

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, June 10, 2024
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

LYNN T. NEWSOME, DEPUTY COMMERCE DIRECTOR
OF THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, CHAIR
REGINA A. HAIRSTON, PRESIDENT, CEO OF THE
AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF PA,
NJ, & DE
ROBERT HARRIS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF AFSCME
DISTRICT COUNCIL 47
JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ, CEO OF GREATER
PHILADELPHIA HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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2 CHAIR NEWSOME: Good
3 morning. The June 10, 2024 meeting
4 of the Economic Opportunity Review
5 Committee is hereby called to
6 order. We welcome our guest
7 speakers and members of the public
8 and those watching on Xfinity
9 Channel 64 and FIOS Channel 40 as
10 well as the City Council's website.

11 EORC members include the
12 Office of Economic Opportunity
13 whose Deputy Commerce Director is
14 the ex-officio Chair of this
15 Committee, the President and CEOs
16 of the African American and
17 Hispanic Chambers of Commerce as
18 well as the Presidents of District
19 Council 47 and District Council 33.

20 My name is Lynn Newsome. I
21 am the Deputy Commerce Director for
22 the City of Philadelphia's Office
23 of Economic Opportunity under the
24 Commerce Department. At this time,
25 I will ask the members of the EORC

1 from the African American, Hispanic
2 Chambers of Commerce and D.C. 33
3 and 47 to introduce themselves in
4 that order.

5 MS. HAIRSTON: Good
6 morning. My name is Regina
7 Hairston, President and CEO of the
8 African American Chamber of
9 Commerce for Pennsylvania, New
10 Jersey and Delaware.

11 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good
12 morning. I am Jennifer Rodriguez,
13 President and CEO of the Greater
14 Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of
15 Commerce.

16 MR. HARRIS: My name is
17 Robert Harris. I'm the Vice-
18 president of AFSCME District
19 Council 47 sitting in proxy for our
20 President April Gidgetts.

21 CHAIR NEWSOME: Thank you.
22 And for the record, we'll note the
23 absence of District Council 33
24 President or their representative.

25 Just a little history about

1 the EORC. EORC was established by
2 City Council in March of 2012. The
3 Committee is responsible for the
4 following: To oversee and
5 facilitate a public review of the
6 implementation, effectiveness and
7 enforcement of Chapter 17-1600
8 entitled Economic Opportunity
9 Plans, taking public testimony
10 related to diversity and inclusion
11 in the City and being responsive to
12 that testimony, to share
13 information that is relevant and
14 useful to the development of MBE,
15 WBE and DSBE firms seeking to do
16 business with the City of
17 Philadelphia and to make
18 recommendations to City Council for
19 the adoption of resolutions calling
20 for the appropriate remedial and
21 legal remedies where we see
22 flagrant violations to inclusion
23 and commitments made by contractors
24 to subcontractors on City
25 contracts.

1 These meetings are held on
2 a Monday at 10:00 a.m. on a
3 quarterly basis in March, June,
4 September and December, and the
5 transcript of this and all previous
6 meetings are available online at
7 the OEO website, which can be found
8 on www.oeoboard/phila.gov.

9 Anyone interested in
10 presenting at the next meeting,
11 which is scheduled Monday,
12 September 9, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.,
13 should call 215-683-2057 or send an
14 email to ariana.d.forde@phila.gov
15 and submit the following
16 information: Full name, callback
17 telephone number and an email
18 address where you can be reached.

19 At this time, we will allow
20 the public an opportunity to give
21 testimony. Ground rules for
22 providing testimony are sign in,
23 step to the mic, state your name
24 and organization and you will be
25 given five minutes to speak. Is

1 there anyone here for testimony?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIR NEWSOME: Seeing
4 there's no one here for public
5 testimony, we will move to our
6 guest speakers. Our guests
7 speakers today are Mia Flouri --
8 Floure -- I'm sorry, and I just
9 asked her this -- Fioravanti, the
10 Vice-president of Corporate Affairs
11 for Hilco Development Partners and
12 her team who will present updates
13 and opportunities provided by the
14 Bellwether District project and
15 Mr. Stanley Wiley, business owner
16 of the DeWitt Heating &
17 Air-Conditioning/Mechanical who
18 will talk about his company and his
19 experiences with doing business
20 with the City.

21 Mia and her team will
22 present first. You can come up to
23 these chairs.

24 (Witnesses approached
25 Witness table.)

1 MS. FIORAVANTI: Hi and
2 good morning. My name is Mia
3 Fioravanti, Vice-president of
4 Corporate Affairs for Hilco
5 Redevelopment Partners, our now HRP
6 Group. Glad to be here today to
7 talk about our project and our EOP
8 plan for the Bellwether District.

9 So just to give a little
10 bit of background on the project
11 and HRP, HRP Group's focus
12 nationally is on projects like the
13 redevelopment of the former oil
14 refinery, so nationally we are
15 largely focused on obsolete
16 industrial sites. Many of those
17 sites are similar in nature to what
18 you'll see in our project in South
19 Philly.

20 So our largest and most
21 complex project right now is
22 redeveloping what was once a
23 150-year-old oil refinery in South
24 Philadelphia. It is a 1300 acre
25 site, representing roughly 2

1 percent of the City's footprint.
2 We're engaged in a 10- to 15-year
3 redevelopment project transforming
4 that site. And we assumed
5 ownership of the property following
6 a massive explosion that occurred
7 in 2019, so we assumed ownership of
8 the property in 2020.

9 There's a lot of
10 opportunity as a result of this
11 project. We're transforming a site
12 that previously employed 1,000
13 people to one that is projected to
14 employ 19,000 people and it's
15 projected to create roughly 20,000
16 construction jobs over that 15- to
17 20-year redevelopment timeline.

18 Ultimately, we are going to
19 create a new business campus or
20 business district for the City that
21 will be both a logistics campus as
22 well as a new life science
23 innovation hub. And so, we're at
24 the very beginning of that
25 redevelopment process. We just --

1 as my colleague Blake will describe
2 just broke ground on construction
3 earlier this year, but those first
4 few years were really focused on
5 the kind of decommissioning and
6 demolition process of what existed
7 previously, which was a huge
8 undertaking.

9 So as a result of our EOP
10 plan for the project, which we'll
11 get into a little bit more detail
12 later in the presentation, a lot of
13 opportunity to build capacity with
14 small MBE and WBE businesses over
15 the next decade or more. As I
16 mentioned, a lot of job opportunity
17 and economic growth.

18 So I'm excited to see the
19 future of the project and work with
20 all of you to make sure that firms
21 are benefiting from the work that
22 we're going to do both now and in
23 the future. So with that, I'll
24 turn it over to my colleague Blake.

25 MR. ROWAN: All right.

1 Good morning. I think I've met
2 some of you before. My name is
3 Blake Rowan. I'm the Senior Vice-
4 president of Development. I focus
5 primarily on our industrial campus
6 but I am involved also in our
7 innovation campus that Mia said.

8 So over the course of the
9 last three-and-a-half years, we're
10 nearing four years, we focused
11 primarily on the decommissioning
12 and the demolition of the refinery.
13 Concurrently to that, we were
14 focusing on our master plan and we
15 really viewed this land as a clean
16 slate.

17 And so, when we did that we
18 engaged, too many to count,
19 consultants to help us really
20 redefine what this development
21 could be. So through that, we
22 worked with Pennoni as our civil
23 and traffic infrastructure master
24 planner, and they helped us work
25 through some of the traffic impact

1 studies as we were envisioning what
2 both campuses are going to
3 reintegrate the City to our site.

4 So that process took about
5 two years. And we worked through
6 some of the early permitting
7 processes. As you can imagine,
8 they were very extensive but we
9 appreciated every step of the way.
10 As we neared completion of the
11 demolition activities towards the
12 middle part of last year, we were
13 able to get started with the
14 underground demolition and
15 earthwork activities.

16 So in May of last year, we
17 started concrete demolition, some
18 underground utility demolition,
19 removal and ultimately recycling of
20 those materials and then we started
21 mass earth work in June of last
22 year. To date, we have moved over
23 a million yards of material
24 throughout the site as we work
25 through our cut, fill and balancing

1 of the site, so a ton of progress.

2 As you've probably driven
3 down 26th Street, you've seen our
4 first building. It's under
5 construction right now. That's
6 being built by Clayco in
7 partnership with Perryman
8 Construction. The project is going
9 tremendously. We are gearing for
10 completion by the end of this year,
11 which we're incredibly excited
12 about.

13 We have our infrastructure
14 project that we also just got
15 kicked off. That is being done by
16 BSI Construction. They've begun
17 the new utility installations on
18 our site and then they are going to
19 start probably by the middle of the
20 summer on the roadway
21 infrastructure. Our first phase is
22 probably 3500 linear feet. It'll
23 provide access to not only our
24 first two buildings but ultimately
25 other sites as we finish mass earth

1 work.

2 And then concurrently,
3 we're going to be working on
4 offsite improvements that we work
5 through with the Streets Department
6 and PennDOT heavily over the period
7 of about 18 months where we're
8 going to do a new intersection at
9 26th and Hartranft as well as
10 improvements down 26th Street and
11 then extensive improvements at
12 Pennrose and 26th Street. BSI
13 Construction is doing all of that
14 work as well.

15 And then we're very excited
16 to get kicked off on our second
17 building. That building is a
18 727,000-square-foot warehouse. To
19 put it in perspective, it's twice
20 the size of the one that you've
21 seen now going up on 26th Street.
22 That is being constructed by ARCO
23 Design/Build. We are nearing the
24 end of the building permit process.
25 We're hoping to have that this

1 month and then we'll get started on
2 vertical construction. That
3 process will likely take us towards
4 May of next year.

5 Both of these buildings are
6 being built speculatively. That
7 means we don't currently have a
8 tenant. However, there's been a
9 lot of discussion. As soon as we
10 put the walls up, I think people
11 started to really see the site come
12 to life and we're excited about
13 that. So we hope in the next
14 handful of months we can bring some
15 exciting news to the City with
16 potential new tenants.

17 On our Innovation Campus
18 we've started mass earth work.
19 That process has been going really,
20 really well. We're hoping to have
21 our first phase complete by the end
22 of this year. We're actively
23 designing two speculative buildings
24 and would hope to start
25 construction the early part of next

1 year. So it's going great and we
2 thank everybody for their support.
3 And if you have any questions on
4 progress, feel free to ask.

5 MS. SHAW: Good morning.
6 My name is Melonease Shaw. I'm CEO
7 of Maven, Inc. I'm glad to see
8 many faces on the other side of the
9 table there because it's crucial to
10 the work that we do. Maven has the
11 role on this contract and project
12 as the engagement and outreach
13 consultant.

14 We are a subcontractor to
15 Talson Solutions, which has the
16 responsibility for monitoring. The
17 team together is 100 percent
18 MBE/WBE. Often times I get to be
19 counted in either one place or the
20 other, WBE or MBE. In this case,
21 I'm WBE. Our job as the engagement
22 and outreach consultant is in many
23 ways to be the town crier.

24 Often times what happens is
25 folks hear about projects like this

1 project and want to know how they
2 can get engaged, how they can get
3 contracting opportunities and so
4 on, and our job is to try to help
5 facilitate that. We widen the net
6 as much as possible while we want
7 certain firms to be able to build
8 capacity, which both Jennifer and
9 Regina have said often about the
10 importance of contractors having
11 the opportunity not only for one
12 opportunity on a project like this,
13 but multiple so that they have a
14 path of a number of contracts but
15 also they are able to build their
16 capacity and they don't have to
17 have their firms laid off or go
18 someplace else in between.

19 The uniqueness of what we
20 do is every place there's going to
21 be minority contractors or vendors
22 or whatever, we're there. It
23 doesn't if it's the Chambers'
24 event. It doesn't matter if it's
25 the City's event. It doesn't

1 matter if it's another developer's
2 event. We are always trying to
3 find contractors that can be given
4 the information to bid on various
5 opportunities that Hilco has to
6 offer. Because they have a number
7 of general contractors working at
8 the same time, in many ways we are
9 duplicating the work across the
10 board but have the same structure
11 and process that we're using so
12 they have continuity and they're
13 able to tie back where there may be
14 any flaws or issues in the process
15 that need to be tightened up.

16 In addition to the fact
17 that with the amount of development
18 that's going on in the City, you
19 need someone that wants to say our
20 project is the project you want to
21 come to. Nothing against anybody
22 else's project, but we need as much
23 as possible. When you have 50
24 percent, when you have goals as
25 high as 50 percent both on the

1 workforce side as well as on the
2 contractor side, you want to be in
3 front of somebody in order to meet
4 that.

5 And so, we also
6 competitively go after anyone and
7 everyone that has the ability to
8 perform on the contract. So we
9 keep in mind the ability to give
10 folks capacity. We keep in mind
11 trying to keep the net as wide as
12 possible so that those that haven't
13 been able to get to the table get
14 to the table, and we operate as an
15 advocate in between the Hilco, the
16 general contractor and even
17 organizations like those of you who
18 are sitting across the table,
19 because lots of people have lots of
20 stories and our job is to try to
21 make sure that there's an
22 independent source that can say
23 this contractor really does have an
24 issue and we need somebody that can
25 help solve that problem or this

1 contractor doesn't seem to be able
2 to get through, what can we do
3 about that.

4 So we keep a nice
5 combination I would say of being an
6 advocate for contractors, but at
7 the same time representing the
8 owners. We do that again through
9 mentoring. We do that through
10 trying to create joint ventures.
11 Often times contractors don't want
12 to think about that, but in order
13 for them to gain additional
14 opportunities and larger
15 opportunities, sometimes that means
16 partnering with each other.

17 So that could be joint
18 ventures. That could be
19 subcontracting. And then also
20 trying to make sure that any other
21 program out here where they're
22 being offered construction
23 management training, where they're
24 being offered how to handle your
25 back office, those things we gather

1 from multiple places and share it
2 with contractors that are working
3 on the project.

4 May I -- is that okay?

5 MS. FIORAVANTI: That was
6 great. And I just want to say how
7 instrumental Mel and her team have
8 been helping us identify firms in
9 the short time they've been with
10 us. So thanks, Mel.

11 Just wanted to reiterate
12 our EOP goals for the project which
13 I think you're aware of, so 50
14 percent MBE participation in both
15 our construction contracts as well
16 as our professional services
17 contracts; 5 to 8 percent WBE
18 participation in again both our
19 construction and professional
20 services contracts; and then on the
21 workforce side our goal is for 50
22 percent of opportunities to go to
23 Philadelphians, in other words
24 residents with a 191 zip code, and
25 50 percent of our workforce

1 opportunities to go to people of
2 color.

3 And so, we have really
4 substantial and important goals
5 that we take very seriously. And
6 again, Mel's team and the Robert
7 Bright's team at Talson are
8 incredible partners on that.

9 Just to wrap up, I wanted
10 to share a little bit about our
11 commitment to workforce because
12 again that is a substantial goal
13 for the project. So because our
14 nearest-term job opportunities are
15 construction-focused jobs, the
16 majority of our workforce
17 development initiatives currently
18 are focused on building more
19 diverse and inclusive pipeline of
20 workers in the construction
21 industry, although as the project
22 evolves our approach to workforce
23 will change and evolve as well.

24 We have to date invested
25 nearly \$2 million in both community

1 philanthropy and workforce
2 development. I think through both
3 lenses, community and workforce,
4 we're really focused on positively
5 impacting and providing opportunity
6 to organizations and people who
7 live near our project, our
8 neighboring residents in South and
9 Southwest Philly, so we're always
10 really looking at things with that
11 focus.

12 Our key partnerships from a
13 workforce perspective currently are
14 Everybody Builds. We're a multi-
15 year partner in Everybody Builds,
16 which I'm sure this group is
17 familiar with. It is a nonprofit
18 organization focused on building
19 capacity with smaller MBE/WBE
20 construction firms and building a
21 more diverse pipeline of workers in
22 the construction industry.

23 We also are supporting
24 several pre-apprenticeship
25 partnerships, which are looking to

1 bring new folks into the trades.
2 One of our primary examples is the
3 CART program through which we serve
4 as their toolbox partner to which
5 we're providing new toolboxes for
6 CART graduates.

7 We're proud to also partner
8 with the Greater Philadelphia
9 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's
10 Build Latino program. We've done
11 that for several years. We also
12 are a partner of the National
13 Association of Women in
14 Construction, NAWIC program, which
15 is focused on getting more young
16 women into the trades and every
17 year we host a group of 30 or more
18 young women at our site for a tour
19 and a preview of our development,
20 which has been a really nice
21 opportunity for us. And we're also
22 engaged with the Center for
23 Employment Opportunities and
24 Philadelphia Works with their
25 Re-entry program that provides

1 transitional employment to
2 justice-impacted individuals on
3 almost a daily basis. We have CEO
4 workers working at our site so
5 that's been a really meaningful
6 partnership as well.

