SULLIVAN: Less than half a dozen.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Less, okay, for
23 the three positions. Okay and everyone went
24 through the same process. Everyone had to fill out
25 an application and give references.

2 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes, that's correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And then you took
4 the 592, winded it down to a number and then you
5 interviewed less than half a dozen.

6 TIM SULLIVAN: At the Mayor's Office
7 level.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: At the Mayor's...
9 [crosstalk]

10 TIM SULLIVAN: NYCHA didn't really...
11 [crosstalk]

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Office. I mean...
13 [crosstalk]

14 TOM SULLIVAN: Much...
15 [crosstalk]

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah, I'm talking
17 the big you, which is not you exactly. For 2011
18 was it? I can't remember when Victor was
19 appointed. How many applications were submitted
20 then for that one resident member slot?

21 TIM SULLIVAN: In 2011, there were 578
22 applications. This time it was 592, so about the
23 same number.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay and for 2011
3 how many people did you bring in for an interview?
4 Did you use a similar process?

5 TIM SULLIVAN: We used a similar...
6 [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Like...

8 TIM SULLIVAN: Process. I would have
9 to get back to you with the specific number of
10 interviews from the 2011 process. I wasn't part of
11 it personally so.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay and all of
13 these candidates went through a Department of
14 Investigations review?

15 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes. Not all the
16 candidates, all the people who were selected.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Excuse me?

18 TIM SULLIVAN: All the people who were
19 selected.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Who were selected.

21 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Oh, so you did the
23 interviews and then when they were selected they
24 went through a Department of Investigations,
25 interview investigations, all of that.

2 TIM SULLIVAN: Correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, thank you.
4 Council Member Chin.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Madam
6 Chair. So yes, what was the criteria... I mean the
7 process for the non-resident board members? I mean
8 how many applications did you get? How many people
9 did you interview? Did you actually publicize the
10 non-residential board members?

11 TIM SULLIVAN: So it was a bit of a
12 different kind of... different sort of process for
13 the resident... excuse me, for the non-resident
14 members. As you know, the Mayor's Office of
15 Appointments organizes these kinds of processes for
16 the Administration you know, across a range of
17 different boards and so they really were the lead
18 driver of that process. There wasn't an
19 advertisement process per se. It was covered in
20 the press obviously and a number of people reached
21 out and wanted to put their name in the... into
22 consideration and we also have you know, a group of
23 people that we consult with to think about who
24 we... who are appointed to boards and that process
25 resulted again, in a number of very, very strong

2 candidates and that process was driven again,
3 largely by the Mayor's Office and particularly the
4 Mayor's Office of Appointments by Andrea Shapiro
5 Davis.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But were you
7 looking... specifically looking for a certain type
8 of skill 'cause it seems like you know, the people
9 that were appointed this certain set
10 of skills that you are looking at...

11 TIM SULLIVAN: Surely. We... that's...
12 that...

13 [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But you're not
15 looking around, you're just looking at specific...

16 TIM SULLIVAN: I didn't hear you. I'm
17 sorry.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I mean it doesn't
19 look like you're looking at all around. I didn't
20 see anybody with expertise like in social service
21 or but you...

22 TIM SULLIVAN: [interposing] Well...

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You...

24 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I think what...

25 [crosstalk]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Mainly like in
3 development.

4 TIM SULLIVAN: So we believe we have a
5 collection of people with a collection of
6 experiences including in social service, and
7 Diahann Billings-Burford is the City's Chief
8 Service Officer. She runs NYC Service. Prior to
9 that, she has a long career in not-for-profit and
10 community development organizations including Prep
11 for Prep and a few other organizations, which we
12 think rounds that... brings a very important skill
13 set and so we were again, looking for a collection
14 of experiences and backgrounds across all the
15 appointees for housing experience, community
16 development, real estate, finance, education,
17 economic development, which I may have mentioned
18 already, so really a collection of experiences
19 across all seven members was really what we were
20 seeking to put together.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So this group of
22 non-resident board members seems like our people
23 that the Mayors have worked with; the Mayor's
24 office have worked with, so they're specific people
25

2 that you actually targeted to recruit to join the
3 board.

4 TIM SULLIVAN: I believe has confidence
5 in all the people he appointed, yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, Madam
7 Chair, I don't know if you want to follow up.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah, let me just
9 ask a little bit more. Of the non-resident board
10 members in the previous board, the Chairman always
11 served at the discretion of the Mayor. The other
12 two board members were appointed and now, one was
13 reappointed, Emily Youssouf and the other one,
14 Margarita Lopez was not. What kind of
15 consideration, if any, went into keeping either one
16 of those two board members?

17 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I don't want to
18 speculate or comment on any individual
19 circumstances. Margarita served the board with
20 distinction. She has an important new job within
21 the management structure of NYCHA running the
22 community programs and development function. I
23 believe her title is Executive Vice President for
24 Community Programs and Development, which is a
25 really important position that we're, as an

2 administration, very excited she's taken on that
3 challenge and that important responsibility, but...

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing] So
5 she took on that position before... so she resigned
6 from the board and took on that position and this
7 was before the appointments were made. Is that...

8 [crosstalk]

9 TIM SULLIVAN: That's...

10 [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Correct?

12 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay and I'm
14 assuming Emily I guess was reached out and asked if
15 she wanted to stay on the board as the
16 administration reached out to individuals?

17 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And all of these
19 individuals were also investigated by the
20 Department of Investigations?

21 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct, same
22 process.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, can you...
24 first of all, let me go back a little bit. We've
25 been joined by Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito

2 from Manhattan, and I'm just going to ask one more
3 question and then I'll turn it over to her if she's
4 ready to ask any questions. But can you tell us
5 the differences now and then in terms of
6 appointments to removing someone from the board
7 before the member served for a term and now they
8 can be removed with or without cause? Can you go
9 into those details, please?

