

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO 24-13

THE SPECIAL INDEPENDENT ADVISORY COMMISSION TO REVIEW  
AND EVALUATE THE DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS

WHEREAS, the mission of the City's Department of Licenses and Inspections (Department) is to administer and enforce the City's Code requirements, including the Building Construction and Occupancy and Property Maintenance Codes, for protection of public safety;

WHEREAS, the Department strives to be the nation's leading code enforcement agency by exercising the highest levels of integrity in its enforcement of the City's codes; and

WHEREAS, the Department is responsible for regulating the conduct of businesses and persons by issuing licenses, conducting inspections and enforcing applicable codes and regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Department has the authority to take the lawful actions necessary to correct dangerous and unlawful conditions, including making necessary emergency repairs to properties, cleaning and sealing abandoned buildings and demolishing vacant buildings that pose a threat to public safety; and

WHEREAS, at its core, the Department exists to enforce the Philadelphia Code to protect the citizens of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, an accreditation assessment of the Department by International Accreditation Services was conducted in April 2013 leading to the Department's September 2013 accreditation by that agency; and

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2013, a building that was being demolished at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Market Streets collapsed onto an adjoining Salvation Army store, tragically killing six individuals and injuring 14 others; and

WHEREAS, after the tragic accident, the Philadelphia City Council Special Investigating Committee on Demolition Practices in the City of Philadelphia was formed and held five public hearings in June through September regarding the City's demolition practices, and issued a September 27, 2013 "Report on City Demolition Practices and Procedures," which included 70 recommendations worthy of further review; and

WHEREAS, a full independent assessment of the practices and operations of the Department is warranted at this time, to develop a detailed set of observations of the Department to determine what is working well, what is not working well and to develop recommendations regarding how to improve the Department and institutionalize reforms for lasting improvement in the public safety responsibilities of the Department; NOW, THEREFORE,

### **SECTION 1. Creation of the Commission**

The Special Independent Advisory Commission to Review and Evaluate the Department of Licenses and Inspections is hereby created in the Office of the Mayor.

### **SECTION 2. Members**

The Special Commission shall be comprised of no more than 20 members appointed by the Mayor, based on their expertise in the area of municipal licensing and inspection services or their interest as a stakeholder regarding the provision of such services.

### **SECTION 3. Purpose of the Special Commission**

The purpose of the Special Commission shall be to conduct a complete and thorough review of the following, including, where appropriate, a comparison to practices in other major cities:

- A. Past and current operations of the Department, including safety and monitoring practices with respect to construction and demolition activity, management operations, enforcement effectiveness, licensing activity, permitting, and inspections.
- B. The organizational structure, reporting responsibilities and the need for specially credentialed personnel in leadership positions in the Department.
- C. Staffing, credentials, training, supervision and professional development of Department management and employees.
- D. The annual budget and spending of the Department as compared to requests for departmental services and the needs of the Department;
- E. The use of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the Department;

F. The City's fine structure for violations of the Code.

G. Any other aspects of the work or structure of the Department the Commission deems appropriate for review.

**SECTION 4. Special Role With Respect to June 5, 2013 Tragedy**

The Special Commission shall review the events of the June 5, 2013 building collapse tragedy with an emphasis on the workflow process and practice of the Department in connection with the tragedy.

**SECTION 5. Cooperation of City Personnel**

All City personnel shall cooperate fully with the work of the Special Commission and shall provide the Special Commission with all documents and information requested by the Special Commission in an expeditious manner.

**SECTION 6. Report of the Special Commission.**

In addition to any recommendations made during the course of its evaluation, the Special Commission shall prepare a report on its findings with respect to its reviews under Section 3 and 4 of this order no later than July 1, 2014. Such report shall include a detailed set of observations of the Department to determine what is working well, what is not working well and recommendations how to improve the Department and institutionalize reforms by making lasting improvements in the public safety and other responsibilities of the Department. The Special Commission shall provide independent review and guidance and its advice shall be driven by consideration of the primary goal of public safety.

10/31/13  
Date

  
Michael A. Nutter, Mayor