7 Last and importantly, we
8 have a project-long commitment to
9 the Philadelphia School District
10 called our Career Connective
11 Learning commitment, and through
12 that CCL program we're providing a
13 number of opportunities on a
14 yearlong basis to Philadelphia
15 District students.

16 We have employed 84 interns
17 to date, either high school or
18 middle-aged. We just recently ran
19 our first middle school program
20 onsite which was really exciting,
21 and we hope to do more with that
22 age group in the future. We also
23 do career-awareness activities on
24 the site on a regular basis and
25 also participate in District events

1 and District initiatives. We have
2 a 10-year commitment to CCP through
3 which we're providing scholarships
4 to South and Southwest-based
5 residents, and just generally
6 through that work we're looking to
7 expose young people to potential
8 career paths in real estate and
9 construction. And again, we do
10 that throughout the year.

11 And so, I think just to
12 close what's really unique about
13 our project is that both from a
14 business standpoint as well as a
15 worker standpoint because of the
16 length of our project, because we
17 have a 10- to 15-year timeline, if
18 done right and done intentionally,
19 have the opportunity to build
20 capacity to spark interest in the
21 young person, to bring new career
22 opportunities to residents living
23 around our project.

24 And so, again we take that
25 very seriously and we look forward

1 to partnering with you to be
2 successful around our EOP. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIR NEWSOME: Thank you.
5 I have a ton of questions. You
6 know, I've heard these
7 presentations a couple of times and
8 I'm always impressed in the work
9 you're doing, particularly on the
10 outreach. But one of the
11 questions, when you talked about
12 the CCP scholarship, can you go in
13 a little more detail about how do
14 you go about selecting those
15 students?

16 MS. FIORAVANTI: Sure.
17 Absolutely. So CCP has a number of
18 scholarships programs as you can
19 imagine. Our specific scholarship
20 program is designated towards South
21 and Southwest residents. And so,
22 on an annual basis CCP opens up
23 that scholarship program. We work
24 with them and review applications
25 to ensure they meet the criteria of

1 living in South and Southwest, and
2 they're sort of awarded annually.

3 I think we've also been
4 more recently building engagement
5 opportunities with those students
6 and stay in touch with them. And
7 so, as an example in April our CEO
8 Roberto Perez sat down with our
9 outgoing and incoming scholarship
10 recipients and had lunch and
11 learned about their career
12 aspirations, talked about the
13 Bellwether District.

14 So I think the CCP
15 scholarship has been successful to
16 date, but we would love to make
17 sure there are ongoing engagement
18 opportunities with our project over
19 time.

20 CHAIR NEWSOME: And you
21 also mentioned the LB, getting
22 local businesses to be able to
23 participate. What kind of outreach
24 activities are you doing to ensure
25 that the local residents have an

1 opportunity to get some of these
2 jobs?

3 MS. SHAW: So we have a
4 priority of 191 as our catchment
5 area. Sometimes we go a little bit
6 outside of that to counties, but
7 mostly it's 191 that the priority
8 is given to. And so, whether it is
9 a community activity or it is
10 through the contractors, the
11 minority contractors, we try to
12 make sure that workforce
13 opportunities are -- getting folks
14 into the workforce is a shared
15 responsibility. And so, that's why
16 it's important for us to also be
17 working with the unions as well.

18 It is not uncommon for me
19 to send one of our guys to a union
20 hall and say, okay, we have a
21 contractor that needs to expand his
22 workforce, we need you guys to send
23 somebody. That is not always
24 received real well, but it's
25 getting better and better I will

1 say. Because as the union in town
2 starts to age out, there is more
3 and more interest that making
4 sure -- and I'm looking at you
5 directly as I say this, we are
6 looking more and more for
7 apprenticeship programs to really
8 to speed up because we are
9 experiencing a gap right now. And
10 the only way we can get through
11 that gap is if the unions are
12 really being intentional about
13 apprenticeship programs and making
14 sure that those apprentices are
15 getting an opportunity.

16 Our minority contractors,
17 our diverse contractors, are more
18 than willing to take on the
19 apprentices but they don't have
20 necessarily access that hopefully
21 we are building getting to the
22 unions to increase that for them.

23 MR. HARRIS: Thank you for
24 looking at me. Most of my members
25 are actually in the private sector.

1 We are AFSCME. We're the American
2 Federation of State, Municipal and
3 County Employees -- I said that in
4 the wrong order -- but as being a
5 part of the AFL-CIO and my union
6 siblings in the Building Trades, I
7 know that they work hard to be able
8 to build their apprenticeship
9 programs and to also offer them to
10 minorities, to women, there's a lot
11 of work in that effort.

12 I'm wondering what you're
13 doing in your program to be able to
14 further support their
15 apprenticeship programs and their
16 goals either financially or in ways
17 that you can support that through
18 other businesses that you know to
19 be able to get folks into those
20 programs. As you just said, it is
21 certainly coming from both ends.
22 It's a shared goal.

23 MS. SHAW: Absolutely. And
24 that's one of the reasons why from
25 the beginning Hilco correctly

1 developed a relationship with the
2 Building Trades. And not to say
3 because I want to be real again
4 intentional when I say this, we
5 understand that the opportunities
6 are not just with laborers. And we
7 also want you to understand that we
8 are working really hard so that we
9 don't end it beyond just the
10 laborers.

11 We had the laborers as our
12 partner because the laborers --
13 Ryan Boyer is the head of the
14 Building Trades. And so, because
15 of that we believe that gives us
16 access to those other trades as
17 well. And so, we pay as much
18 attention to which trade it's
19 coming from. And in fact, lots of
20 our contracting bid opportunities
21 are somewhat based on the trade
22 itself, so that when we're in a
23 space where we're going to be
24 needing electricians, we are
25 specifically focusing on working

1 with them in that space.

2 When we are in the space
3 where we're breaking up foundation
4 or cementing or whatever, we have
5 other trades that we are working
6 with, so we're conscious about
7 that. And the other thing that
8 we're also doing is documenting the
9 story, which is not what I got to
10 say earlier and I should have.

11 If we make the numbers or
12 not, there won't be a secret as to
13 how we got there. So a big part of
14 our responsibility on the Maven
15 side is to document the story. So
16 it doesn't matter if we are in
17 charge of workforce or community
18 engagement or not. We combine all
19 of that in documenting the activity
20 of the project so we can tell you,
21 we can tell Council, we can tell
22 anyone, you know what, we don't --
23 even to the point of where it
24 appears that there's a
25 nonopportunity, which is a big

1 thing in the City now, so we have a
2 process that we crafted and work
3 through with OEO that says, okay,
4 this is what the contractor is
5 saying, there's no opportunity in
6 that space, is that true, can you
7 validate that. And if you can
8 validate that, then it's given back
9 to us to be able to pull that out
10 of the numbers but not until we've
11 gone through an external validation
12 process.

13 So for us we believe that
14 the story is the biggest part of
15 this, being able to tell you that
16 for one opportunity we literally
17 went through 30 different
18 contractors, and I am not
19 exaggerating when I say that. So
20 does that answer your question
21 because I can go too far sometimes?

22 MR. HARRIS: Yes.

23 MS. FIORAVANTI: I can just
24 add on the outreach side there are
25 certainly activities that we do at

1 HRP to educate local firms on the
2 project and make sure they can get
3 connected to us. So for example,
4 earlier this year we held a what we
5 called a How to Do Business with
6 the Bellwether District event in
7 partnership with Council President
8 Johnson's office and of course
9 Mel's team at Maven, and we had a
10 huge turnout for that. Over 100
11 people attended that event, which
12 was great.

13 We also have resources on
14 our website, for example, for firms
15 that are interested in working with
16 us and reach out and that kind of
17 electronic form goes right to the
18 Maven team and of course to us as
19 well. But I think what's also
20 important is that we're
21 highlighting our general contractor
22 partners when thinking about
23 opportunities because the majority
24 of contracting opportunities on the
25 construction side primarily are

1 coming from those GC partners.

2 So Melonease's team really
3 meet, and us as well, meet with our
4 general contractors very regularly,
5 hold them accountable to our EOP
6 goals in general, make sure that
7 they are holding adequate outreach
8 activities and outreach events so
9 that local firms know not only how
10 to connect with us but how to
11 connect to them as well. I think
12 that's an important piece.

13 CHAIR NEWSOME: Any
14 questions?

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good
16 morning. As you know, you meet on
17 a pretty regular basis with the
18 Diverse Chambers of Commerce, so we
19 know a little bit already of what's
20 going on. Last time we spoke we
21 had a conversation related to
22 professional services, right. That
23 is really from my perspective and
24 the Hispanic Chamber where there
25 are a lot of opportunities for

1 participation at a really high
2 level in the Latino community in
3 particular, and I suspect that in
4 the African American and perhaps
5 Asian Chambers given that our
6 construction firms tend to be
7 smaller and more challenged in
8 getting them into the supply chain.
9 Can you tell me a little bit about
10 opportunities?

11 I heard that the innovation
12 district is going through the
13 design process. I'm sure that
14 there will be other processes that
15 provide for opportunities for
16 architects and consultants and
17 engineers of that kind where we can
18 really help you boost those
19 numbers. Can you tell us a little
20 bit about what's coming up?

21 MS. FIORAVANTI: Thank you,
22 Jennifer. I really appreciate the
23 question. I think just to make a
24 distinction before I answer the
25 question, there are only certain

1 professional services that actually
2 are counted and applied towards our
3 EOP. That's not to say that more
4 broadly we are always looking to
5 employ and contract with MBE and
6 WBE and local firms with contracts
7 that might be outside of that and
8 that might make up some of the
9 members that are of your Chamber,
10 for example.

11 But those that are
12 applicable in the EOP are really
13 like engineering and planning,
14 design and architecture,
15 environmental remediation and of
16 course economic opportunity plan
17 oversight and monitoring. So there
18 really is a more limited scope of
19 opportunities that are reflected in
20 the EOP. Again, we focus on
21 engaging firms even outside of
22 those categories.

23 You know, I think for us we
24 are really -- and while early on in
25 the project are recognizing that

1 professional services is something
2 that we really need to develop a
3 serious strategy around in order to
4 make best effort on those goals.
5 And so, currently we're going
6 through an exercise where we're not
7 only evaluating our current vendors
8 that perform those services like
9 Pennoni, for example, to say, okay,
10 you might not be an MBE/WBE firm
11 but how are you performing
12 towards -- you're still responsible
13 for performing towards those EOP
14 goals, how are you performing
15 currently, so really like an
16 auditing or internal evaluation of
17 the vendors we have currently.

18 And I think what we're
19 aiming to do is project out what
20 scopes of work are going to come
21 into play and when with as much
22 specificity as possible, honestly
23 on the professional services side
24 as well as the construction side,
25 so that we can really say, Regina,

1 Jennifer, we have this specific
2 engineering work that's going to
3 come up a year from now, are there
4 firms within your organization that
5 are capable of receiving the work,
6 why and why not, right, can we help
7 them get there if not or are there
8 firms potentially that we should be
9 considering that might not be
10 member organizations and really
11 utilizing your chambers to help
12 achieve those goals.

13 But I do want to say that
14 it's been somewhat challenging
15 because some of those firms don't
16 exist today or aren't capable of
17 receiving the work today, so
18 there's some work that we need to
19 do on our side and we would want to
20 do so in partnership with you.

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
22 I'll say that from my perspective
23 having that projection, even if
24 it's not entirely 100 percent
25 accurate because things do change,

1 does make a difference in us being
2 able to prepare and scope out the
3 availability from our side. So I
4 think particularly architecture,
5 engineering, those design services
6 that you mentioned are places where
7 our community is rather strong.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. SHAW: What I would add
10 to what Mia has said is the
11 Maven/Talson team came on in
12 September. At that point, Hilco
13 had been operating for a little
14 while already. And so, we were on
15 this little treadmill trying to
16 catch up to just where they were.

17 What I will add though is
18 that once our services were clear
19 by what we were going to do, the
20 Hilco team has been very responsive
21 to hearing what we have to say
22 about input, even if it's after the
23 fact, and one of those things is
24 the professional services. And
25 what we realized from that is that

1 Hilco has to be able to talk to the
2 general contractor before they get
3 out the gate.

4 And so, as we identify
5 where those holes or opportunities
6 exist and we are able to share that
7 with them, they've been real
8 responsive about making sure that
9 as they go forward, they amend
10 their setup process, their decision
11 process and so on. You guys know
12 as well as any of us that GCs come
13 with their own group of folks that
14 they want to do things with. And
15 so, the ying and the yang between
16 trying to get them to be
17 comfortable that they have the team
18 they can work with but at the same
19 time open up opportunity will only
20 happen if we are intentional in
21 working with them and helping them
22 to understand this is a high
23 priority and a goal for the
24 developer. And so, that is what we
25 are doing.

1 To the point of where even
2 the data that we were using for
3 collecting the information about
4 potential contractors on the
5 website for Hilco, we've modified
6 that so that there's more
7 information that we're getting,
8 more detail that we're getting so
9 that we can say back to Hilco, we
10 did a little research, we know they
11 still exist, we know this is what
12 their structure is, we know their
13 certification still is in place,
14 no, they need to get certified but
15 we're going to help them get
16 certified. All of those things
17 come from them tightening up the
18 website process as well as the
19 process that they use for bringing
20 on additional GCs.

21 And it's mindboggling to
22 believe that we are really in Year
23 1 and 2 of this and there's still
24 10 more years or so to go and
25 contractors hear it about today and

1 they want to know, oh, my God, I'm
2 missing my opportunity; oh, my
3 goodness, nobody reached out to me;
4 oh, my goodness, I'm never going to
5 get there. And so, the other part
6 of our story is to make sure we
7 tell them and share with them this
8 is a long one. And if it didn't
9 happen today, we will stay
10 intentional in making sure that you
11 can get an opportunity further down
12 the road.

13 To the point of where Hilco
14 is asking us to track our
15 interaction with contractors, even
16 the ones that don't get an
17 opportunity today, if four months
18 from now something comes up where
19 they're in that space, they want us
20 to be able to go back, pull that
21 information and make sure that they
22 are included.

23 MS. HAIRSTON: Thank you
24 for that information. I think one
25 thing that we should point out and

1 highlight that involving diverse
2 Chambers in the city early and
3 often in the process leads to the
4 presentation that we've heard
5 today. I have quite a few notes
6 that I was going to ask questions
7 about that you already honed in
8 because you understand what's
9 important to us.

10 So I'm going to go back to
11 something, Ms. Shaw, that you
12 mentioned that's important to
13 particularly the African American
14 Chamber of Commerce, which is
15 growth and scalability of our
16 businesses. And you broached
17 briefly the topic of how you
18 onboard new firms considering that
19 you also want to be intentional
20 about growing the firms that you
21 have.

22 You seem to have a large
23 ecosystem of organizations that you
24 work with. Can you just tie in for
25 me how -- and I'll give an example.

1 So Girl Concrete, Girl Concrete is
2 one of your firms that is pouring
3 concrete. Lynette Sutton is the
4 managing operator. She has a
5 pretty large, I believe, contract
6 with this development, but her
7 particular phase of the project
8 comes in after other things are
9 done and she needs to keep her team
10 in place. She has a very diverse
11 team. So are you working with
12 organizations such as Everyone
13 Builds to look across the landscape
14 of the large projects in
15 Philadelphia and see how you can
16 ensure or you can work together,
17 collaborate, to make sure that as
18 we're building capacity, then she's
19 on this other project so when she
20 comes back to Hilco, she can keep
21 her team in place?

22 MS. SHAW: Yes is the --
23 that's the short answer. Because
24 Maven has a network of women in
25 particular that are working with

1 different contractors, whether that
2 be Gilbane, whether that be
3 Driscoll or whatever, we actually
4 have a support group amongst those
5 organizations where I identify for
6 them contractors that have
7 performed well and need the
8 opportunity to keep their supply
9 chain going. I share that
10 information with them and we work
11 through whether or not any of them
12 have similar opportunities coming
13 up on board. That's just -- it
14 just seems like to me the right
15 thing to do given that there are a
16 number of different projects going
17 on and they're all in different
18 time periods. But things like
19 concrete happens at a particular
20 time and place in the life of a
21 project. And so, being able to
22 talk to them about the performance
23 that Girl Concrete has had, and I
24 am pretty sure that Girl Concrete
25 right now has at least three

1 different developers that they're
2 working with because we've been
3 intentional in that way to try to
4 help them to not only build that
5 capacity but to keep their supply
6 chain going.