10 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. One thing that is
11 the same is that the Chair serves at the pleasure
12 of the Mayor previously and now. Any member other
13 than the Chairman can be removed by the Mayor by a
14 process that involves filing with the Commissioner
15 of DCAS the reasons for the Mayor's decision to
16 remove that person. The document that sets forth
17 those reasons has to be published on the NYCHA
18 website and it's to be made available to the
19 public. That's the removal process.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Is there any
21 length of time of notice to let the board members
22 or the public know for the removal of a board
23 member?

24

25

2 TIM SULLIVAN: I don't believe there
3 is. I would have to check that. I don't think
4 there is.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, so since the
6 Mayor can remove any of the board members for any
7 reason, that means come January we could find
8 ourselves with a new board when a new Mayor comes
9 in. Is that correct?

10 TIM SULLIVAN: I'm not... I don't think
11 it's helpful for me to speculate on what the next
12 Mayor will or won't do, but the...

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing] But
14 it will be the new Mayor's decision whether to keep
15 this board or some of them or replace them all. Is
16 that correct? And the new Mayor could remove them
17 for any reason and just post it. That's my
18 understanding.

19 TIM SULLIVAN: That's the... that's
20 what's spelled out in the legislation. That's
21 correct.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, Council
23 Member Melissa Mark-Viverito, do you want to ask
24 some questions now or should I continue? Okay, the
25 BCG report, do you remember that?

TIM SULLIVAN: I do.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah, we had a big hearing on that.

TIM SULLIVAN: I remember that too.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So the BCG report that was released last year did say that best corporate governance models should include a mechanism for periodically reviewing and evaluating the performance of the board. Is there such a mechanism that was created through this legislation or if not, does the Mayor have a mechanism in place for the remainder of his tenure for evaluating these board members?

TIM SULLIVAN: I'm sure there's... the legislation does not include any such mechanism as prescribed in the law. I would say that the NYCHA bylaws provide for an audit committee, which is responsible for you know, oversight and you know, internal reporting on the board, as well as on its finances. Excuse me, on the authority's finances and I'm sure there is no formal mechanism that's been established to answer your question.

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, is that
3 something that the administration considered
4 putting in place?

5 TIM SULLIVAN: No, that was never in
6 the proposed legislation and removed.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you tell me
8 some of the specific matters that the new board
9 would be setting policy on? Like do they review...
10 the previous board reviewed every contract. They
11 reviewed every non-payment holdover proceeding and
12 had to sign off on it prior to someone being
13 evicted. Are these some of the same things that
14 the new board will be voting on?

15 TIM SULLIVAN: So the NYCHA bylaws
16 provide for a threshold for contracts that have to
17 be reviewed at the board level and I believe
18 it's... I would need to get back to you with the
19 specific number, but it has raised the threshold so
20 that not all contracts need to be reviewed by the
21 board. Similarly, it's contemplated or it's
22 assumed that the board will invest in management of
23 the responsibility for much more of the tenant
24 disciplinary matters with an appeal process that
25 does give the board the opportunity to weigh on

2 those situations, but the ordinary course process
3 would not fall to the board.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

5 TIM SULLIVAN: And again, that's
6 consistent again with... those are... by and large
7 those are management functions in most typical
8 organizations. There's an appeals process that
9 will... that in extraordinary circumstances can
10 have the board weigh in, but that is part of the
11 intended clear lines of responsibility between
12 board and management.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: My counsel tells
14 me that anything over \$1 million does have to go to
15 the board.

16 TIM SULLIVAN: I was pretty that was
17 the number. I just didn't want to get that wrong.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so since the
19 board is serving per diem this very limited manner,
20 I'm assuming they can put in more hours, right?
21 How will they get brought up to speed on all these
22 different contracts that are coming before the
23 Housing Authority?

24 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. Well, the
25 Chairman's Office is responsible for providing you

2 know, information ahead... well advance of the
3 meetings to the members, including making briefings
4 available for anyone who requests them, as well as
5 you know, briefing papers on the documents that
6 they'll be reviewing and voting on, and that's how
7 that process will work.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The previous
9 board, whether per diem or not, had a driver that
10 would take them to all the different meetings in
11 the different developments, as well as family days.
12 Is that different now for the board members?

13 TIM SULLIVAN: You are correct. There
14 is not drivers for the non-chair board members.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: There are no
16 drivers for the non-chair appointments. Do the
17 non-chair appointments have an office in 250
18 Broadway?

19 TIM SULLIVAN: They do not or they will
20 not.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: They will not,
22 okay. Do they have a space to meet if they want to
23 be reviewing contracts or doing anymore? They will
24 be given space to review things?

2 TIM SULLIVAN: I would imagine so. I
3 don't know that for sure, but that sounds
4 completely reasonable.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Is there any
6 changes to management operations or staffing that
7 is being made in light of the new board structure?

8 TIM SULLIVAN: Nothing specifically.
9 Again, the new board will weigh in on strategy,
10 help set strategy and review decisions that have to
11 be made, but as of... just because of the
12 appointment of the board there is not any direct
13 change of strategy or change of operational
14 procedures or anything else. But any changes that
15 would be made would be made and approved by the new
16 board.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Did the Housing
18 Authority have any kind of orientation for the new
19 board members?

20 TIM SULLIVAN: It did. That was
21 conducted prior to the appointments being
22 announced, but yes. The board met for the first
23 time last Wednesday.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And they were all
3 briefed on current NYCHA matters prior to that
4 meeting?

5 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Was there any kind
7 of orientation for the new board members on city
8 agency structures? I mean there's some overlap
9 between NYCHA and other city agencies. Was that
10 done for the board members?