7 MS. HAIRSTON: And I would
8 like for us to think about how we
9 can democratize that across all
10 projects to ensure that that's a
11 formal process because I think that
12 is a good intentionality to have,
13 but it's something that you're
14 doing on our own accord, so we
15 would like to work with you in this
16 body to understand how we can
17 democratize that across all
18 projects.

19 MS. FIORAVANTI: Yeah. And
20 I know -- and you mentioned
21 Everybody Builds. They're also
22 working on those making those types
23 of connections to and are working
24 with Lynette's firm specifically.
25 So I agree with you. I think -- I

1 said this earlier, what's exciting
2 about our project is that because
3 of the long timeline while we can't
4 guarantee that Girl is not going to
5 get a contract on every single
6 build, there is the potential to
7 build capacity with her firm over
8 the course of that timeline. I
9 could see her working with us again
10 in the future of course, and I've
11 had that conversation with her.
12 So, yeah, I think both in
13 connecting with other projects and
14 thinking about long-term timeline
15 for contractors on our site alone
16 can be opportunities.

17 CHAIR NEWSOME: Okay. So I
18 have one more question. You talked
19 a lot about opportunities and for
20 MBE/WBEs to get contracts. What
21 kind of contractors are available,
22 what kind of jobs are available?
23 Can you let the audience know?

24 MR. ROWAN: Yeah, so I'll
25 take that one. I think from a

1 construction standpoint it's really
2 all trades are available for sure.
3 We have a very significant goal as
4 we mentioned and we're actually
5 tracking, just about to hit it,
6 which we're very excited about as
7 we near the final buy-out stage of
8 the project. So that's mechanical,
9 electrical, plumbing, roofing,
10 everything you can think of to
11 build a super structure of a
12 building.

13 On the professional
14 services side, we talked about the
15 engineering, the architecture.
16 It's also survey work. That's one
17 that we've been successful with
18 onsite, utilizing a handful of
19 different surveying firms. I think
20 to Mia's point that there are some
21 that have been slightly excluded,
22 but we do utilize a lot from the
23 legal perspective. There's
24 obviously a big need for that as we
25 navigate through the permit process

1 and land use and entitlements and
2 all of that.

3 I think what is very unique
4 about our project is that it feels
5 that it's legitimately almost
6 everything that you can think of,
7 from a professional service, from a
8 construction standpoint because of
9 the scale, because of every person
10 and entity that we touch while we
11 look forward to develop the site.
12 So there's really just a breadth of
13 opportunity for that over the next
14 10 to 15 years. We have to get
15 through this first phase of where
16 we've committed to from a
17 professional service and
18 construction standpoint. As
19 tenants hopefully take these
20 buildings, that opens up the next
21 10 years and opportunity as we
22 think for -- on the industrial
23 campus, it's the third building,
24 the fourth building. It's
25 hopefully build-the-suite

1 opportunities where tenants come
2 and they see our site as wow, this
3 is an incredible opportunity to be
4 a mile-and-a-half away from the
5 Center City of Philadelphia and I
6 can build whatever I want because
7 we have so much land available.
8 And with that, that creates all of
9 those opportunities that we talked
10 about. So with that, hopefully
11 that's helpful.

12 CHAIR NEWSOME: That's very
13 helpful. I thank you for that. We
14 look forward to working with you
15 and making sure there's an ample
16 supply of minorities and women that
17 do this work. So the sooner we get
18 a list of things that you need by
19 trades or businesses, then we can
20 prepare that, so you'll have many
21 people to pick from.

22 So looking forward to
23 working with you. Thank you very
24 much for your presentation and have
25 a good day.

1 MS. SHAW: Thank you.

2 MS. FIORAVANTI: Thank you.

3 MR. ROWAN: Thank you very
4 much.

5 CHAIR NEWSOME: Our next
6 speaker will be Mr. Stanley Wiley.

7 (Witnesses approached
8 Witness table.)

9 MR. WILEY: Good morning,
10 everyone.

11 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good
12 morning.

13 MR. WILEY: I'm so thankful
14 to be here. I thank you for the
15 panel. Thank you for Deputy
16 Officer Lynn for allowing us this
17 platform, all of the Chambers that
18 are here and everyone that's here.
19 I hope everybody had a good
20 weekend. I did. It's Monday. I
21 had the opportunity to go to
22 ODUNDE, which was a very diverse
23 cultural event. And not only was I
24 an attendee there, I was a vendor.

25 And one of the beautiful

1 things that you get in return is
2 that you connect with all walks of
3 life. You meet everybody who wants
4 to know about you. You grow
5 together, you answer questions. We
6 had questions. They had questions,
7 and it was beautiful. Why can't we
8 have this in construction? Why
9 can't we have this in mechanical
10 services?

11 I'm going to have to
12 apologize in advance because I
13 had -- the agenda that was given to
14 me for this meeting was to talk
15 about the effectiveness of certain
16 chapters and the development of
17 firms seeking to do business in
18 Philadelphia and things like that.
19 I did not know we were going to
20 have a presentation.

21 For DeWitt we stopped doing
22 the presentations because we look
23 at it as no one in the room who
24 goes in for presentations wins
25 anything. And I think it's a

1 pretty sad situation. Ourselves,
2 we are a Black and Brown signatory
3 to the union, HVAC mechanical
4 company located right here in
5 Philadelphia. And for so long
6 we've been going to these events
7 and being hopeful, doing the right
8 thing and all of that good stuff,
9 and it just doesn't seem to happen
10 for unforeseen reasons and we don't
11 know why.

12 So I'm going in another
13 direction because this is totally
14 another topic. When you establish
15 or try to start a business, your
16 goal is to say, okay, well, why am
17 I doing this. You know, for us we
18 wanted to include diversity in
19 construction and maintenance. We
20 work together with Local 19 and we
21 work together with 420, which is
22 the steamfitters. That's all
23 mechanical/HVAC service. That's a
24 big chunk of construction.

25 We're not on any of these

1 jobs. I know we're working
2 together to improve, but the reason
3 we stopped going to purchase
4 displays like this is because
5 everybody takes the energy to do it
6 another direction. It's not hard
7 to do it right.

8 The one thing we do know
9 also is that every outreach we're
10 guaranteed two things, a free meal
11 and a soda and perhaps sometimes if
12 they like you, they bring you in
13 and say, hey, we want to do a job
14 with you or cut out a job for you.
15 And that job usually maxes out at
16 300,000, and we're a union company.

17 So when you hear that,
18 you're glad you're there. You're
19 glad you're talking, you're glad
20 you're communicating. But if
21 you're giving DeWitt a \$300,000 and
22 the prequalification cost you \$1
23 million, you're already in the
24 negative. And I think we need to
25 understand the cost of business.

1 And we need to look at some
2 reality.

3 You know, when I look
4 around, we wanted to establish
5 diversity in construction. But the
6 one question that I can't answer is
7 that if I were to ask myself to
8 name three companies, Black and
9 Brown companies that is, that are
10 MBEs in the mechanical field, how
11 many of them are making over \$1
12 million in revenue. And you'll
13 say, wow, I can't answer that
14 question. Why can't I answer that
15 question? And then you got to look
16 at yourself and say, wow, did I
17 volunteer to get on a plane and
18 jump out without a parachute. You
19 have to look at these things.

20 And also -- and I'm sorry
21 I'm changing the -- because this
22 agenda has changed. This is not
23 what we came here to talk about.
24 But when I hear a presentation, I
25 feel like all of us working

1 together can do better. We can say
2 a lot of things, but numbers don't
3 lie.

4 They just talked about
5 construction handing out toolboxes
6 which is great, but we need to see
7 Black and Brown businesses in our
8 communities grow in our
9 communities, be successful in our
10 communities, show an example of
11 what we can do instead of us
12 continuously talking about, oh, we
13 need help or we need capital or we
14 need all of these things. All we
15 need is opportunity.

16 And I pray that some of
17 these presentations start changing
18 their direction and having a real
19 true story to stand by and
20 acknowledge that we can grow
21 together in Philadelphia with
22 opportunity.

23 So with that being said, I
24 apologize in advance. This was not
25 the conversation I wanted to have,

1 but I did not know we were coming
2 here for someone presenting a new
3 construction deal in Philadelphia
4 that I know companies are not even
5 going to get a piece of.

6 CHAIR NEWSOME: Mr. Wiley,
7 you can speak on any anything that
8 you want to. You're brought here
9 to speak on your truth, what
10 happened to you out there in the
11 industry and tell your story. This
12 is no way tied to the presentation
13 before you.

14 MR. WILEY: I mean, the
15 reality is we don't have any
16 success stories. We together with
17 the union, with a mechanical
18 company that's a signatory to a
19 union -- first of all, do you know
20 how much it cost to become
21 signatory? Do you know how much it
22 cost to qualify for any institution
23 that you're working for?

24 We're with the School
25 District of Philadelphia. We're a

1 prime, not even a sub. But do you
2 know the cost of doing that? I
3 mean, I had to stop counting after
4 \$3 million because I want to sleep
5 at night. So we can't keep being
6 the subject of let me give you
7 something small and see if you can
8 handle it.

9 There's companies that's
10 prepared and ready and they're
11 being overlooked. And we're doing
12 everything around that to make a
13 new idea. And then when you see
14 the companies that are involved,
15 they don't grow. Why don't we not
16 have any growing companies in
17 Philadelphia? Prime example, do
18 the research. Who makes over \$1
19 million? A stand-alone. I'm not
20 talking about joint ventures and
21 second tier and all that other
22 stuff. That's a whole other topic
23 that's not working either. But
24 this is what we come up against all
25 the time.

1 And I think all of us
2 working together can do a better
3 job. We need to do a better job.
4 It'll improve our communities.
5 Just like I said, I was at ODUNDE
6 yesterday. So many people coming
7 together wanting to know who you
8 are, you want to know who they are.
9 Can you imagine a workplace like
10 that? Our workplace don't look
11 that in construction. It doesn't
12 look like that in the mechanical
13 field. And any task that we do get
14 in the mechanical field is always
15 the hardest task. I'm not sitting
16 here for a pity party, but it's a
17 reality.
18 We need to do better and
19 come together and do better.
20 Whether our differences, put them
21 aside, let's get some success
22 stories. And again, I apologize.
23 This is not what I came here to
24 talk about but I saw that the
25 agenda has changed. And again,

1 another presentation where if you
2 look at the outcome when that job
3 is over, what companies have really
4 grown from that.

5 CHAIR NEWSOME: There is no
6 agenda. You can put the agenda
7 aside. Please talk about exactly
8 what you came here to speak to.
9 When we had a conversation before
10 and you told me what you wanted to
11 talk about, that's perfectly --
12 that's what I'm here to hear.

13 I want to hear the DeWitt
14 story. I want to hear how you
15 started, the barriers, the
16 obstacles that were put before you
17 and I want you to tell it in your
18 words, in your way. The agenda was
19 just something to put together for
20 a guideline, but I want to hear
21 your story.

22 MR. WILEY: So DeWitt was
23 established in 2012 here in
24 Philadelphia. We're a full
25 mechanical service company, Black

1 and Brown HVAC-certified company.

2 We provide a full range of
3 mechanical services, much like
4 described that the presentation
5 wanted before.

6 We're in jobs now. We're
7 with the School District of
8 Philadelphia in contracts. We're
9 with Community College. We've even
10 done work with PHDC with the
11 weatherization. We're at
12 Germantown Friends. We're in a lot
13 of construction. But it's like
14 you're in it and it's only like a
15 low bar. They give you just
16 enough, \$300,000, just a little,
17 enough.

18 But if you do the
19 calculation of what a laborer, a
20 union laborer is in three weeks,
21 you've already surpassed the
22 300,000. And it just seems like
23 the obstacle is we can't get past
24 that barrier. And I've
25 collaborated on jobs with Mike.

1 We've done schools, helped each
2 other out. Because when we get in
3 positions of opportunity, they ramp
4 up the time, they ramp up
5 everything that changes the
6 goalpost, which is fine. We're
7 here for the task and do what we
8 have to do, but it's just an
9 ongoing situation.

10 And for us, born and raised
11 in Philadelphia, love Philadelphia.
12 You just hate to see no growth in
13 our communities, you know. Every
14 time we drive our red truck through
15 the communities, it's like, hey,
16 how do I get involved. So we're
17 union, so they talked about
18 apprentices, talked about building
19 apprentices. Well, you know that's
20 a five-, six-year process.

21 And for a diverse company
22 like us to even have an apprentice,
23 you got to have five, six years of
24 work. You got to have a backlog.
25 You got to have all these things

1 that Black and Brown companies
2 don't have. And then every time we
3 go to a presentation, we only hear
4 what we can't do. We got to talk
5 about what we can do. We got to
6 make a difference. And I thank you
7 for this platform to say that.

8 I don't want to get too
9 much into DeWitt because, you know.
10 We're easily to be found. It's not
11 hard to find us.

12 CHAIR NEWSOME: Let's have
13 the conversation now. Let's talk
14 about what we need to do to help
15 businesses, especially minority
16 businesses grow and get work in
17 Philadelphia.

18 MR. WILEY: Well, I mean we
19 have to get opportunity first and
20 we have to stop listening to the
21 rhetoric. Everybody always says
22 the same thing. Well, they don't
23 have a back office. Well, that's
24 not true. You wouldn't get paid or
25 billed. They're always saying they

1 don't have capacity. That's not
2 true. If you were given a contract
3 and you were signed into a
4 contract, you can get anything you
5 want.

6 But we keep listening to
7 the same rhetoric like what we
8 can't do. It's always what we
9 can't do. Oh, they can't perform
10 the work. Well, what do you mean
11 we can't perform the work. We pull
12 from the same labor pool that
13 everybody else does, so how you
14 can't get the work. I call the
15 same local as the other companies.
16 So all of these excuses we have to
17 stop listening to and really get
18 down to the facts and say, hey,
19 what are we really doing here and
20 uncover what's really going on.

21 I mean, we're in
22 Philadelphia. Black and Brown make
23 up a big population of the City.
24 Everybody's bad? Everybody's
25 failing? Why do we always have to

1 partner and go with some other
2 company? Why is that? They
3 mentioned you always have to
4 partner with someone to succeed.
5 No, all we have to do is get the
6 opportunity and the contract and do
7 just like everybody else. Why is
8 that the case? Those are the
9 things for me that I think we
10 should look at.

11 And it's sad. We live in a
12 big city where I was raised and
13 born and love, and it's the hardest
14 place to get any work. And us
15 being the only mechanic HVAC union
16 signatory, you would think doors
17 would open. We can work together
18 on a lot of things to improve.
19 Bring communities together, hire
20 within our communities. We're
21 based here in Philadelphia. So
22 with that being said, we have to be
23 do better. We have to do better.

24 CHAIR NEWSOME: I agree. I
25 do. And part of my role at OEO is

1 to make sure that we get
2 particularly minority businesses
3 out of that subcontracting arena
4 into the prime and to your point,
5 to get the prime contracts. But we
6 need to know what are the barriers,
7 what are the things that you're
8 coming up against.

9 This why I asked you here,
10 to tell us exactly your experience.
11 Once you go and seek a job, and
12 be perfectly hon -- that's what
13 we're here for. We can't fix
14 something if we don't know what's
15 going on. If you go to become a
16 prime contractor, what are some of
17 the things that you're hearing?

18 MR. WILEY: So we are a
19 prime contractor and we worked our
20 way to a prime contractor in
21 specific places. And first of all,
22 the criteria is so high to become a
23 prime. Your revenue has to be a
24 certain level. You have to have an
25 EMR rating. You have to have

1 Workers' Comp. and you have to have
2 bonding with the unions and
3 everything.

4 CHAIR NEWSOME: Okay.
5 You're saying the revenue. What
6 was that, the E?

7 MR. WILEY: What's that --
8 EMR rating. EMR rating is the
9 safety rating that takes five years
10 to get. That means you paid
11 Workers' Comp. for all of your
12 employees and hopefully you didn't
13 have car accidents or any of your
14 local members fell or all that
15 other good stuff, that you have to
16 have a good record. It has to be a
17 -1. That's just to prequalify.
18 Okay. Then --

19 CHAIR NEWSOME: And that
20 rating is if you didn't have any
21 accidents or car accidents or --

22 MR. WILEY: Yeah, no cuts
23 or bruises. Yeah, all of that's
24 under that same umbrella.

25 CHAIR NEWSOME: So is that

1 in conjunction with the contract or
2 your personal power or --

3 MR. WILEY: You need to
4 have that just to prequal to bid.

5 CHAIR NEWSOME: And it
6 takes five years you're saying to
7 get that?

8 MR. WILEY: Correct.

9 CHAIR NEWSOME: Do you know
10 why?

11 MR. WILEY: The insurance
12 is very expensive. You can pay
13 \$40,000 a month of your insurance.
14 And you have to be consistent. You
15 can't have any gaps in it. Once
16 you have a gap in it it's like
17 starting all over again. It's just
18 a high bar just to even get, first
19 of all, a sub. But then to get to
20 a prime, your revenue has to be
21 over \$2 million and your experience
22 and just everything. It's a tough
23 road. And we're there.

24 The thing is we're only
25 getting less than 1 percent of the

1 work. So you get there and then
2 you don't get the work or they say,
3 you know what, they look for little
4 things, you left a screw in the
5 roof or whatever the case may be to
6 try to say you don't qualify.

7 But that being said, we're
8 more focused on putting together
9 what we can do and having a success
10 story. Because we don't go to the
11 presentations anymore because
12 it's -- I haven't seen a company
13 sustain itself from that. Let's
14 name one company that sustained and
15 grew. Do you know any? No one can
16 sustain. Any Black -- I mean,
17 that's a problem. And we accept
18 all of this as if nothing's wrong
19 or we hear the rhetoric and think
20 that's correct, but we don't look
21 at the real situation.

22 And companies like us,
23 we're scrapping pennies just to
24 survive to qualify. Then you got
25 to do the work. Then you got to go

1 through all the other stuff.

2 That's just to get there.

3 CHAIR NEWSOME: Can you
4 describe the other stuff?

5 MR. WILEY: Well, you got
6 to get the capital to front the
7 labor, you know. You have to pay
8 the labor pay rate plus the fringe.
9 You got to have a back office for
10 certified payrolls and all the
11 invoicing and things like that.
12 You got to have a bonding for the
13 union. Then you got to have the
14 upfront capital.

15 We have a lot of
16 organizations that's kind of set
17 aside to help but the funding is
18 going there. It's not going to the
19 appropriate places.

20 CHAIR NEWSOME: So you have
21 to have a certain amount of money
22 in order to even get bonding,
23 correct?

24 MR. WILEY: Well, I haven't
25 seen a Black and Brown company

1 exceed the bonding of 750,000. It
2 seems like there's a magic number
3 for everything. The magic number
4 is, oh, yeah, come on in, let's
5 talk about a job, and then it's at
6 300,000. Well, if you're a union
7 company, how can you do a \$300,000
8 job. The labor would be done in
9 two-and-a-half weeks alone.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Are the
11 requirements stringent in private
12 sector jobs that are outside of
13 Philadelphia perhaps?

14 MR. WILEY: I'm sorry. Say
15 that again.

16 MS. RODRIGUEZ: So are
17 these the minimum requirements
18 generally speaking or are those
19 requirements different for other
20 jobs that are not necessarily the
21 Hilcos or the big projects that we
22 talked about?

23 MR. WILEY: Well, you just
24 heard their presentation. They
25 keep saying the same thing. We're

1 going to keep building capacity for
2 companies. We're going to select
3 companies to help them build. I
4 mean, we've heard a lot of these
5 projects. I don't know a company
6 that can self-sustain and get the
7 bonding that's needed after these
8 partnerships. I don't know a
9 company.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ: So
11 hypothetical: In order for your
12 company to be able to qualify and
13 sustain itself, given what you have
14 told us, what kind of capital would
15 you need to sustain? Is it that
16 you would need an investment of \$2
17 million in order to be able to
18 sustain the insurance until you can
19 get the next job? What would it
20 take for your company to say, okay,
21 I can play at the million dollar
22 level confidently?

23 MR. BROWN: So I'm going
24 to -- can you hear me? I'm going
25 to answer for Stan. Just real

1 quick, Mike Brown, the 360 Group,
2 another minority-owned firm that
3 has used Stan in the past. I'm
4 going to tackle a couple of these
5 questions on behalf of Stan.

6 The issue that Stan has is
7 Stan has worked with me and for me
8 on projects. He's done some of the
9 best work. We worked on Bethune,
10 Beaver and Brown Schools, \$23
11 million where Stan was critical in
12 making sure that the project
13 happened on time and was delivered.
14 We're a design build firm, also
15 union mechanical firm. Hilco
16 probably doesn't know who we are.
17 This is the two largest minority
18 mechanicals in the City, just so
19 you know, right.

20 So Stan needs consistent
21 work. It's not about just capital,
22 right. He needs contracts. And he
23 needs a company that's willing to
24 work with him for a sustained
25 period of time. You talked about a

1 five-year apprenticeship program.
2 You got to have five years' worth
3 of work. The problem that Stan has
4 and other minorities have,
5 including myself, I'm a little bit
6 less susceptible because I just
7 left Philadelphia. I was like this
8 is not the place to grow a
9 business, period, end of story,
10 right. Went down to D.C., went to
11 Florida. I run Atlantic City
12 Housing Authority. It was the way
13 to make money.

14 But I get to look back at
15 Stan and I see a person that worked
16 at NORESCO for years, that was the
17 boiler operator manager for the
18 School District for years, that
19 whenever I have a question
20 mechanically, I go to him and he
21 can answer it. The majority firms
22 do not want to use him, do not want
23 to use his company. I used his
24 company, right, and he's a
25 competitor, because of how smart

1 and how committed he is, right.

2 But they don't want to use
3 him because it's a lot easier to
4 use a 3 percent passthrough. And I
5 sat on OEO's Board -- I'm probably
6 the one person that most of you
7 don't know that probably has sat on
8 more boards that I can begin to say
9 because I like staying under the
10 radar. I rarely ever come out to
11 these events, but I am coming out
12 to support him because this is just
13 a travesty. If companies like his
14 company don't survive, you're not
15 going to have it.

16 And mind you, this is a
17 person that we bid against,
18 projects against him, but there's
19 enough room for multiple minority
20 firms. Let's just put it that way.
21 But the issue is you have these
22 outreach events and the outreach
23 events are about partnering a
24 majority company that does what
25 Stan does with Stan. So how is

1 there any money to be made for Stan
2 in a deal like that.

3 As far as capital is
4 concerned, the capital has to match
5 the contract. You give him capital
6 too early and he starts spending
7 it, and now he has a debt that he
8 has to cover every single month.
9 So contracts and capital have to go
10 together.

11 Another thing is these
12 outreach events. You got to be
13 kidding me, right. You don't know
14 who the minority firms -- we've
15 been around for 10, 15 years. My
16 company has been around for 14
17 years. They've probably never even
18 heard of me, right. And it's not
19 hard. Pick up the phone, call the
20 union, who are your signatory
21 contractors that are minority.
22 There's three on the mechanical
23 side. Plumbing, there's three.
24 Sheet metal, there's three.
25 Electrical, there might be 10.

1 You don't have to keep
2 having -- these outreach events are
3 a facade and a joke because they
4 don't work well. Stan's here.
5 Stan doesn't hide on what he is.
6 He's a mechanical firm that does
7 service in construction. He's a
8 prime contractor at the School
9 District. Why is he not bigger?
10 Because that's a contract that's 3
11 million a year, 4 million a year?

12 MR. WILEY: 9.5 million.

13 MR. BROWN: How much do you
14 get out of that? He's supposed to
15 get equal parts with the awarded
16 contractors. You get what,
17 200,000; 150,000 and they find
18 reasons why he shouldn't get it,
19 right. Philadelphia needs to
20 change, right.

21 And I'm going to leave it
22 with this. I'm going to give you a
23 question that needs to be answered
24 and a lot of people don't get,
25 right. The value of diversity.

1 Why does diversity matter, right?
2 It's not just to help the community
3 out because Black people and Brown
4 people are being looked over. It's
5 because America wouldn't be America
6 if it wasn't for diversity.

7 Imagine if there was no
8 Michael Jordan, right. Atlantic
9 City is the most hilarious thing on
10 earth, right. I hate to say it
11 this way. Many White companies
12 tried to go manage that housing
13 authority, but it took a company
14 with people that grew up in the
15 hood to go manage that authority,
16 that we understand what life is
17 what it is to be on the ground.

18 When I got asked to do
19 emergency response in Puerto Rico,
20 why? Because I'm Hispanic and I'm
21 not going to get shot when I go to
22 Puerto Rico, you know. There's
23 value and diversity, it's another
24 way of thinking. The Hilcos of the
25 world should be jumping at

1 opportunities to build companies
2 like Stan's company.

3 And like I said, I'm here
4 to advocate for Stan. He does
5 great work. But if he gets one
6 contract for 1 million -- and I
7 told Stan, wait until you get to 5,
8 10, 15 million. Then you get a
9 contract for 15 million one year
10 and then you don't get another
11 contract like Frankford High
12 School. They use a majority firm
13 because nobody wants to use a
14 minority firm, right.

15 And then these
16 certifications, we don't even get
17 certified anymore. That's another
18 joke, right. Let me get you
19 certified so I can work with you.
20 That means that you don't value me
21 as a company. You value me as a
22 check box. How about let's go do
23 work and then I'll talk about
24 getting certified so you can get
25 some good kudos with the City. But

1 if you don't want to work with me
2 without a certification, you don't
3 want to work with me, period, end
4 of story. I'm just a color to you,
5 right.

6 They need to appreciate --
7 I don't need to use Stan. I'm a
8 minority firm. I don't need to use
9 Team Clean. I don't need to use
10 half the minority firms that I use.
11 I use them because they're hungry
12 and they help me make money, and
13 there is a value proposition in
14 using them, not just a check box.

15 So I will speak on behalf
16 of Stan. He does have a great
17 company, but companies like him
18 have died in the past because for
19 some reason no one wants to use
20 them. They see us as a threat for
21 some reason. I don't know why.
22 It's not like we're going to take
23 over the world tomorrow.

24 And unfortunately, there
25 hasn't been -- it's not that there

1 hasn't been a desire politically to
2 help minority firms. It's that you
3 just don't know how. You're told
4 that we have to go work with the
5 Gilbanes and work with the
6 Driscolls. I worked with Gilbane.
7 I helped design Philly Live. Guess
8 what minority they asked me for?
9 Nothing because it was behind
10 schedule and they knew that I did
11 good work at that type of work.

12 Stan -- they were behind
13 schedule on a project at the School
14 District and they were also
15 overbudget. Who to call? The guy
16 that understands all the boilers.
17 They'll call him for that. But
18 when it comes to sustainable work
19 over a period of time, minority
20 firms aren't getting that, and
21 that's why they will continue to
22 fail.

23 CHAIR NEWSOME: Well, you
24 make a valid point when you say
25 that the will is there politically.

1 We do have the will to help
2 minority businesses. And your
3 point taken is the how, how do we
4 do that. So I'm asking you how?
5 You said you left Philadelphia and
6 went to D.C. and Florida and had
7 success. What's the difference
8 between Philadelphia and D.C.?
9 What were the differences you found
10 that made it successful in D.C.
11 versus Philadelphia?

12 MR. BROWN: Well, D.C.
13 they're willing to partner with you
14 in a meaningful partnership, right,
15 in a partnership that's not with
16 51/49 on paper. You sit down at
17 the table when projects are being
18 put together, right. Great
19 example, Hilco did a project --
20 since we're talking Hilco -- and
21 they had an outreach event at the
22 Navy Yard.

23 And they said, here are all
24 our contractors, right, that you
25 guys can work with, one of them

1 being McCloskey. McCloskey is a
2 design build engineering firm. We
3 used to do design services for
4 McCloskey because they didn't have
5 design services, right. But they
6 got brought to the table early on.
7 Instead of bringing a McCloskey to
8 the table early on, why don't you
9 bring Stan in early on and let him
10 start putting the projects
11 together. That's the
12 difference-maker, right.

13 When you get brought in
14 early and you're not fighting for
15 scraps at the tail end of the
16 project and you have a seat at the
17 table when the project is being put
18 together, that is how you change
19 this. And you know what starts to
20 happen? Majority firms go, oh, my
21 God, he's not the militant Black
22 dude with no money, disadvantaged
23 business that we don't want to work
24 with that we thought he was. He's
25 actually an intelligent man that

1 has a lot of experience with his
2 type of work. You got to get a
3 seat early at the table.

4 So Florida, Puerto Rico,
5 whereas Puerto Rico Emergency
6 Response, Florida Emergency
7 Response, Aid-A worked out in D.C.,
8 the companies, they work to work
9 with you, they want to meet you,
10 they want to see what your ideas
11 are versus the companies that say,
12 listen, let us take your company,
13 we'll give you \$300,000, go sit in
14 the corner.

15 MS. HAIRSTON: Thank you
16 for sharing that with us. We
17 recognize that that is an issue,
18 but what we can tell you is this
19 Committee is here to make sure that
20 we're advocating for your voice.
21 We're making sure that we're
22 pushing change.

23 And I will tell you with
24 the Hilco project when I came on,
25 the project had already started,

1 and we have the same conversation,
2 well, who did you send out the bids
3 to, who are you talking to. And
4 they said a list of folks. And
5 there was some pushback. And we
6 said, why aren't you inviting a
7 wider net of folks, a more diverse
8 group to be in that invitation.
9 And then Talson and Maven were
10 brought on. They were not the
11 initial folks that were on that
12 project. But after the pushback
13 and the advocacy, then some more
14 folks were brought on.

15 So I'm not saying it's
16 perfect. It's definitely not
17 perfect. But what we will continue
18 to do is to listen to you tell us
19 how we need to advocate for you so
20 we are pushing the conversation to
21 make it better and we are
22 highlighting the success stories,
23 because you will not hear the
24 African American Chamber of
25 Commerce talk about what our

1 businesses cannot do. We talk
2 about what our businesses can do.
3 And the more that you're pushing us
4 and you're giving us the
5 information, the more we can push
6 your voice out. So we will be a
7 partner in this. But it's this
8 type of venue that we need you to
9 come and tell us what the issues
10 are so we can continue to advocate
11 for you.

12 MR. WILEY: I think one of
13 the things when they come in with
14 the presentations and their ideas
15 and all that good stuff, the City
16 loses a lot of money because if you
17 look at their payrolls and where
18 they're paying, it's not coming
19 here. If you look at their staff,
20 who do they employ? Where are
21 their employees coming from? Are
22 they from Philadelphia? Are they
23 from communities that are Black and
24 Brown that need the opportunity?

25 We say we want to give

1 encouragement and opportunity and
2 it just doesn't seem to happen.
3 For me, and I always say this joke
4 to Mike all the time, the only part
5 that we play in construction is
6 holding the stop, slow and go sign.
7 And every time you pass the
8 construction, that's all you see
9 we're doing. And then when you
10 look at the construction, you don't
11 see diversity. And it's sad. And
12 then we wonder why things are
13 happening and why people don't have
14 inspiration to do better and
15 opportunity to feed their families
16 at an equitable rate, because the
17 union rate is pretty good. It's
18 pretty good, and we're not there.
19 And we should be upset about this,
20 you know.

21 But we're just taking the
22 rhetoric of, oh, we can't find a
23 company, they're too small,
24 capacity, this and that. That's
25 all we know. Tell me something

1 good you heard about a minority
2 company.

3 MS. HAIRSTON: Say that
4 again please.

5 MR. WILEY: Tell me
6 something good that you heard from
7 a Black and Brown minority company.

8 MS. HAIRSTON: I can tell
9 you something all day that I've
10 heard from Black and Brown minority
11 companies. I'll start with Girl
12 Concrete who did get the project,
13 not only at Hilco but she's gotten
14 several other projects since then
15 and she was invited to be on the
16 project in Maryland from some other
17 work that she's done here.

18 I talk to Pride Enterprises
19 who's constantly telling me about
20 the work that they are doing. I
21 don't want to --

22 MR. WILEY: How many
23 employees does Pride have? These
24 are questions that we can ask.
25 We're not talking about putting two

1 managers in a hat and construction

2 with eyeglasses walking around.

3 How many employees does Pride

4 employ?

5 MS. HAIRSTON: So --

6 MR. WILEY: Is the union

7 pay and labor going through Pride

8 Construction?

9 MS. HAIRSTON: So this

10 is --

11 MR. WILEY: See, this is

12 the thing we keep hearing and

13 why --

14 MS. HAIRSTON: But can you

15 give me a chance to respond, sir?

16 MR. WILEY: Why would a

17 first tier company want to create a

18 second tier company? It's like --

19 MS. HAIRSTON: I can answer

20 that, but can you give me an

21 opportunity? I'm answering the

22 question that you asked me. And

23 these are not stories that I am

24 going to pull from my members.

25 These are the stories that they're

1 telling me. So I can't justify if
2 they --

3 MR. WILEY: You have to do
4 the research. We can't just --
5 when somebody tells me something,
6 you can tell me anything, but
7 numbers don't lie.