11 TIM SULLIVAN: I believe that was
12 covered, but not probably in as much detail as it
13 will be in the coming months.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member, a
15 question?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: In line with
17 the questions around training for the new members,
18 how familiar are they with the structure of the
19 Authority; the points in that structure that raise
20 the greatest concern for residents? And I'll use
21 the calling center as an example. How familiar are
22 they with how the system functions or doesn't
23 function 'cause depending on who you talk to, you
24 get a very different view of that particular part
25 of the larger structure of the entity?

2 TIM SULLIVAN: So I can't say for sure
3 about these six individual people and that
4 particular issue, but certainly I think the
5 resident members...

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing]
7 Well, in general. I'm using that as an example.
8 This is a monster we're talking about.

9 TIM SULLIVAN: NYCHA'a a very large
10 organization, yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Right and the
12 reality of the residents are influenced by how well
13 the components of that monster work, so the
14 question is how versed are these members regarding
15 the overall structure? Although they're not
16 responsible for managing it, their responsibility,
17 as I'm understanding it, is to set strategic policy
18 goals, but in order for them to be realistic about
19 those goals, they need to understand how the animal
20 functions. So how well do they understand how this
21 animal functions?

22 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, it's the
23 responsibility of the management team before board
24 meetings to brief them on all the key issues and to
25 provide any information of the board... any

2 individual board member, which is either in advance
3 or as a standing matter about any issue that
4 they... that he or she believes is important, so if
5 they're not as knowledgeable today as they would
6 wish to be, they can actually...

7 [crosstalk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Is there a plan
9 to walk them through the different layers in some
10 sense either in summary or you know, hands on walk
11 through so that they can touch and feel the
12 different components in the system?

13 TIM SULLIVAN: Again, that'll be for
14 the board members to decide which areas they wish
15 to focus on. If the board chooses to focus on, for
16 example, the call center and requests a tour of the
17 call center or a review of the operations, then a
18 review of the operations or a tour would be
19 provided and it's going to be for the board members
20 to decide what they choose to focus on. As you
21 mentioned, it's a large organization with a long
22 list of challenges and they're going to have to
23 choose what they choose to focus on.

24

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So it'll be up
3 to the board to decide to do that. There is no
4 direction being set for them.

5 TIM SULLIVAN: Where they choose to
6 exercise their oversight will be yes, up to them.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay, thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
10 Melissa Mark-Viverito.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank
12 you, Madam Chair and I know... I apologize for
13 being late, so I know some of this stuff was kind
14 of being touched on, so if it's repetitive,
15 apologies. But I just want to go back to the issue
16 of the resident and non-resident applicants. So
17 how many of the non... how many non-resident
18 applicants were there?

19 TIM SULLIVAN: So on the non-resident
20 side there wasn't an application process per se.
21 It was more like a typical... typical may be the
22 wrong work word, but how appointments are made to
23 other city boards by the Mayor's Office of
24 Appointments where it's not an application process.

2 For the resident side there was an extensive
3 application process, but for the non-residents...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Right,
5 but then the...

6 [crosstalk]

7 TIM SULLIVAN: The Mayor's Office of
8 Appointments directed that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: For the
10 residents application process you said over 500
11 applied, but less than half a dozen...

12 TIM SULLIVAN: [interposing] 592, yeah.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Were
14 interviewed and how... who made the decision of
15 narrowing it down and who was in charge of that
16 process of going through all those 500 applications
17 and figuring out how you're now going to narrow it
18 down and who was going be looked at and interviewed
19 and...

20 TIM SULLIVAN: The Office of the
21 Chairman of NYCHA reviewed and was responsible for
22 that part of the process.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: I think
24 that seems... I don't know. That's seems kind of
25 questionable to me. I don't know how you get down

2 to a process from 500 to just select less than six
3 people that you want to interview, but I mean that
4 doesn't seem clear. How long did that process
5 take?

6 TIM SULLIVAN: The process was launched
7 on June 24th or 25th; I have it in my notes
8 somewhere and it concluded on August 2nd, so then
9 we had from August until September to review the
10 applications and...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: And how
12 was the word spread? I mean 550 or 500
13 applications is a lot, so... of residents. It's a
14 good number I mean so what... how would you... how
15 was the word being spread?

16 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. In late June
17 there was a letter sent from the Mayor to each
18 household at NYCHA announcing the beginning of the
19 application process. There were flyers posted in
20 all 334 NYCHA developments in English, Spanish,
21 Chinese and Russian. There were applications
22 available in property management offices, online
23 and at community centers. There was an article
24 about the application process in the NYCHA Journal
25 and so there was a pretty... there was an extensive

2 outreach process that was conducted again, in each
3 of the developments in multiple languages through
4 different... through multiple channels to drive...
5 well, we were actually pretty positively... I mean
6 we saw a great number of applications, which we
7 think was a good thing.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Were
9 most of those applications received online, in
10 person or you know, on paper?

11 TIM SULLIVAN: I have that information.
12 Hold on a second.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Mr. Sullivan, you
14 said it was mailed. Was it done as a separate
15 mailing or was it mailed with the rent bill? Do
16 you know?

17 TIM SULLIVAN: I would have to get back
18 to you on that. I don't know the answer to that.
19 I can follow up on that.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And if there were
21 any applications that were incomplete did the
22 administration just discard them or did they reach
23 out to have them complete application?

24 TIM SULLIVAN: People who filled out
25 complete applications received a notification that

2 it had been completed, so it was sort of the
3 opposite way.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So they were given
5 time to send stuff in or not? I'm not...

6 TIM SULLIVAN: No, if you filled out a
7 completed application you got a notification, which
8 basically said you've completed the application and
9 if you didn't...