8 MS. HAIRSTON: But you
9 asked me --

10 MR. WILEY: Let's pull
11 payrolls. Tell me anything. It's
12 just like if somebody said you were
13 a bad person, I don't even know
14 you. I wouldn't listen to that.
15 But I would say I have to find out
16 for myself. So it's the same thing
17 we have to do when we say these
18 companies are saying, oh, yeah,
19 they're a second tier this, a
20 second tier that.

21 Okay. Well how many
22 employees? Are they direct with
23 the union-paying payrolls? Are
24 they signatory to the union? Well,
25 what are they really doing?

1 MS. HAIRSTON: And those
2 are valid questions. But your
3 question to me was do I have
4 stories based on what they are
5 telling me. And these stories are
6 coming directly from them as
7 success stories. So that is why I
8 am --

9 MR. WILEY: Who is them?

10 MS. HAIRSTON: The
11 companies that you asked me for and
12 I started naming. And so, I'm just
13 answering that question. I'm not
14 devaluing what you're saying
15 because what you're saying is
16 valid. But for the question that
17 you asked me, it was coming
18 firsthand from my members. But I'm
19 not saying that everything is
20 perfect. I'm just saying that
21 folks do have success stories, that
22 they feel is success stories, but
23 it may not be perceived that way by
24 you.

25 MR. WILEY: For us we're

1 tired and exhausted --

2 CHAIR NEWSOME: I can say
3 two things can be true at the same
4 time. Some minority companies can
5 tell us good stories and that we
6 need to do better. And that's what
7 I want to focus on now, we need to
8 do better. When I say we, I'm
9 talking about the City of
10 Philadelphia.

11 So what we're going to do
12 here is we're going to pull back,
13 get a rein on our emotions because
14 this is a very emotional topic.
15 And I can understand that. I've
16 been a small business before. So
17 now I'm going to ask you, will you
18 be willing to work with us to fix
19 this thing?

20 I want to know what D.C. is
21 doing, I want to know what
22 Florida's doing so that
23 Philadelphia can do the same thing
24 for the people here in
25 Philadelphia, because

1 Philadelphians deserve the same
2 type of treatment that you're
3 getting in D.C. and Florida to help
4 you be successful. Can you agree
5 to help us with this?

6 MR. BROWN: So we have
7 helped for 10, 12, 14 years. I've
8 written diversity plans for almost
9 every single governor --

10 CHAIR NEWSOME: Well, I
11 wasn't in this seat then so.

12 MR. BROWN: No, I get it.
13 I get it. And we will help, but
14 you got to understand when you hear
15 the same thing over and over again,
16 you get to the point where, look,
17 I'm a business owner, right, and
18 I'm an entrepreneur and I go where
19 the money is easy to be made,
20 right. I've done enough helping in
21 my career.

22 I mean, I teach classes at
23 PIDC for diverse businesses. I do
24 everything under the sun, but at
25 the same time I don't have time for

1 it. I will begin by this, and Stan
2 approached it, and to take the
3 emotions out of it, and I know
4 Craig and Craig used to do wonders
5 back in the day so I'm never going
6 to have anything bad to say about
7 Craig, Pride Enterprise.

8 But I will say this though,
9 Stan makes another good point, how
10 you measure success in diverse
11 businesses, right. It's not
12 revenue. If you measure success
13 from revenue and contracts, that is
14 not the way to measure success,
15 right. When I was doing emergency
16 response down in Florida, a large
17 company out of Texas said to me,
18 Mike, you're measured by how many
19 people you put to work, right. And
20 that is the truth, right. It's
21 about as close a measure of success
22 as you can get. Because if you
23 have the money to put people to
24 work and you're building equity in
25 your business, right, then you're

1 successful.

2 OEO, and I used to sit on
3 OEO's Advisory Board,
4 unfortunately -- and, look, you got
5 to take baby steps. First, you got
6 to get contracts to generate
7 anything else. But I asked the
8 question maybe about eight years
9 ago, and I said who are the top
10 three minority firms in each trade,
11 and no one could answer that, and
12 that's your job.

13 Your job is not to count
14 numbers and report them to the
15 Mayor's office alone. If you are
16 reporting them to the Mayor's
17 office, it's within --

18 CHAIR NEWSOME: No, that is
19 part of my job.

20 MR. BROWN: No, but I'm
21 just saying it's with a goal,
22 right. It's not just to say, oh,
23 look, if we move this over here and
24 we take these firms out of the
25 potential pool, we can increase the

1 diversity spend to 45 percent.

2 That's not what we're trying to do
3 here, right.

4 CHAIR NEWSOME: That's
5 right. I agree 100 percent.

6 MR. BROWN: Our argument is
7 like, hey, give us 3 percent, but
8 make it count, right.

9 MR. WILEY: Yeah.

10 MR. BROWN: I want to see
11 Craig grow. If Craig wants to do
12 construction management and he
13 wants to grow his business, by all
14 means, knock it out of the park.
15 But also, let's grow the companies
16 that are labor companies that are
17 going to generate economic wealth
18 to the City through taxable
19 revenue, right.

20 MR. WILEY:
21 Self-performing, boots-on-the-
22 ground.

23 MR. BROWN: This is the
24 value proposition that we hold.
25 When you're sitting there and

1 you're wondering, oh, my God --
2 what was said -- 45 percent of
3 Philadelphia's revenue comes from
4 wage taxes and blah, blah, blah.
5 Could you imagine how much if we
6 had more businesses in Philadelphia
7 and more union people in
8 Philadelphia that weren't coming
9 from New Jersey?

10 And when it comes to the
11 businesses in the Chamber, right,
12 and part of the reason why I don't
13 sit on the Board of the Chamber, at
14 least I didn't in the past, is
15 because it's -- and this is no shot
16 at the Chamber either, is that we
17 have to change the way we operate.
18 We can't do things as usual.

19 We can't do this, okay,
20 everybody rush to get certified,
21 let's see how money companies we
22 can count, right. Let's start
23 coming up with new metrics on how
24 we gauge the success on minority
25 firms. His company is real easy.

1 He's got 10 employees now. Let's
2 see if we can get him to 20 by the
3 end of the year, right.

4 CHAIR NEWSOME: Absolutely.

5 MS. HAIRSTON: The great
6 thing is the Chamber doesn't
7 operate like that anymore, so we
8 are tracking with what you're
9 saying.

10 MR. BROWN: So 14 years, my
11 whole experience is 24 years,
12 change my thinking, right. That's
13 all we're asking for, change our
14 thinking. Because as far as I'm
15 concerned, we're completely
16 demoralized with Philadelphia.

17 And I will say if it wasn't
18 Mayor Cherelle Parker I wouldn't
19 even be sitting here today, right.
20 There was a contract at the School
21 District of Philadelphia. They
22 kicked us off the contract for
23 being a minority firm, \$23 million.
24 Get that minority -- we don't need
25 it, it doesn't matter, go bring in

1 a majority firm. They brought us
2 back in.

3 The day we got back in, we
4 were nine months behind schedule
5 and a cure notice was given to us.
6 And if it wasn't for people like
7 Eric Watkins at the School
8 District, Reggie McNeil, Oz Hill
9 that actually went to bat, we would
10 have been another story. The
11 narrative that they create around
12 minority firms is ridiculous. We
13 ended up finishing the project in
14 record time and it still wasn't
15 fast enough, right.

16 The issue is that we have
17 to just change. And back to
18 Cherelle Parker, when she was
19 Councilwoman she actually reviewed
20 the documentation and called a
21 meeting over there, and then they
22 couldn't answer, right. Why is
23 this person -- in his case it's the
24 same thing. They actually said
25 that he's a bad contractor. And

1 when they asked why, his
2 competitors say so, his
3 competitors.

4 I mean, so will we help?
5 We all help. And if you ever ask
6 about me, you will find out that I
7 help behind the scenes as much as I
8 possibly can. And I'm here now to
9 speak on Stan's behalf because he
10 needs help, and all we're asking
11 for is just a level playing field
12 and that it's not -- you know what
13 I do at outreach events, I use them
14 as a way to go steal sodas. So I
15 get 50 sodas to take to the kids in
16 the community when I get a chance
17 because no work ever comes out of
18 that. The teams have already been
19 decided.

20 But if the City and as
21 the -- notice I said if, but as the
22 City starts to really promote the
23 use of minority firms -- the large
24 firms are smart, right. The
25 majority firms, they're always

1 going to look for a competitive
2 advantage. And if it's like, hey,
3 look, Stan's business is going to
4 employ people which makes it better
5 for work there and is going to help
6 us have a competitive advantage,
7 then they're going to use him.

8 Best value RFPs where
9 minority scoring really matters,
10 they will use him. Shutting down
11 this passthrough stuff, that's not
12 good for anybody, right, like you
13 should as the Chamber and the same
14 thing for the National Minority
15 Council or whatever that does the
16 certifications, if they actually
17 took a look to make sure that they
18 weren't certifying or approving or
19 getting behind passthrough entities
20 that are good for no one, no one.

21 I mean, it's just changing
22 the paradigm. Look for growth.
23 Look for job creation. Look for
24 equity generation.

25 MR. WILEY: Absolutely.

1 CHAIR NEWSOME: I thank you
2 very much. This is what we're here
3 for. We're here to hear the truth,
4 not anything sugar-coated but to
5 hear the truth and see if we can
6 turn this ship around to the right
7 direction. So I appreciate your
8 testimony.

9 Mr. DeWitt, do you --

10 MR. WILEY: And like you
11 said --

12 CHAIR NEWSOME: I'm sorry.
13 Mr. Wiley.

14 MR. WILEY: And when we
15 have a presentation that was just
16 presented to us, it's just not the
17 beginning stage we have to look at.
18 We have to look at the tail end and
19 see if they complied with
20 everything they said they were
21 going to do too. And then we have
22 to have accountability for when
23 they don't. Because if not,
24 they're going to do the same thing
25 over and over. And that's what we

1 just keep seeing, a continuum of
2 what they do over and over and
3 over.

4 And If we accept everything
5 they say, then it's not going to be
6 any progress. I want to see the
7 facts, you know. If you're saying
8 you're a second tier or you're
9 saying you're a joint venture,
10 okay, let's see the facts. We see
11 applications where people say, to
12 be determined, and get the big
13 contract. I'm like, to be
14 determined? I couldn't write that
15 on there.

16 So it's like we really have
17 to -- diversity is growth for
18 everybody and that's what we're
19 here for. And if that doesn't
20 happen, then none of us is going to
21 be here. So we're putting our
22 names and our faces out here and
23 saying this is what we're about.
24 So when you say we're here to help,
25 we're here now. But we're

1 exhausted and we're tired. We
2 don't want to continue to keep
3 talking. We're not doing that.
4 And I'm not going to accept no for
5 something we know we're qualified
6 for.

7 Because I tell you this, we
8 were established in 2012 and nobody
9 here in this room heard anything
10 bad about DeWitt. So that means if
11 they could have got rid of us a
12 long time ago because of our bad
13 work, I wouldn't be sitting here
14 now. So if you hear anything down
15 the future because I was on this
16 panel today, well, that's a lie.
17 So what we need to do is come
18 together and make sure that we grow
19 together. And, you know, that's
20 what diversity is about.

21 CHAIR NEWSOME: Thank you.
22 I appreciate it.

23 MR. WILEY: And we thank
24 you so much for giving us this
25 opportunity to speak. And sorry

1 for changing the agenda. I just
2 didn't know.

3 CHAIR NEWSOME: No, no, no.
4 Like I said, there was no agenda.
5 You were here to talk, speak your
6 truth and we appreciate to hear
7 what you had to say and your truth.

8 Anybody have any questions?
9 (No response.)

10 MS. HAIRSTON: No. Thank
11 you.

12 CHAIR NEWSOME: Thank you
13 very much and we will be in touch.
14 And I'm serious, we need to work
15 with you to find out how we can be
16 better.

17 MR. WILEY: Absolutely.

18 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

19 CHAIR NEWSOME: I would
20 like to thank all of our speakers.
21 And to reiterate, this Committee
22 continues to look for innovative
23 ways to increase MBE/WBE
24 participation on City contracts.
25 In addition, I want to invite all

1 to utilize the workshops and
2 information sessions that the
3 Office of Economic Opportunity
4 provides every third and fourth
5 Wednesday of the month at 1:00 to
6 3:00 p.m.

7 The next Doing Business in
8 the City Workshop will be the
9 second Wednesday. It will be June
10 12th because June 19th is
11 Juneteenth and the City offices are
12 closed, and then the OEO Doing
13 Business Development Series is on
14 June 26th. These workshops are
15 designed to share information that
16 is relevant and useful to the
17 development of the MBE/WBE/DSBE
18 firms seeking to do business with
19 the City of Philadelphia.

20 And it's not too early to
21 mention MED Week, which is the
22 first full week of October. This
23 year's dates are Monday, October
24 7th through Friday, October 11th.
25 This year is the 40th anniversary

1 of MED Week here in Philadelphia
2 and we're planning to do something
3 special, so we encourage everybody
4 to attend.

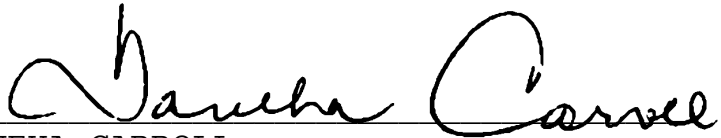
5 As always, I remain
6 grateful for the opportunity to
7 lead this charge. If there's no
8 further questions, comments or
9 suggestions, this meeting is
10 adjourned. Thank you for your
11 attendance and see you in
12 September, if not sooner.

13 (Economic Opportunity
14 Review Committee concluded at
15 11:40 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Taneha Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Taneha" and the last name "Carroll" clearly distinguishable.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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<hr/>	10-	191	33:17	<hr/>
\$	8:2 25:17	20:24	300,000	7
\$1	10-year	28:4,7	55:16	727,000-
55:22	25:2	<hr/>	62:22 72:6	square-foot
56:11	100	2	33	13:18
59:18	15:17	2	2:19 3:2,	750,000
\$2	34:10	7:25 42:23	23	72:1
21:25	39:24 97:5	20	3500	<hr/>
69:21	10:00	99:2	12:22	8
73:16	5:2,12	20,000	360	8
\$23	12	8:15	74:1	20:17
74:10	94:7	20-year	<hr/>	84
99:23	1300	8:17	4	24:16
\$3	7:24	200,000	4	<hr/>
59:4	14	78:17	78:11	9
\$300,000	77:16 94:7	2012	40	9
55:21	99:10	4:2 61:23	2:9	5:12
62:16 72:7	15	2019	420	9.5
85:13	50:14	8:7	54:21	78:12
\$40,000	77:15	2020	45	<hr/>
69:13	80:8,9	8:8	97:1 98:2	A
<hr/>	15-	2024	47	a.m.
-	8:16	2:3 5:12	2:19 3:3,	5:2,12
-1	15-year	215-683-	19	ability
68:17	8:2 25:17	2057	<hr/>	18:7,9
<hr/>	150,000	5:13	5	absence
1	78:17	24	5	3:23
1	150-year-	99:11	20:17 80:7	Absolutely
42:23	old	26th	50	26:17
69:25 80:6	7:23	12:3 13:9,	17:23,25	30:23 99:4
1,000	17-1600	10,12,21	20:13,21,	102:25
8:12	4:7	<hr/>	25 101:15	accept
10	18	3	51/49	70:17
2:3 42:24	13:7	3	83:16	access
50:14,21	19	76:4 78:10	<hr/>	12:23
77:15,25	54:20	97:7	6	29:20
80:8 94:7	19,000	30	64	31:16
99:1	8:14	23:17	2:9	