10 [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

12 TIM SULLIVAN: Which was included...
13 this was all described in the application process,
14 so then you would get that and if you didn't get
15 it, then you had to follow up.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Do you know of the
17 592 how many were completed?

18 TIM SULLIVAN: That's the completed
19 number.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: That is the
21 completed number, I see. Okay, thank you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Did you
23 say you say you had the numbers about how the
24 applications were received; whether it was online
25 or whether...

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 59

2 TIM SULLIVAN: I'm looking for that. I
3 have it in my notes on one of these pieces of
4 paper.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Do you
6 think it was on your testimony or not?

7 TIM SULLIVAN: It was not on my
8 testimony.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

10 TIM SULLIVAN: Actually I don't have
11 that handy. I can follow up with the committee and
12 get you that information. We have it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Do you
14 know offhand whether the majority was online or was
15 it mailed?

16 TIM SULLIVAN: I don't want to give the
17 wrong information, so I'd rather...

18 [crosstalk]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

20 TIM SULLIVAN: Follow up if that's
21 okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: And then
23 the last question for clarification 'cause you said
24 592 was the number of completed applications. Is
25

2 that different from the total number of original
3 applicants?

4 TIM SULLIVAN: Well, I don't... I can't
5 say for sure how many people looked at it and
6 started it online or picked it up at the office and
7 started filling it out, but that was the number we
8 received.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Right.
10 You know, I guess just in terms of what the
11 Chairwoman was asking about the fact that if an
12 application was incomplete, what additional follow
13 up, so if an application was incomplete...

14 TIM SULLIVAN: Oh, how many came in
15 above that that...

16 [crosstalk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes.

18 TIM SULLIVAN: Were submitted but were
19 incomplete.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes.

21 TIM SULLIVAN: Oh, I'd have to get that
22 information for you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:
24 [interposing] So can you add that to your...

25 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah, mm-hm.

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 61

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay,
3 thank you. Alright, those are all my questions.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Mr. Sullivan, were
6 there any kind of breakdowns as to how many
7 resident applicants applied from each borough or
8 from each development?

9 TIM SULLIVAN: Yeah, if I can... if you
10 can indulge me, I'll look on my blackberry where I
11 have that information, I can...

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Oh, great.

13 TIM SULLIVAN: Read that right...

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing]
15 Thank you.

16 TIM SULLIVAN: Read that right to you,
17 yes. Okay.

18 [Pause]

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: For the public,
20 we've been joined by Council Member Robert Jackson
21 from Manhattan, who's not a member of the
22 committee, but has near perfect attendance.

23 [Pause]

24

25

2 TIM SULLIVAN: I'm sorry, I can't find
3 it in my email. We can get you that information by
4 borough by the end of the day. That's... that's...

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, if you can
6 get that to us.

7 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes, of course.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To the committee
9 that would be helpful. Okay, I just have a couple
10 more questions. In your testimony on page three,
11 you say the members other than the Chair serve for
12 three-year terms, but the law creates a staggered
13 board structure. So that means there are three
14 resident members and three non-resident members, so
15 currently one of each has been appointed to a one-
16 year term?

17 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To a two-year term
19 and a three-year term.

20 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So if one of those
22 members leaves their term; they decide to leave,
23 whoever gets reappointed finishes out their term,
24 so it will continue to be staggered. Is that
25 correct?

2 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, thank you.

4 Can you tell me which terms which members are
5 serving?

6 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure. Of the non-
7 resident members Emily Youssef has a one-year
8 appointment, Diahann Billings-Burford has a two-
9 year appointment and Kyle Kimball has a three-year
10 appointment. Of the resident members Miss Lewis
11 has a one-year appointment, Miss Byrd has a two-
12 year appointment and Mr. Gonzalez has a three-year
13 appointment.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you, and
15 also in your testimony you make reference to the
16 \$732 million in bond financing.

17 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: That was just
19 announced several days ago, so that's more bond
20 money than NYCHA has ever received and this new
21 board will be determining how to use that bond
22 financing?

23 TIM SULLIVAN: They'll be certainly
24 overseeing it. Some of those decisions... some of
25 the specific projects that are funded by that bond

2 financing have already... were part of the
3 financing, so there's already work underway in a
4 number of developments using the money that was
5 received a handful of days ago, but certainly this
6 board will be responsible for directing the rest of
7 the money, as well as ensuring that that money is
8 spent wisely, efficiently as it was described... as
9 it was... on the basis in which it was borrowed.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, I don't
11 recall if I read it in your testimony or in the
12 papers, but there were 24 developments that this
13 money is slated for. Is that correct?

14 TIM SULLIVAN: That's correct.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And this bond
16 financing has to be used for those 24? Let's say a
17 new problem; a big problem is determined at another
18 development now that wasn't in those original 24.
19 Could a swap be done to take care of those problems
20 with this bond financing?

21 TIM SULLIVAN: I'm happy to follow up
22 with NYCHA on that one specifically. I don't want
23 to give more information than I have.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

2 TIM SULLIVAN: Or the wrong
3 information, so.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And I'm assuming
5 NYCHA knows the 24 developments. Can someone from
6 the administration or NYCHA get us the 24
7 developments?

8 TIM SULLIVAN: Sure, of course.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: That the money is
10 slated for?

11 TIM SULLIVAN: Yes, of course.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And what projects.

13 [Pause]

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I got really great
15 members of this committee, so when I forget
16 something they bring it up. So one, I'm done with
17 my questions, but I will just... thank you. I will
18 just ask my colleagues if there's anything we've
19 forgotten, anything we would like them to still get
20 us, any information. Mr. Sullivan, thank you for
21 being here and answering all our questions. I
22 don't know if you'll stay around. I usually do ask
23 NYCHA and for eight years they've always left a
24 staff member to listen and if there's anything that

25

2 comes up in the public testimony, bring it back to
3 the administration. Someone is here, great and...

4 TIM SULLIVAN: [interposing] She's here
5 and I'll sit right next to her.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you so much.
7 So we are going to bring up the public now to
8 testify if...there's only been five people who have
9 signed up to testify and... I'm going to split this
10 up. I'll call up Remilda Ferguson and Ruben Torres
11 from local 237 Teamsters and then on the next panel
12 will be Shirley Jones from Amsterdam Houses, Maria
13 Pacheco from UPACA 5 and Michael Noble, 10th Avenue
14 address. I'm not quite sure which development.
15 Alright and that will be the next panel that comes
16 up. So if you're ready, just grab the microphone,
17 identify yourself for the record and start your...
18 before you get started, we did get written
19 testimony from Legal Services New York City and
20 this is being submitted into the record, their
21 written testimony of two pages. Thank you.

22 RUBEN TORRES: Good afternoon, Madam
23 Chair. My name is Ruben Torres, Secretary-
24 Treasurer of Teamsters Local 237.

2 REMILDA FERGUSON: Good afternoon. My
3 name is Remilda Ferguson. I'm Director of the
4 Housing Division for Teamsters Local 237.

5 RUBEN TORRES: 'Kay, thank you,
6 Chairwoman Mendez and the members of the Committee
7 on Public Housing for the opportunity to testify at
8 this hearing. On behalf of Teamsters Local 237, I
9 would like to welcome the newest board members of
10 the New York City Housing Authority, Beatrice Byrd,
11 Willie Mae Lewis, Diahann Billings-Burford and Kyle
12 Kimball. We look forward to working with them to
13 make the nation's largest Public Housing Authority
14 the best in the country, but we also look forward
15 to the firing of the New York City Housing
16 Chairman, John Rhea, by the next Mayor. For far
17 too long, he has sat on his hands while the
18 authority's mismanagement and incompetence affected
19 hundreds of thousands of New York families. Many
20 in attendance today are well aware of the problems
21 NYCHA experiences under Bloomberg and the former
22 board. We applaud the new law restructuring the
23 board by adding three additional members, three of
24 which are required to be residents of public
25 housing making these positions part-time and

limiting pay. We agree this new board structure will promote participation from NYCHA residents, save the city money and help direct resources to essential maintenance and repairs. These are all good changes because today NYCHA is on the verge of financial collapse, operating with a \$60 million deficit and a \$6 billion backlog in major capital improvement. Accordingly, according to the city's Public Advocate's Office, the city lost nearly 200,000 affordable rental housing units between 2002 and 2008. The once well respected shining example of civic responsibility that received national acclaim is now another example of government failing the people. NYCHA's mismanagement is even more egregious when you look at how it treats its residents. Last summer, the New York City Daily News uncovered a huge backlog of needed repairs. In fact, there were 10,000 requests that weren't even scheduled until the year 2014. This is unacceptable. Local 237 is proud to represent more than 8,000 NYCHA employees, some of whom are NYCHA residents, and we're concerned with every person that calls the city's public housing home. With a population larger than Atlanta,

Cleveland or Miami, we must fight for NYCHA residents and save the nation's best public housing system, not only because they are the blue-collar worker who drive our city's economy, but because it's the right thing to do for our fellow New Yorkers because we feel that the best people to develop a plan to fix the agency are the people who help run it. Local 237 brought together our employees, resident leaders, civic advocates and public housing experts to create a plan that would truly improve NYCHA. We released the report of our task force earlier this year. Although many of our suggestions remained ignored, we hope that this new board, more representative than the last one, will take up these worthy ideas in their effort to correct many of the wrongs in NYCHA. Critical to that effort is to continue to protect and reward the hardworking employees at NYCHA. Too often under the last administration, many jobs were given to outsourced companies that do not care about the public housing system, but only their bottom line. We know that there were more plans to continue giving more and more jobs to outside workers, who in many cases do not have the expertise or training

2 to do the work correctly. That is not good for
3 NYCHA residents or New York City's middle class,
4 many of whom depend on public sector jobs to
5 provide for their families. NYCHA needs to have
6 its own dedicated workforce that knows the issues
7 and knows that job. That is good for everyone. We
8 are eager to begin work with the board to
9 aggressively pursue government funding for NYCHA,
10 monitor spending by the agency, stop payments for
11 police and sanitation services, stop warehousing
12 apartments, cancel plans to sell property to
13 developers and hire more union workers. With great
14 resident participation, we will take on the
15 challenges that have festered under the previous
16 administration and work to keep public housing
17 strong for decades to come. Thank you again,
18 Chairwoman Mendez, for the opportunity to testify.
19 I commend your continued work on NYCHA and look
20 forward to working together with you and other
21 members of the New York City Council to make the
22 city's public housing the best in the world. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you. I
25 think that is everyone's goal. I'm just going to

2 say regarding your testimony I just want to correct
3 something.

4 RUBEN TORRES: Sure.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: On page one where
6 you said, "last summer The Daily News uncovered,"
7 so I think it should read, "The Daily News
8 reported," because I think this body had for months
9 and months and months, almost years talked about
10 how long it was taking for repairs. It was
11 something we were seeing in our office and then
12 last year as a result, we were able to get \$10
13 million in last year's budget just prior to June of
14 2012 and in this budget in June of 2013 we also
15 passed in Fiscal Year 14 another \$10 million to
16 deal with those backlogs, so that was
17 acknowledgment from the council that these repairs
18 were taking a long time, so I want to give Daily
19 News their credit, which is they reported it, but
20 we've known about it for a long time and we were
21 trying to figure out how to deal with the problem.
22 No offense, Mr. Smith, right? You're out there
23 somewhere. [laughter] Thank you. Just keep
24 reporting, Mr. Smith. So I would... we have your
25 action plan that's submitted for the record.