accidents 68:13,21	advance 53:12 57:24	aiming 38:19	32:24	area 28:5
accord 47:14	advantage 102:2,6	Air-conditioning/mechanical 6:17	applicable 37:12	arena 67:3
accountable 35:5	Advisory 96:3	allowing 52:16	applications 26:24	argument 97:6
accurate 39:25	advocacy 86:13	amend 41:9	applied 37:2	ariana.d.forde@phila.gov 5:14
achieve 39:12	advocate 18:15 19:6 80:4 86:19 87:10	America 79:5	appreciated 11:9	Asian 36:5
acknowledge 57:20	advocating 85:20	American 2:16 3:1,8 30:1 36:4 44:13 86:24	apprentice 63:22	aspirations 27:12
acre 7:24	Affairs 6:10 7:4	amount 17:17 71:21	apprenticeship 29:14,19 63:18,19	Association 23:13
activities 11:11,15 24:23 27:24 33:25 35:8	AFL-CIO 30:5	ample 51:15	approach 21:22	assumed 8:4,7
activity 28:9 32:19	African 2:16 3:1,8 36:4 44:13 86:24	annual 26:22	approached 6:24 52:7 95:2	Atlantic 75:11 79:8
add 33:24 40:9,17	AFSCME 3:18 30:1	annually 27:2	approving 102:18	attended 34:11
addition 17:16	age 24:22 29:2	answering 90:21 92:13	April 3:20 27:7	attendee 52:24
additional 19:13 42:20	agenda 53:13 56:22 60:25 61:6,18	anymore 70:11 80:17 99:7	architects 36:16	attention 31:18
address 5:18	agree 47:25 66:24 94:4 97:5	apologize 53:12 57:24 60:22	architectural 37:14 40:4 49:15	audience 48:23
adequate 35:7	Aid-a 85:7	appears	ARCO 13:22	auditing 38:16
adoption 4:19				authority 75:12 79:13,15
				availability 40:3
				awarded 27:2 78:15

aware 20:13	26:22 35:17	biggest 33:14	72:1 73:7	13 86:10, 14 100:1
<hr/>	bat 100:9	billed 64:25	boost 36:18	Brown 54:2 56:9
B				57:7 62:1
baby 96:5	beautiful 52:25 53:7	bit 7:10 9:11	boots-on- the- 97:21	64:1 65:22
back 17:13 19:25 33:8 42:9 43:20 44:10 45:20 64:23 71:9 75:14 93:12 95:5 100:2,3,17	Beaver 74:10	21:10 28:5 35:19 36:9,20 75:5	born 63:10 66:13	71:25 73:23 74:1,10 78:13 79:3
	begin 76:8 95:1		box 80:22 81:14	83:12 87:24 89:7,10
	beginning 8:24 30:25	Black 54:2 56:8 57:7 61:25 64:1 65:22 70:16	Boyer 31:13	94:6,12 96:20
	begun 12:16	71:25 79:3 84:21 87:23 89:7,10	breadth 50:12	97:6,10,23 99:10
background 7:10	behalf 74:5 81:15 101:9		breaking 32:3	bruises 68:23
backlog 63:24	Bellwether 6:14 7:8 27:13 34:6	blah 98:4	briefly 44:17	BSI 12:16 13:12
bad 65:24 91:13 95:6 100:25	benefiting 9:21	Blake 9:1,24 10:3	Bright's 21:7	build 9:13 16:7, 15 23:10 25:19 30:8 47:4 48:6, 7 49:11 51:6 73:3 74:14 80:1 84:2
balancing 11:25	Bethune 74:9	board 17:10 46:13 76:5 96:3 98:13	bring 14:14 23:1 25:21 55:12 66:19 84:9 99:25	
bar 62:15 69:18	bid 17:4 31:20 69:4 76:17	boards 76:8	bringing 42:19 84:7	
barrier 62:24	bids 86:2	body 47:16	broached 44:16	build-the- suite 50:25
barriers 61:15 67:6	big 32:13,25 49:24 54:24 65:23 66:12 72:21	boiler 75:17	broadly 37:4	building 12:4 13:17,24 21:18 22:18,20 27:4 29:21
based 31:21 66:21 92:4		boilers 82:16	broke 9:2	
basis 5:3 24:3, 14,24	bigger 78:9	bonding 68:2 71:12,22	brought 58:8 84:6,	

30:6 31:2, 14 45:18 49:12 50:23,24 63:18 73:1 95:24 buildings 12:24 14:5,23 50:20 Builds 22:14,15 45:13 47:21 built 12:6 14:6 business 4:16 6:15, 19 8:19,20 25:14 34:5 53:17 54:15 55:25 75:9 84:23 93:16 94:17 95:25 97:13 102:3 businesses 9:14 27:22 30:18 44:16 51:19 57:7 64:15,16 67:2 83:2 87:1,2 94:23 95:11 98:6,11	buy-out 49:7 C calculation 62:19 call 5:13 65:14 77:19 82:15,17 callback 5:16 called 2:5 24:10 34:5 100:20 calling 4:19 campus 8:19,21 10:5,7 14:17 50:23 campuses 11:2 capable 39:5,16 capacity 9:13 16:8, 16 18:10 22:19 25:20 45:18 47:5 48:7 65:1 73:1 88:24 capital 57:13 71:6,14 73:14	74:21 77:3,4,5,9 car 68:13,21 career 24:10 25:8,21 27:11 94:21 career- awareness 24:23 CART 23:3,6 case 15:20 66:8 70:5 100:23 catch 40:16 catchment 28:4 categories 37:22 CCL 24:12 CCP 25:2 26:12,17, 22 27:14 cementing 32:4 Center 23:22 51:5 CEO 3:7,13 15:6 24:3 27:7	CEOS 2:15 certificati on 42:13 81:2 certificati ons 80:16 102:16 certified 42:14,16 71:10 80:17,19, 24 98:20 certifying 102:18 chain 36:8 46:9 47:6 Chair 2:2,14 3:21 6:3 26:4 27:20 35:13 48:17 51:12 52:5 58:6 61:5 64:12 66:24 68:4,19,25 69:5,9 71:3,20 82:23 93:2 94:10 96:18 97:4 99:4 chairs 6:23 challenged 36:7	challenging 39:14 Chamber 3:8,14 23:9 35:24 37:9 44:14 86:24 98:11,13, 16 99:6 102:13 chambers 2:17 3:2 35:18 36:5 39:11 44:2 52:17 Chambers' 16:23 chance 90:15 101:16 change 21:23 39:25 78:20 84:18 85:22 98:17 99:12,13 100:17 changed 56:22 60:25 changing 56:21 57:17 102:21 Channel 2:9 Chapter
---	---	--	--	--

4:7	clear	commitments	company	concerned
chapters	40:18	4:23	6:18 54:4	77:4 99:15
53:16	close	committed	55:16	concrete
charge	25:12	50:16 76:1	58:18	11:17
32:17	95:21	Committee	61:25 62:1	45:1,3
check	code	2:5,15 4:3	63:21 66:2	46:19,23,
80:22	20:24	85:19	70:12,14	24 89:12
81:14	collaborate	communicati	71:25 72:7	concurrentl
Cherelle	45:17	ng	73:5,9,12,	y
99:18	collaborate	55:20	20 74:23	10:13 13:2
100:18	d	communities	75:23,24	confidently
chunk	62:25	57:8,9,10	76:14,24	73:22
54:24	colleague	60:4	77:16	conjunction
city	9:1,24	63:13,15	79:13	69:1
2:10,22	collecting	66:19,20	80:2,21	connect
4:2,11,16,	42:3	87:23	81:17	35:10,11
18,24 6:20	College	community	85:12	53:2
8:20 11:3	62:9	21:25 22:3	88:23	connected
14:15	color	28:9 32:17	89:2,7	34:3
17:18 33:1	21:2 81:4	36:2 40:7	90:17,18	connecting
44:2 51:5	combination	62:9 79:2	95:17	48:13
65:23	19:5	101:16	98:25	connections
66:12	combine	Comp	competitive	47:23
74:18	32:18	68:1,11	102:1,6	Connective
75:11 79:9	comfortable	companies	competitive	24:10
80:25	41:17	56:8,9	18:6	conscious
87:15 93:9	Commerce	58:4 59:9,	competitor	32:6
97:18	2:13,17,	14,16 61:3	75:25	consistent
101:20,22	21,24 3:2,	64:1 65:15	competitors	69:14
City's	9,15 35:18	70:22	101:2,3	74:20
8:1 16:25	44:14	73:2,3	complete	constantly
civil	86:25	76:13	14:21	89:19
10:22	Commerce's	79:11 80:1	completely	constructed
classes	23:9	81:17	99:15	13:22
94:22	commitment	85:8,11	completion	constructio
Clayco	21:11	89:11	11:10	n
12:6	24:8,11	91:18	12:10	8:16 9:2
clean	25:2	92:11 93:4	complex	12:5,8,16
10:15 81:9		97:15,16	7:21	
		98:21		

13:13	69:1 77:5	conversatio	counting	cut
14:2,25	78:10	n	59:3	11:25
19:22	80:6,9,11	35:21	County	55:14
20:15,19	99:20,22	48:11	30:3	cuts
21:20	contracting	57:25 61:9	couple	68:22
22:20,22	16:3 31:20	64:13	26:7 74:4	
23:14 25:9	34:24	86:1,20	cover	D
34:25 36:6	contractor	corner	77:8	D.C.
38:24 49:1	18:2,16,23	85:14	crafted	3:2 75:10
50:8,18	19:1 28:21	Corporate	33:2	83:6,8,10,
53:8	33:4 34:21	6:10 7:4	Craig	12 85:7
54:19,24	41:2	correct	95:4,7	93:20 94:3
56:5 57:5	67:16,19,	69:8 70:20	97:11	daily
58:3 60:11	20 78:8	71:23	create	24:3
62:13 78:7	100:25	correctly	8:15,19	data
88:5,8,10	contractors	30:25	19:10	42:2
90:1,8	4:23	cost	90:17	date
97:12	16:10,21	55:22,25	100:11	11:22
constructio	17:3,7	58:20,22	creates	21:24
n-focused	19:6,11	59:2	51:8	24:17
21:15	20:2	Council	creation	27:16
consultant	28:10,11	2:19 3:19,	102:23	day
15:13,22	29:16,17	23 4:2,18	crier	51:25 89:9
consultants	33:18 35:4	32:21 34:7	15:23	95:5 100:3
10:19	42:4,25	102:15	criteria	deal
36:16	43:15	Council's	26:25	58:3 77:2
continue	46:1,6	2:10	67:22	debt
82:21	48:15,21	Councilwoma	critical	77:7
86:17	77:21	n	74:11	decade
87:10	78:16	100:19	crucial	9:15
continuity	83:24	count	15:9	December
17:12	contracts	10:18	cultural	5:4
continuousl	4:25 16:14	96:13 97:8	52:23	decided
y	20:15,17,	98:22	cure	101:19
57:12	20 37:6	counted	100:5	decision
contract	48:20 62:8	15:19 37:2	current	41:10
15:11 18:8	67:5 74:22	counties	38:7	decommissio
37:5 45:5	77:9 95:13	28:6		ning
48:5 65:2,	96:6			
4 66:6				

9:5 10:11	42:8	54:13 55:6	4:10 54:18	early
Delaware	devaluing	57:18	56:5 78:25	11:6 14:25
3:10	92:14	directly	79:1,6,23	37:24 44:2
delivered	develop	29:5 92:6	88:11 94:8	77:6 84:6,
74:13	38:2 50:11	Director	97:1	8,9,14
democratize	developed	2:13,21	document	85:3
47:9,17	31:1	disadvantag	32:15	earth
demolition	developer	ed	documentati	11:21
9:6 10:12	41:24	84:22	on	12:25
11:11,14,	developer's	discussion	100:20	14:18
17,18	17:1	14:9	documenting	79:10
demoralized	developers	displays	32:8,19	earthwork
99:16	47:1	55:4	dollar	11:15
Department	development	distinction	73:21	easier
2:24 13:5	4:14 6:11	36:24	doors	76:3
Deputy	10:4,20	district	66:16	easily
2:13,21	17:17	2:18,19	Driscoll	64:10
52:15	21:17 22:2	3:18,23	46:3	easy
describe	23:19 45:6	6:14 7:8	Driscolls	94:19
9:1 71:4	53:16	8:20 24:9,	82:6	98:25
deserve	Dewitt	15,25 25:1	drive	economic
94:1	6:16 53:21	27:13 34:6	63:14	2:4,12,23
design	55:21	36:12	driven	4:8 9:17
36:13	61:13,22	58:25 62:7	12:2	37:16
37:14 40:5	64:9	75:18 78:9	drown	97:17
74:14 82:7	died	82:14	12:3	ecosystem
84:2,3,5	81:18	99:21	DSBE	44:23
Design/	difference	100:8	4:15	educate
build	40:1 64:6	diverse	dude	34:1
13:23	83:7	21:19	84:22	effectivene
designated	difference-	22:21	duplicating	ss
26:20	maker	29:17	17:9	4:6 53:15
designing	84:12	35:18 44:1		effort
14:23	differences	45:10	E	30:11 38:4
desire	60:20 83:9	52:22	earlier	electrical
82:1	direct	63:21 86:7	9:3 32:10	49:9 77:25
detail	91:22	94:23	34:4 48:1	electrician
9:11 26:13	direction	95:10		s
		diversity		31:24

electronic 34:17	ended 100:13	50:1	evaluation 38:16	excuses 65:16
else's 17:22	ends 30:21	entity 50:10	event 16:24,25	exercise 38:6
email 5:14,17	energy 55:5	entrepreneu r 94:18	17:2 34:6, 11 52:23 83:21	exhausted 93:1
emergency 79:19 85:5,6 95:15	enforcement 4:7	environment al 37:15	events 24:25 35:8 54:6	exist 39:16 41:6 42:11
emotional 93:14	engaged 8:2 10:18 16:2 23:22	envisioning 11:1	76:11,22, 23 77:12 78:2 101:13	existed 9:6
emotions 93:13 95:3	engagement 15:12,21 27:4,17 32:18	EOP 7:7 9:9 20:12 26:2 35:5 37:3, 12,20 38:13	Everybody's 65:24	expand 28:21
employ 8:14 37:5 87:20 90:4 102:4	engaging 37:21	EORC 2:11,25 4:1	evolve 21:23	expensive 69:12
employed 8:12 24:16	engineering 37:13 39:2 40:5 49:15 84:2	equal 78:15	evolves 21:22	experience 67:10 69:21 85:1 99:11
employees 30:3 68:12 87:21 89:23 90:3 91:22 99:1	engineers 36:17	equitable 88:16	ex-officio 2:14	experiences 6:19
employment 23:23 24:1	ensure 26:25 27:24 45:16 47:10	equity 95:24 102:24	exaggeratin g 33:19	experiencin g 29:9
EMR 67:25 68:8	Enterprise 95:7	Eric 100:7	examples 23:2	explosion 8:6
encourageme nt 88:1	Enterprises 89:18	establish 54:14 56:4	exceed 72:1	expose 25:7
end 12:10 13:24 14:21 31:9 75:9 81:3 84:15 99:3	entities 102:19	established 4:1 61:23	excited 9:18 12:11 13:15 14:12 49:6	extensive 11:8 13:11
	entitled 4:8	estate 25:8	exciting 14:15 24:20 48:1	external 33:11
	entitlement s	evaluating 38:7	excluded 49:21	eyeglasses 90:2
				<hr/>
				F
				facade 78:3

faces 15:8	fighting 84:14	16:7,17 20:8 22:20	Floure 6:8	foundation 32:3
facilitate 4:5 16:5	fill 11:25	34:1,14 35:9 36:6	Flouri 6:7	fourth 50:24
fact 17:16 31:19 40:23	final 49:7	37:6,21 39:4,8,15 44:18,20	focus 7:11 10:4 22:11 37:20 93:7	Frankford 80:11
facts 65:18	financially 30:16	45:2 49:19 53:17	focused 7:15 9:4 10:10 21:18 22:4,18 23:15 70:8	free 15:4 55:10
fail 82:22	find 17:3 64:11	75:21 76:20 77:14	folk 10:14 31:25	Friends 62:12
failing 65:25	fine 63:6	81:10 82:2,20 84:20	folks 15:25 18:10 23:1 28:13 30:19 41:13 86:4,7,11, 14 92:21	fringe 71:8
familiar 22:17	finish 12:25	96:10,24 98:25 100:12 101:23,24, 25	footprint 8:1	front 18:3 71:6
fast 100:15	finishing 100:13	firsthand 92:18	form 34:17	full 5:16 61:24 62:2
Federation 30:2	Fioravanti 6:9 7:1,3 20:5 26:16	five- 63:20	forward 25:25 41:9 50:11 51:14,22	funding 71:17
feed 88:15	firm 38:10 47:24 48:7 74:2,14,15 78:6 80:12,14 81:8 84:2 99:23 100:1	five-year 75:1	found 5:7 64:10 83:9	future 9:19,23 24:22 48:10
feel 15:4 56:25 92:22	finishing 47:19 52:2	fix 67:13 93:18	formal 47:11	
feels 50:4	FIOS 2:9	flagrant 4:22	found 5:7 64:10 83:9	G
feet 12:22	firm 38:10 47:24 48:7 74:2,14,15 78:6 80:12,14 81:8 84:2 99:23 100:1	flaws 17:14	formal 47:11	gain 19:13
fell 68:14	firms 4:15 9:20	Florida 75:11 83:6 85:4,6 94:3 95:16 Florida's 93:22	formal 47:11	gap 29:9,11 69:16
field 56:10 60:13,14 101:11			forward 25:25 41:9 50:11 51:14,22	gaps 69:15
			found 5:7 64:10 83:9	gate 41:3
				gather 19:25
				gauge 98:24