2 RUBEN TORRES: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I also encourage
4 you to submit this to the new board members and the
5 Mayoral candidates. We'll certainly make sure we
6 have discussions, as I'm sure the unions will be
7 having with them as well on how we continue to make
8 this public housing the best that it is, get at
9 those backlogs and hopefully with this bond
10 financing get to those overdue capital repairs that
11 have been causing a lot of the problems that
12 residents have been dealing with on a daily basis,
13 including all of the impacts from Sandy from last
14 year, which will be the basis of a hearing before
15 the end of this year. Any questions from my
16 colleagues? Thank you so much for your testimony
17 and I look...

18 [crosstalk]

19 RUBEN TORRES: Thank you, Madam Chair
20 and I look...

21 [crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Forward to...

23 [crosstalk]

24 RUBEN TORRES: The Council.

25

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 73

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Meeting with you
3 and discussing this. Thank you.

4 RUBEN TORRES: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The next and last
6 panel will be Shirley Jones, Maria Pacheco and
7 Michael Noble and if there is anyone else who would
8 like to testify, we will accept other testimony.
9 You just need to fill out one of these forms with
10 the sergeant in the back; otherwise this will be
11 the last panel.

12 [Pause]

13 SHIRLEY JONES: Good afternoon...

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Whenever you're
16 ready, just grab the microphone and give your name
17 for the record.

18 SHIRLEY JONES: Good afternoon. My
19 name is Shirley Jones and I'm from the Amsterdam
20 Houses. I live in the Amsterdam Houses.

21 MARIA PACHECO: I'm Maria Pacheco from
22 UPACA 6.

23 MICHAEL NOBLE: Yeah, Michael Noble
24 from NYCHA Houses at Elliott-Chelsea.

25 [Pause]

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Whoever's ready
3 you can start your testimony.

4 SHIRLEY JONES: Alright.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

6 SHIRLEY JONES: Firstly, I'd like to
7 ask the board; everyone to lend me your ears. Real
8 listening is important to us. Secondly, we did
9 expect that the new board would be here. Alright,
10 Community Voices Heard want to welcome the new
11 board, and are looking forward to working with you
12 in the best interests of the over 600,000 residents
13 that call New York City Public Housing home. While
14 it is an important to have three tenant
15 representatives on the NYCHA Board up from the
16 previous one tenant representative, the NYCHA Board
17 is still under full Mayoral control. The Mayor
18 still hires and replaces all members on the board,
19 which furthers the Mayor's agenda without input
20 from any other bodies. Community Voices Heard
21 Public Housing Committee had a meeting on Thursday,
22 September the 26th and we are here as delegates
23 representing public housing residents from
24 Community Voices Heard. Our main objective is that
25 the new board is working to preserve and improve

public housing in the best interests of public housing residents, not in the interest of private firms like The Boston Consulting Group, who undeservedly took our \$10 million, definitely not in the interest of related companies or any other private entity or developer looking to profit off of public housing land. We want the new NYCHA Board to work to implement real resident decision making through participatory budgeting in our developments. We want the new NYCHA Board to stop the destruction of parks, community centers and public spaces in order to profit high end private developers, the infield plan. We want the new board to ensure and create training programs and job opportunities for public housing residents. We want the NYCHA Board to actively pressure and work with City Hall to end the NYCHA NYPD MOU that unfairly doubles taxes of public housing residents and bring back the money to make sure residents do not have to wait to get a basic repair. The new NYCHA Board needs to work with residents to guarantee that public housing residents live with respect and dignity. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

3 Whoever is ready grab the microphone.

4 MARIA PACHECO: Madam Chairman, even
5 though she is the speaker, I'm just here to back
6 her up and represent the NYCHA residents. We are
7 looking forward to working with the new board to
8 make sure that they work in our interests, the
9 interests of the residents of New York City to make
10 it one of the best ones in the world. Thank you.

11 MICHAEL NOBLE: Thank you, Madam
12 Speaker and the rest of you. My name is Michael
13 Noble. I'm here by happenstance. I didn't know
14 that this was happening. I went to a hearing same
15 time across the street and was told oh, yeah,
16 there's something happening here. Oh, that sounds
17 good. Oh, yeah, and it's NYCHA having to do with
18 the board membership. Hm... oh, gee, I haven't
19 heard from them because I sent my application in
20 July and indeed got a letter about a month later
21 saying oh, yeah, we received it, okay? So to
22 answer one question, all the applications although
23 completed online in some instances must be mailed
24 in, alright, so all those 500 and whatever went
25 through the mail, okay, addressed to the Mayor's

2 Office. So we sit there you know, after July,
3 waiting for some word you know? Gee, are they
4 weeding people out. Oh, ready to attend in August.
5 Oh, August, there's no new board in August. So
6 anyway, I learn about it today, you know and when I
7 heard there are 592 applicants ultimately, of whom
8 six were chosen for an interview, I ask myself you
9 know, you go to... you apply for college. Any
10 university or college is going to give you more
11 interviews than that as a percentage, yes? There
12 is no way on earth that you can make a really
13 intelligent decision about a person without
14 interviewing him and there must've been hundreds of
15 those 600, you know that deserved an interview.
16 But that's okay because I kind of felt that Victor
17 Gonzalez was a shoe-in anyway, [laughter] okay and
18 there is indeed... there is indeed a particular I
19 don't know; outline that NYCHA's looking for, this
20 person to fill... you know fill that little figure
21 in the particular way that makes sense to one or
22 two people and yeah, most boards of directors are
23 chosen by a shareholder vote, not one person. When
24 you have what could be well, among the top 20
25 populations in this country just above maybe