GC 35:1	giving 55:21 87:4	goodness 43:3,4	growth 9:17 44:15	14:14 49:18
GCS 41:12 42:20	glad 7:6 15:7 55:18,19	governor 94:9	63:12 102:22	handing 57:5
gearing 12:9	goal 20:21 21:12	graduates 23:6	guarantee 48:4	handle 19:24 59:8
general 17:7 18:16 34:21 35:4,6 41:2	goalpost 63:6	great 15:1 20:6 34:12 57:6 80:5 81:16 83:18 99:5	guaranteed 55:10	happen 41:20 43:9 54:9 84:20 88:2
generally 25:5 72:18	goals 17:24 20:12 21:4 30:16 35:6 38:4,14 39:12	Greater 3:13 23:8	Guess 82:7	happened 58:10 74:13
generate 96:6 97:17	God 43:1 84:21 98:1	grew 70:15 79:14	guests 6:6	happening 88:13
generation 102:24	good 2:2 3:5,11 7:2 10:1 15:5 35:15 47:12 51:25 52:9,11,19 54:8 68:15,16 80:25 82:11 87:15 88:17,18 89:1,6 93:5 95:9 102:12,20	ground 5:21 9:2 79:17 97:22	guy 82:15	hard 30:7 31:8 55:6 64:11 77:19
Germantown 62:12		group 7:6 22:16 23:17 24:22 41:13 46:4 74:1 86:8	guys 28:19,22 41:11 83:25	hardest 60:15 66:13
Gigetts 3:20		Group's 7:11		Harris 3:16,17 29:23 33:22
Gilbane 46:2 82:6		grow 53:4 57:8, 20 59:15 64:16 75:8 97:11,13, 15	H	
Gilbanes 82:5		growing 44:20 59:16	Hairston 3:5,7 43:23 47:7 85:15 89:3,8 90:5,9,14, 19 91:8 92:1,10 99:5	Hartranft 13:9
Girl 45:1 46:23,24 48:4 89:11		grown 61:4	half 81:10	hat 90:1
give 5:20 7:9 18:9 44:25 59:6 62:15 77:5 78:22 85:13 87:25 90:15,20 97:7			hall 28:20	hate 63:12 79:10
			handful	head 31:13
				hear 15:25 42:25

55:17	high	history	huge	35:12
56:24	17:25	3:25	9:7 34:10	44:9,12
61:12,13,	24:17 36:1	hit	hungry	importantly
14,20 64:3	41:22	49:5	81:11	24:7
70:19	67:22	hold	HVAC	impressed
73:24	69:18	35:5 97:24	54:3 66:15	26:8
86:23	80:11	holding	HVAC-	improve
94:14	highlight	35:7 88:6	CERTIFIED	55:2 60:4
heard	44:1	holes	62:1	66:18
26:6 36:11	highlightin	41:5	hypothetica	improvement
44:4 72:24	g	hon	l	s
73:4 77:18	34:21	67:12	73:11	13:4,10,11
89:1,6,10	86:22	honored	<hr/>	include
hearing	hilarious	44:7	I	2:11 54:18
40:21	79:9	honestly	idea	included
67:17	Hilco	38:22	59:13	43:22
90:12	6:11 7:4	hood	ideas	including
Heating	17:5 18:15	79:15	85:10	75:5
6:16	30:25	hope	87:14	inclusion
heavily	40:12,20	14:13,24	identify	4:10,22
13:6	41:1 42:5,	24:21	20:8 41:4	inclusive
held	9 43:13	52:19	46:5	21:19
5:1 34:4	45:20	hopeful	imagine	incoming
helped	74:15	54:7	11:7 26:19	27:9
10:24 63:1	83:19,20	hoping	60:9 79:7	increase
82:7 94:7	85:24	13:25	98:5	29:22
helpful	89:13	14:20	impact	96:25
51:11,13	Hilcos	host	10:25	incredible
helping	72:21	23:17	impacting	21:8 51:3
20:8 41:21	79:24	housing	22:5	incredibly
94:20	Hill	75:12	implementat	12:11
hey	100:8	79:12	ion	independent
55:13	hire	HRP	4:6	18:22
63:15	66:19	7:5,11	importance	individuals
65:18 97:7	Hispanic	34:1	16:10	24:2
102:2	2:17 3:1,	hub	important	industrial
hide	14 23:9	8:23	21:4 28:16	7:16 10:5
78:5	35:24		34:20	50:22
	79:20			

industry	intentional	involved	19:10,17	knew
21:21	29:12 31:4	10:6 59:14	59:20	82:10
22:22	41:20	63:16	joke	knock
58:11	43:10	involving	78:3 80:18	97:14
information	44:19 47:3	44:1	88:3	kudos
4:13 5:16	intentional	issue	Jordan	80:25
17:4 42:3,	ity	18:24 74:6	79:8	
7 43:21,24	47:12	76:21	jump	L
46:10 87:5	intentional	85:17	56:18	labor
infrastruct	ly	100:16	jumping	65:12
ure	25:18	issues	79:25	71:7,8
10:23	interaction	17:14 87:9	June	72:8 90:7
12:13,21	43:15		2:3 5:3	97:16
initial	interest	J	11:21	laborer
86:11	25:20 29:3	Jennifer	justice-	62:19,20
initiatives	interested	3:12 16:8	impacted	laborers
21:17 25:1	5:9 34:15	36:22 39:1	24:2	31:6,10,
innovation	internal	Jersey	justify	11,12
8:23 10:7	38:16	3:10 98:9	91:1	laid
14:17	interns	job		16:17
36:11	24:16	9:16 15:21	K	land
input	intersectio	16:4 18:20	key	10:15 50:1
40:22	n	21:14	22:12	51:7
inspiration	13:8	55:13,14,	kicked	landscape
88:14	introduce	15 60:3	12:15	45:13
installatio	3:3	61:2 67:11	13:16	large
ns	invested	72:5,8	99:22	44:22
12:17	21:24	73:19	kidding	45:5,14
institution	investment	96:12,13,	77:13	95:16
58:22	73:16	19 102:23	kids	101:23
instrumenta	invitation	jobs	101:15	largely
l	86:8	8:16 21:15	kind	7:15
20:7	invited	28:2 48:22	9:5 27:23	larger
insurance	89:15	55:1 62:6,	34:16	19:14
69:11,13	inviting	25 72:12,	36:17	largest
73:18	86:6	20	48:21,22	7:20 74:17
intelligent	invoicing	Johnson's	71:16	Latino
84:25	71:11	34:8	73:14	23:10 36:2
		joint		

LB	listen	49:22 57:2	84:20	manager
27:21	85:12	62:12	100:1	75:17
leads	86:18	66:18	101:25	managers
44:3	91:14	71:15 73:4	make	90:1
learned	listening	76:3 78:24	4:17 9:20	managing
27:11	64:20	85:1 87:16	18:21	45:4
Learning	65:6,17	lots	19:20	March
24:11	literally	18:19	27:16	4:2 5:3
leave	33:16	31:19	28:12	Maryland
78:21	live	love	32:11 34:2	89:16
left	22:7 66:11	27:16	35:6 36:23	mass
70:4 75:7	82:7	63:11	37:8 38:4	11:21
83:5	living	66:13	40:1 43:6,	12:25
legal	25:22 27:1	low	21 45:17	14:18
4:21 49:23	local	62:15	59:12 64:6	massive
legitimatel	27:22,25	lunch	65:22 67:1	8:6
y	34:1 35:9	27:10	75:13	master
50:5	37:6 54:20	Lynette	81:12	10:14,23
length	65:15	45:3	82:24	match
25:16	68:14	Lynette's	85:19	77:4
lenses	located	47:24	86:21 97:8	material
22:3	54:4	Lynn	102:17	11:23
level	logistics	2:20 52:16	makes	materials
36:2 67:24	8:21		59:18 95:9	11:20
73:22	long	M	102:4	matter
101:11	43:8 48:3	made	making	16:24 17:1
lie	54:5	4:23 77:1	29:3,13	32:16 79:1
57:3 91:7	long-term	83:10	41:8 43:10	99:25
life	48:14	94:19	47:22	matters
8:22 14:12	looked	magic	51:15	102:9
46:20 53:3	79:4	72:2,3	56:11	Maven
79:16	loses	maintenance	74:12	15:7,10
limited	87:16	54:19	85:21	32:14
37:18	lot	majority	man	34:9,18
linear	8:9 9:12,	21:16	84:25	45:24 86:9
12:22	16 14:9	34:23	manage	Maven/
list	30:10	75:21	79:12,15	talsen
51:18 86:4	35:25	76:24	management	40:11
	48:19	80:12	19:23	
			97:12	

maxes	mechanical	68:14	84:21	100:12
55:15	49:8 53:9	90:24	million	101:23
Mayor	54:3 56:10	92:18	11:23	102:9,14
99:18	58:17	mentioned	21:25	minority-
Mayor's	60:12,14	9:16 27:21	55:23	owned
96:15,16	61:25 62:3	40:6 44:12	56:12	74:2
MBE	74:15	47:20 49:4	59:4,19	minutes
4:14 9:14	77:22 78:6	66:3	69:21	5:25
15:20	mechanical/	mentoring	73:17,21	missing
20:14 37:5	hvac	19:9	74:11	43:2
MBE/WBE	54:23	met	78:11,12	modified
15:18	mechanicall	10:1	80:6,8,9	42:5
22:19	y	metal	99:23	Monday
38:10	75:20	77:24	mind	5:2,11
MBE/WBES	mechanicals	metrics	18:9,10	52:20
48:20	74:18	98:23	76:16	money
MBES	meet	Mia	mindbogglin	71:21
56:10	18:3 26:25	6:7,21 7:2	g	75:13 77:1
Mccloskey	35:3,16	10:7 40:10	42:21	81:12
84:1,4,7	53:3 85:9	Mia's	minimum	84:22
Mcneil	meeting	49:20	72:17	87:16
100:8	2:3 5:10	mic	minorities	94:19
meal	53:14	5:23	30:10	95:23
55:10	100:21	Michael	51:16 75:4	98:21
meaningful	meetings	79:8	minority	monitoring
24:5 83:14	5:1,6	middle	16:21	15:16
means	Mel	11:12	28:11	37:17
14:7 19:15	20:7,10	12:19	29:16	month
68:10	Mel's	24:19	64:15 67:2	14:1 69:13
80:20	21:6 34:9	middle-aged	74:17	77:8
97:14	Melonease	24:18	76:19	months
measure	15:6	Mike	77:14,21	13:7 14:14
95:10,12,	Melonease's	62:25 74:1	80:14	43:17
14,21	35:2	88:4 95:18	81:8,10	100:4
measured	member	mile-and-a-	82:2,8,19	morning
95:18	39:10	half	83:2 89:1,	2:3 3:6,12
mechanic	members	51:4	7,10 93:4	7:2 10:1
66:15	2:7,11,25	militant	96:10	15:5 35:16
	29:24 37:9		98:24	52:9,12
			99:23,24	

move 6:5 96:23	necessarily 29:20 72:20	nonopportun ity 32:25	52:22 60:5 OEO 5:7 33:3 66:25 96:2	98:17 99:7 operating 40:13
moved 11:22	needed 73:7	nonprofit 22:17	OEO's 76:5 96:3	operator 45:4 75:17
multi- 22:14	needing 31:24	NORESCO 75:16	offer 17:6 30:9	opportuniti es 6:13 16:3 17:5 19:14,15 20:22 21:1,14 23:23 24:13 25:22 27:5,18 28:13 31:5,20 34:23,24 35:25 36:10,15 37:19 41:5 46:12 48:16,19 51:1,9 80:1
multiple 16:13 20:1 76:19	negative 55:24	note 3:22	offered 19:22,24	
Municipal 30:2	neighboring 22:8	notes 44:5	office 2:12,22 19:25 34:8 64:23 71:9 96:15,17	
<hr/>	net 16:5 18:11 86:7	nothing's 70:18	Officer 52:16	
N		notice 100:5 101:21	offsite 13:4	
naming 92:12	network 45:24	number 5:17 16:14 17:6 24:13 26:17 46:16 72:2,3	oil 7:13,23	
narrative 100:11	news 14:15	numbers 32:11 33:10 36:19 57:2 91:7 96:14	onboard 44:18	
National 23:12 102:14	Newsome 2:2,20 3:21 6:3 26:4 27:20 35:13 48:17 51:12 52:5 58:6 61:5 64:12 66:24 68:4,19,25 69:5,9 71:3,20 82:23 93:2 94:10 96:18 97:4 99:4	<hr/>	ongoing 27:17 63:9	
nationally 7:12,14		O	online 5:6	opportunity 2:4,12,23 4:8 5:20 8:10 9:13, 16 16:11, 12 22:5 23:21 25:19 28:1 29:15 33:5,16 37:16 41:19 43:2,11,17 46:8 50:13,21
nature 7:17		obsolete 7:15	onsite 24:20 49:18	
navigate 49:25		obstacle 62:23	open 41:19 66:17	
Navy 83:22		obstacles 61:16	opens 26:22 50:20	
NAWIC 23:14	nice 19:4 23:20	occurred 8:6	operate 18:14	
neared 11:10	night 59:5	ODUNDE		
nearest- term 21:14				
nearing 10:10 13:23				

51:3 52:21	overlooked	96:19	past	88:13
57:15,22	59:11	98:12	62:23 74:3	93:24
63:3 64:19	oversee	participate	81:18	95:19,23
66:6 87:24	4:4	24:25	98:14	98:7 100:6
88:1,15	oversight	27:23	path	102:4
90:21	37:17	participati	16:14	perceived
order	owner	on	paths	92:23
2:6 3:4	6:15 94:17	20:14,18	25:8	percent
18:3 19:12	owners	36:1	pay	8:1 15:17
30:4 38:3	19:8	partner	31:17	17:24,25
71:22	ownership	22:15	69:12	20:14,17,
73:11,17	8:5,7	23:4,7,12	71:7,8	22,25
organizatio	Oz	31:12	90:7	39:24
n	100:8	66:1,4	paying	69:25 76:4
5:24 22:18		83:13 87:7	87:18	97:1,5,7
39:4		partnering	payrolls	98:2
organizatio	P	19:16 26:1	71:10	Perez
ns	paid	76:23	87:17	27:8
18:17 22:6	64:24	partners	91:11,23	perfect
39:10	68:10	6:11 7:5	Penndot	86:16,17
44:23	panel	21:8 34:22	13:6	92:20
45:12 46:5	52:15	35:1	pennies	perfectly
71:16	paper	partnership	70:23	61:11
outcome	83:16	12:7 24:6	Pennonni	67:12
61:2	parachute	34:7 39:20	10:22 38:9	perform
outgoing	56:18	83:14,15	Pennrose	18:8 38:8
27:9	paradigm	partnership	13:12	65:9,11
outreach	102:22	s	Pennsylvani	performance
15:12,22	park	22:12,25	a	46:22
26:10	97:14	73:8	3:9	performed
27:23	Parker	parts	people	46:7
33:24	99:18	78:15	8:13,14	performing
35:7,8	100:18	party	14:10	38:11,13,
55:9 76:22	part	60:16	18:19 21:1	14
77:12 78:2	11:12	pass	22:6 25:7	period
83:21	14:25 30:5	88:7	34:11	13:6 74:25
101:13	32:13	passthrough	51:21 60:6	75:9 81:3
overbudget	33:14 43:5	76:4	78:24	82:19
82:15	66:25 88:4	102:11,19	79:3,4,14	

periods	61:24 62:8	place	politically	prequalify
46:18	63:11	15:19	82:1,25	68:17
permit	64:17	16:20	pool	present
13:24	65:22	42:13	65:12	6:12,22
49:25	66:21	45:10,21	96:25	presentatio
permitting	72:13 75:7	46:20	population	n
11:6	78:19	66:14 75:8	65:23	9:12 44:4
Perryman	83:5,8,11	places	positions	51:24
12:7	87:22	20:1 40:6	63:3	53:20
person	93:10,23,	67:21	positively	56:24
25:21 50:9	25 98:6,8	71:19	22:4	58:12 61:1
75:15	99:16,21	plan	possibly	62:4 64:3
76:6,17	Philadelphi	7:8 9:10	101:8	72:24
91:13	a's	10:14	potential	presentatio
100:23	2:22 98:3	37:16	14:16 25:7	ns
personal	Philadelphi	plane	42:4 48:6	26:7
69:2	ans	56:17	96:25	53:22,24
perspective	20:23 94:1	planner	potentially	57:17
13:19	philanthrop	10:24	39:8	70:11
22:13	y	planning	pouring	87:14
35:23	22:1	37:13	45:2	presenting
39:22	Philly	plans	power	5:10 58:2
49:23	7:19 22:9	4:9 94:8	69:2	president
phase	82:7	platform	pray	2:15 3:7,
12:21	phone	52:17 64:7	57:16	13,18,20,
14:21 45:7	77:19	play	pre-	24 10:4
50:15	pick	38:21	apprentices	34:7
PHDC	51:21	73:21 88:5	hip	Presidents
62:10	77:19	playing	22:24	2:18
Philadelphi	PIDC	101:11	prepare	pretty
a	94:23	plumbing	40:2 51:20	35:17 45:5
3:14 4:17	piece	49:9 77:23	prepared	46:24 54:1
7:24 23:8,	35:12 58:5	point	59:10	88:17,18
24 24:9,14	pipeline	32:23	prequal	preview
45:15 51:5	21:19	40:12 42:1	69:4	23:19
53:18 54:5	22:21	43:13,25	prequalific	previous
57:21	pity	49:20 67:4	ation	5:5
58:3,25	60:16	82:24 83:3	55:22	previously
59:17		94:16 95:9		8:12 9:7