2 Baltimore, Maryland in terms of size, right, that's
3 a lot of people and to have the Mayor himself
4 determine everything that happens to have an effect
5 on these people every day of their lives; a big
6 part, a big part of their lives, it shouldn't come
7 from him or the one or two people that he decides
8 are going to suit his purposes and yeah, I second
9 Local 237's you know, urging that there is a new
10 chairman appointed. You know, it should've
11 happened a long time ago, a long time ago. We've
12 got a man there who's in way over his head and one
13 wonders you know, how it's been allowed to you
14 know, go on this long. I mean it's a joke. I mean
15 this is really a joke, yeah? And I don't care
16 about getting appointed to the board, as a matter
17 of fact 'cause I applied last year and I knew. I
18 knew it wasn't happening then because I indeed... I
19 have an education, as a matter of fact, a law
20 degree; worked as a lawyer for many years; worked
21 in Wall Street. I'm on Community Board 4, as a
22 matter of fact, so I get to see a lot of stuff that
23 happens at NYCHA and its interaction with the City
24 Council and I figured that was going to preclude me
25 anyway, but I wanted to apply just to see how the

2 process worked. How long is it going to take for
3 them to tell me they got my application? How long
4 to tell me well, you can stop thinking about us now
5 'cause we've weeded this down to like 50 people.
6 50's reasonable out of 500 or 600 people, right? I
7 didn't expect to hear; I'm glad I came today; six
8 people. You are going to insult all those 592
9 people who put an hour or two or three or more into
10 filling this application out and you're not going
11 to at least invite 50 or 30 or something in for an
12 interview? There had to be people there who had
13 something for you to learn, okay? There had to be
14 people and God knows I don't know how one... you
15 know, I've asked NYCHA people along the way during
16 the process, "Oh, how's it going? What's going
17 on?" Nobody could tell me. Oh, that's up to...
18 it's all Mike Bloomberg. It's all his thing, you
19 know? He'll let us know. Okay well, I'd really
20 love to know what's going through his mind when it
21 comes to this particular non... the resident board
22 members. I really would like to know what he's
23 thinking about and even the six; I'd love to know
24 who those... all those six people were. Who were
25 the other three for the love of God or were they

2 not any of them picked? Were these people that
3 were picked, did they indeed have an inter... is
4 that... are they among those six? I don't know.
5 Victor Gonzalez I'm sure didn't need an interview,
6 alright, so there's...that's one out. It just
7 isn't... it's... a lot of work has to be done here,
8 you know, a lot of work and where this might look
9 like something it is something, but a lot of work
10 needs to go into it and I feel insulted,
11 marginalized by virtue of not having been told
12 what's going on. Press release September 24th,
13 this meeting six days later. Were the appointments
14 made... was this thing noticed before the
15 appointments were made?

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: This hearing?

17 MICHAEL NOBLE: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: This hearing was
19 noticed many weeks ago.

20 MICHAEL NOBLE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

21 [crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We did not know
23 there was a board...

24 MICHAEL NOBLE: [interposing] Alright.

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: A new board. As a
3 matter of fact, this hearing was supposed to take
4 place last Wednesday...

5 MICHAEL NOBLE: [interposing] Mm-hm.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And we were told
7 there was a conflict 'cause there was a board
8 hearing scheduled, and so we deferred the hearing
9 'til today and on last Tuesday, whatever date that
10 was, a press release was sent out certainly to the
11 media. That's how I got it, and the media
12 forwarded it to me and some friends forwarded it to
13 me afterward saying about the new appointments.

14 MICHAEL NOBLE: Mm-hm.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And then the board
16 meeting was held the next morning.

17 MICHAEL NOBLE: Well, it's weird. You
18 know, it looks as though the appointments were made
19 in light of this happening.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Well, no.

21 MICHAEL NOBLE: Alright? No? You
22 don't think so?

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: No, I don't... I
24 mean we don't have hearings during the summer.

25 MICHAEL NOBLE: Mm-hm.

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Unless there's an
3 emergency, so last year during the summer we did
4 hold an emergency hearing about the security
5 cameras, but during the month of July and August we
6 do not hold hearings typically in the New York City
7 Council, so this was going to be the first
8 scheduled meeting of this month.

9 Just to address some of the things
10 you're saying, the NYCHA Board; the Chair and the
11 board just like any other commissioner is at the
12 discretion of the Mayor. The Mayor is at our
13 discretion...

14 MICHAEL NOBLE: [interposing] Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Of the New York
16 City voters.

17 MICHAEL NOBLE: [interposing] Right.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So if we want
19 different decisions we need to look at our Mayoral
20 candidates...

21 MICHAEL NOBLE: [interposing] Oh, I... I
22 understand.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And what their
24 vision is for NYCHA and other city agencies, but
25

2 it's always been up to the discretion of the Mayor
3 to...

4 [crosstalk]

5 MICHAEL NOBLE: Oh, I understand...

6 [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To appoint and to
8 fill...

9 [crosstalk]

10 MICHAEL NOBLE: The structures.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The positions...

12 [crosstalk]

13 MICHAEL NOBLE: No, I... I...

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: As they wish.

16 [crosstalk]

17 MICHAEL NOBLE: Know the structures. I
18 know how it all works. I'm just saying in light of
19 those... this is what we have, okay? Let's try to
20 do something that approaches what might happen in
21 another set... in a private setting, for example.
22 We want to make comparisons to private this and
23 private that, well, okay. You know, shareholders
24 have a say. You know, residents should be viewed
25 in a little bit of the same light as a shareholder,

2 you know? And just to get... going back, back to
3 one more thing about this process, so anyway, it
4 would've nice once those appointments were made,
5 you know the Mayor's Office knew who we were; who
6 the 592 people were. He could've sent us an email.
7 You got our email addresses, right; sent us some...
8 let us know something, okay? Alright well, we now
9 have the board. You guys can you know get off the
10 edge of your seat. It ain't... it's not you,
11 alright, that sort of thing. The merest amount of
12 respect would've been welcome, you know? Public
13 image is not something that NYCHA nor the Mayor's
14 Office is really good about you know when it comes
15 to people at NYCHA. You know, they don't really
16 car, you know? Who cares what they think, yeah?
17 Who cares, right? They should be happy for what
18 they're getting and indeed I am. I am grateful,
19 you know? And my hope, had I been appointed to the
20 board position, would have been to make the people
21 I live with a bit more appreciative, alright?
22 Yeah, we know it I mean 'cause we're older folk.
23 We know...

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing] And
25 can I ask...

[crosstalk]

MICHAEL NOBLE: We are grateful.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can I ask the other panelists did any of you apply to the board? No?

SHIRLEY JONES: I did not.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay so thank you, Mr. Noble. It was...

[crosstalk]

MICHAEL NOBLE: That's... that's...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: It was very important...

[crosstalk]

MICHAEL NOBLE: That's it.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To hear from you.

MICHAEL NOBLE: That's it.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

MICHAEL NOBLE: I would've been more prepared; better spoken had I know about this and I walked into it late, as a matter of fact.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I think you were very well spoken and certainly you know, coming in at this at the last second and I think your

2 testimony was very valuable and important, so I'm
3 so glad that you were here...

4 [crosstalk]

5 MICHAEL NOBLE: Thank you for having
6 me.

7 [crosstalk]

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To put it on the
9 record.

10 MICHAEL NOBLE: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Do my colleagues
12 have any questions?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: A comment. Since
14 I see Mr. Sullivan is still here, which is great.
15 Thank you. Maybe you could...

16 TIM SULLIVAN: [interposing] Are we
17 still here? Oh, geez.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yes, you're still
19 here.

20 TIM SULLIVAN: I thought I was...

21 [laughter]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So maybe in light
23 of the testimony, maybe you could bring back to the
24 Mayor's Office and check for us if indeed there was
25 a letter sent to all the applicants at least

2 thanking them for applying and letting them know
3 who the new board members are. I think that would
4 go a long way of showing...

5 TIM SULLIVAN: [interposing] Showing
6 them.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Respect and also
8 thank people for taking the time to apply to be on
9 the board, especially the residents members. 'Kay,
10 thank you.

11 CARMEN PINEIRO: May I make a short
12 comment?

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You will need to
14 fill out a...

15 CARMEN PINEIRO: No, just to say that
16 this is a...

17 [crosstalk]

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: A...

19 [crosstalk]

20 CARMEN PINEIRO: Delegation of CVH and
21 we do have members that did apply and they...

22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: But I need to...

24 [crosstalk]

25 CARMEN PINEIRO: Did not get responses.

1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING 88

2 [crosstalk]

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Get your name on
4 the record and know who you are. The Sergeant's
5 going to bring you a little sheet. Now you can
6 identify yourself for the record and make any
7 comment you want as long or as short as you like.

8 CARMEN PINEIRO: Mm-hm.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay?

10 [Pause]

11 MICHAEL NOBLE: We have an election
12 tomorrow.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: At your
14 development for the...

15 [crosstalk]

16 MICHAEL NOBLE: No, the city.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Resident
18 Association?

19 MICHAEL NOBLE: The city's run-off
20 election.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Oh, you mean...

22 [crosstalk]

23 MICHAEL NOBLE: For a...

24 [crosstalk]

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes.

[crosstalk]

MICHAEL NOBLE: Public advocate.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The run-off
election.

MICHAEL NOBLE: Of which...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah.

MICHAEL NOBLE: There... there are...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Hold it.

MICHAEL NOBLE: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Ma'am?

CARMEN PINEIRO: Very quickly I'll just
repeat. My name is Carmen Pineiro. I am an
organizer with Community Voices Heard and I just
wanted to state very clearly that this is part of a
representation of a full body of CVH members that
have come together at a public housing meeting to
discuss some of the issues that were brought about,
and so just to recognize that while these two may
have not applied for one of those positions, we
have other members who, in fact, did apply and
unfortunately have not received any commentary
whatsoever as to what was happening, how did it

2 unfold and who were the people that were chosen at
3 the very end, and it would be greatly appreciated
4 and I thank Miss Chin for mentioning that; that it
5 would be absolutely wonderful if there were some
6 type of follow up for every one of the people that
7 did take the time to apply for those positions.
8 Thank you very much and have a great day.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Let me just ask
10 you so you know of several people that have
11 applied?

12 CARMEN PINEIRO: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And do you know if
14 any of them got called in for an interview? None o
15 them got called in, okay. Alright and you are from
16 what development?

17 CARMEN PINEIRO: I am an organizer with
18 Community Voices Heard.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Great. Thank you.
20 Thank you so much. Okay.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Can the committee
22 just make the request... I just want to make sure
23 it's clear, Mr. Sullivan. It's not just checking
24 and if the NYCHA has not done that or the Mayor's
25 Office has... the Mayor has not done that, we would

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like to request that the Mayor send a letter to all the resident applicants thanking them for applying and then letting them know who the new board members are. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I want to thank this panel for their testimony. I want to thank the public for being here today. Mr. Noble, I want to thank you for crossing the street and giving your testimony, which was so crucial. Mr. Sullivan, thank you for your testimony and for staying 'til the end of the hearing, and my colleagues, as always, thank you for your input and for being here for this hearing. This hearing is adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date 10/10/2013