Pride	20:16,19	83:19	providing	
89:18,23	35:22 37:1	84:16,17	5:22 22:5	Q
90:3,7	38:1,23	85:24,25	23:5 24:12	qualify
95:7	40:24	86:12	25:3	58:22
primarily	49:13	89:12,16	proxy	70:6,24
10:5,11	50:7,17	100:13	3:19	73:12
34:25	program	project-	public	quarterly
primary	19:21	long	2:7 4:5,9	5:3
23:2	23:3,10,	24:8	5:20 6:4	question
prime	14,25	projected	Puerto	33:20
59:1,17	24:12,19	8:13,15	79:19,22	36:23,25
67:4,5,16,	26:20,23	projection	85:4,5	48:18
19,20,23	30:13 75:1	39:23	pull	56:6,14,15
69:20 78:8	programs	projects	33:9 43:20	75:19
priority	26:18	7:12 15:25	65:11	78:23
28:4,7	29:7,13	45:14	90:24	90:22
41:23	30:9,15,20	46:16	91:10	92:3,13,16
private	progress	47:10,18	93:12	96:8
29:25	12:1 15:4	48:13	purchase	questions
72:11	project	72:21 73:5	55:3	15:3 26:5,
problem	6:14 7:7,	74:8 76:18	push	11 35:14
18:25	10,18,21	83:17	87:5	44:6 53:5,
70:17 75:3	8:3,11	84:10	pushback	6 74:5
process	9:10,19	89:14	86:5,12	89:24 92:2
8:25 9:6	12:8,14	promote	pushing	quick
11:4 13:24	15:11	101:22	85:22	74:1
14:3,19	16:1,12	property	86:20 87:3	
17:11,14	17:20,22	8:5,8	put	R
33:2,12	20:3,12	proposition	13:19	radar
36:13	21:13,21	81:13	14:10	76:10
41:10,11	22:7	97:24	60:20	raised
42:18,19	25:13,16,	proud	61:6,16,19	63:10
44:3 47:11	23 27:18	23:7	76:20	66:12
49:25	32:20 34:2	provide	83:18	ramp
63:20	37:25	12:23	84:17	63:3,4
processes	38:19	36:15 62:2	95:19,23	ran
11:7 36:14	45:7,19	provided	putting	24:18
professiona	46:21 48:2	6:13	70:8 84:10	range
l	49:8 50:4		89:25	62:2
	74:12			
	82:13			

rarely 76:10	receiving 39:5,17	38:25	requirement s 72:11,17, 19	69:20 95:12,13 97:19 98:3
rate 71:8 88:16,17	recently 24:18 27:4	regular 24:24 35:17	research 42:10 59:18 91:4	review 2:4 4:5 26:24
rating 67:25 68:8,9,20	recipients 27:10	regularly 35:4	residents 20:24 22:8 25:5,22 26:21 27:25	reviewed 100:19
Re-entry 23:25	recognize 85:17	rein 93:13	resolutions 4:19	RFPS 102:8
reach 34:16	recognizing 37:25	reintegrate 11:3	resources 34:13	rhetoric 64:21 65:7 70:19 88:22
reached 5:18 43:3	recommenda- tions 4:18	reiterate 20:11	respond 90:15	Rico 79:19,22 85:4,5
ready 59:10	record 3:22 68:16 100:14	related 4:10 35:21	response 6:2 79:19 85:6,7 95:16	ridiculous 100:12
real 25:8 28:24 31:3 41:7 57:18 70:21 73:25 98:25	recycling 11:19	relationshi- p 31:1	responsibil- ity 15:16 28:15 32:14	road 43:12 69:23
reality 56:2 58:15 60:17	red 63:14	relevant 4:13	responsible 4:3 38:12	roadway 12:20
realized 40:25	redefine 10:20	remedial 4:20	responsive 4:11 40:20 41:8	Robert 3:17 21:6
reason 55:2 81:19,21 98:12	redevelopin- g 7:22	remediation 37:15	result 8:10 9:9	Roberto 27:8
reasons 30:24 54:10 78:18	redevelopme- nt 7:5,13 8:3,17,25	remedies 4:21	return 53:1	Rodriguez 3:11,12 35:15 39:21 52:11 72:10,16 73:10
received 28:24	refinery 7:14,23 10:12	removal 11:19	revenue 56:12 67:23 68:5	role 15:11 66:25
	reflected 37:19	report 96:14		
	Reggie 100:8	reporting 96:16		
	Regina 3:6 16:9	representat- ive 3:24		
		representin- g 7:25 19:7		

roof 70:5	100:4	sector 29:25	84:3,5	38:23,24
roofing 49:9	scheduled 5:11	72:12	set 71:16	39:19 40:3
room 53:23	scholarship 26:12,19,	seek 67:11	setup 41:10	49:14
76:19	23 27:9,15	seeking 4:15 53:17	share 4:12 20:1	77:23
roughly 7:25 8:15	scholarship s	select 73:2	21:10 41:6	sign 5:22 88:6
Rowan 9:25 10:3	school 24:9,17,19	selecting 26:14	shared 28:14	signatory 54:2
48:24 52:3	58:24 62:7	Self- performing 97:21	30:22	58:18,21
rules 5:21	75:18 78:8	self- sustain 73:6	sharing 85:16	66:16
run 75:11	80:12	send 5:13	Shaw 15:5,6	77:20
rush 98:20	82:13	28:19,22	28:3 30:23	91:24
Ryan 31:13	99:20	86:2	40:9 44:11	signed 65:3
	100:7	Senior 10:3	45:22 52:1	significant 49:3
	schools 63:1 74:10	September 5:4,12	Sheet 77:24	similar 7:17 46:12
	science 8:22	40:12	short 20:9 45:23	single 48:5 77:8
	scope 37:18 40:2	serve 23:3	shot 79:21	94:9
s	scopes 38:20	service 50:7,17	show 57:10	sir 90:15
sad 54:1 66:11	scoring 102:9	54:23	Shutting 102:10	sit 83:16
88:11	scrapping 70:23	61:25 78:7	siblings 30:6	85:13 96:2
safety 68:9	scraps 84:15	services 20:16,20	side 15:8 18:1,	98:13
sat 27:8 76:5,	screw 70:4	35:22 37:1	2 20:21	site 7:25 8:4,
7	seat 84:16 85:3	38:1,8,23	32:15	11 11:3,24
scalability 44:15	94:11	40:5,18,24	33:24	12:1,18
scale 50:9	secret 32:12	49:14	34:25	14:11
scenes 101:7		53:10 62:3		23:18
schedule 82:10,13				24:4,24
				48:15
				50:11 51:2
				sites 7:16,17
				12:25

sitting 3:19 18:18 60:15 97:25 99:19	someplace 16:18 sooner 51:17 sort 27:2 source 18:22 South 7:18,23 22:8 25:4 26:20 27:1 Southwest 22:9 26:21 27:1 Southwest- based 25:4 space 31:23 32:1,2 33:6 43:19 spark 25:20 speak 5:25 58:7, 9 61:8 81:15 101:9 speaker 52:6 speakers 2:7 6:6,7 speaking 72:18 specific 26:19 39:1 67:21	specificall y 31:25 47:24 specificity 38:22 speculative 14:23 speculative ly 14:6 speed 29:8 spend 97:1 spending 77:6 spoke 35:20 staff 87:19 stage 49:7 Stan 73:25 74:3,5,6, 7,11,20 75:3,15 76:25 77:1 78:5 80:4, 7 81:7,16 82:12 84:9 95:1,9 Stan's 78:4 80:2 101:9 102:3 stand 57:19	stand-alone 59:19 standpoint 25:14,15 49:1 50:8, 18 Stanley 6:15 52:6 start 12:19 14:24 54:15 57:17 84:10 89:11 98:22 started 11:13,17, 20 14:1, 11,18 61:15 85:25 92:12 starting 69:17 starts 29:2 77:6 84:19 101:22 state 5:23 30:2 stay 27:6 43:9 staying 76:9 steal 101:14 steamfitter s	54:22 step 5:23 11:9 steps 96:5 stop 59:3 64:20 65:17 88:6 stopped 53:21 55:3 stories 18:20 58:16 60:22 86:22 90:23,25 92:4,5,7, 21,22 93:5 story 32:9,15 33:14 43:6 57:19 58:11 61:14,21 70:10 75:9 81:4 100:10 strategy 38:3 Street 12:3 13:10,12, 21 Streets 13:5 stringent 72:11 strong 40:7
---	---	---	---	---

structure	98:24	73:13,15,	talked	telephone
17:10	successful	18	26:11	5:17
42:12	26:2 27:15	sustainable	27:12	telling
49:11	49:17 57:9	82:18	48:18	89:19 91:1
students	83:10 94:4	sustained	49:14 51:9	92:5
24:15	96:1	70:14	57:4	tells
26:15 27:5	summer	74:24	63:17,18	91:5
studies	12:20	Sutton	72:22	tenant
11:1	sun	45:3	74:25	14:8
stuff	94:24		talking	tenants
54:8 59:22	super	T	55:19	14:16
68:15	49:11	table	57:12	50:19 51:1
71:1,4	supply	6:25 15:9	59:20	tend
87:15	36:8 46:8	18:13,14,	83:20 86:3	36:6
102:11	47:5 51:16	18 52:8	89:25 93:9	testimony
subcontract	support	83:17	Talson	4:9,12
ing	15:2	84:6,8,17	15:15 21:7	5:21,22
19:19 67:3	30:14,17	85:3	86:9	6:1,5
subcontract	46:4 76:12	tackle	task	Texas
or	supporting	74:4	60:13,15	95:17
15:14	22:23	tail	63:7	thankful
subcontract	supposed	84:15	taxable	52:13
ors	78:14	takes	97:18	thing
4:24	surpassed	55:5 68:9	taxes	32:7 33:1
subject	62:21	69:6	98:4	43:25
59:6	survey	taking	teach	46:15 54:8
submit	49:16	4:9 88:21	94:22	55:8 64:22
5:15	surveying	talk	team	69:24
substantial	49:19	6:18 7:7	6:12,21	72:25
21:4,12	survive	41:1 46:22	15:17 20:7	77:11 79:9
succeed	70:24	53:14	21:6,7	90:12
66:4	76:14	56:23	34:9,18	91:16
success	susceptible	60:24	35:2	93:19,23
58:16	75:6	61:7,11	40:11,20	94:15 99:6
60:21 70:9	suspect	64:4,13	41:17	100:24
83:7 86:22	36:3	72:5 80:23	45:9,11,21	102:14
92:7,21,22	sustain	86:25 87:1	81:9	things
95:10,12,	70:13,16	89:18	teams	19:25
14,21			101:18	22:10

39:25	tightening	toolbox	transcript	
40:23	42:17	23:4	5:5	U
41:14	time	toolboxes	transformin	ultimately
42:16 45:8	2:24 5:19	23:5 57:5	g	8:18 11:19
46:18	17:8 19:7	top	8:3,11	12:24
51:18	20:9 27:19	96:9	transitiona	umbrella
53:1,18	35:20	topic	l	68:24
55:10	41:19	44:17	24:1	uncommon
56:19	46:18,20	54:14	travesty	28:18
57:2,14	59:25	59:22	76:13	uncover
63:25	63:4,14	93:14	treadmill	65:20
66:9,18	64:2	totally	40:15	underground
67:7,17	74:13,25	54:13	treatment	11:14,18
70:4 71:11	82:19	touch	94:2	understand
87:13	88:4,7	27:6 50:10	tremendousl	31:5,7
88:12 93:3	93:4 94:25	tough	y	41:22 44:8
98:18	100:14	69:22	12:9	47:16
thinking	timeline	tour	truck	55:25
34:22	8:17 25:17	23:18	63:14	79:16
48:14	48:3,8,14	town	true	93:15
79:24	times	15:23 29:1	33:6 57:19	94:14
99:12,14	15:18,24	track	64:24 65:2	understands
thought	19:11 26:7	43:14	93:3	82:16
84:24	tired	tracking	truth	undertaking
threat	93:1	49:5 99:8	58:9 95:20	9:8
81:20	today	trade	turn	unforeseen
three-and-	6:7 7:6	31:18,21	9:24	54:10
a-half	39:16,17	96:10	turnout	union
10:9	42:25	trades	34:10	28:19 29:1
tie	43:9,17	23:1,16	two-and-a-	30:5 54:3
17:13	44:5 99:19	30:6 31:2,	half	55:16
44:24	told	14,16 32:5	72:9	58:17,19
tied	61:10	49:2 51:19	type	62:20
58:12	73:14 80:7	traffic	82:11 85:2	63:17
tier	82:3	10:23,25	87:8 94:2	66:15
59:21	tomorrow	training	types	71:13 72:6
90:17,18	81:23	19:23	47:22	74:15
91:19,20	ton			77:20
tightened	12:1 26:5			88:17 90:6
17:15				

91:24 98:7	vendor	walls	18:11	work
union-	52:24	14:10	widen	9:19,21
paying	vendors	wanted	16:5	10:24
91:23	16:21	20:11 21:9	wider	11:21,24
unions	38:7,17	54:18 56:4	86:7	13:1,4,14
28:17	ventures	57:25	Wiley	14:18
29:11,22	19:10,18	61:10 62:5	6:15 52:6,	15:10 17:9
68:2	59:20	wanting	9,13 58:6,	25:6 26:8,
unique	venue	60:7	14 61:22	23 30:7,11
25:12 50:3	87:8	warehouse	64:18	33:2 38:20
uniqueness	versus	13:18	67:18	39:2,5,17,
16:19	83:11	watching	68:7,22	18 41:18
updates	85:11	2:8	69:3,8,11	44:24
6:12	vertical	Watkins	71:5,24	45:16
upfront	14:2	100:7	72:14,23	46:10
71:14	Vice-	ways	78:12	47:15
upset	3:17 10:3	15:23 17:8	87:12	49:16
88:19	Vice-	30:16	89:5,22	51:17
usual	president	WBE	90:6,11,16	54:20,21
98:18	6:10 7:3	4:15 9:14	91:3,10	62:10
utility	viewed	15:20,21	92:9,25	63:24
11:18	10:15	20:17 37:6	97:9,20	64:16
12:17	violations	wealth	102:25	65:10,11,
utilize	4:22	97:17	wins	14 66:14,
49:22	voice	weatherizat	53:24	17 70:1,2,
utilizing	85:20 87:6	ion	witnesses	25 74:9,
39:11	volunteer	62:11	6:24 52:7	21,24 75:3
49:18	56:17	website	women	78:4 80:5,
		2:10 5:7	23:13,16,	19,23
V	W	34:14	18 30:10	81:1,3
valid	wage	42:5,18	45:24	82:4,5,11,
82:24	98:4	weekend	51:16	18 83:25
92:2,16	wait	52:20	wondering	84:23
validate	80:7	weeks	30:12 98:1	85:2,8
33:7,8	walking	62:20 72:9	wonders	89:17,20
validation	90:2	White	95:4	93:18
33:11	walks	79:11	words	95:19,24
	53:2	wide	20:23	101:17
			61:18	102:5
				worked
				10:22 11:5

67:19	worth	yearlong	
74:7,9	75:2	24:14	
75:15 82:6	wow	years	
85:7	51:2	9:4 10:9,	
worker	56:13,16	10 11:5	
25:15	wrap	23:11	
workers	21:9	42:24	
21:20	written	50:14,21	
22:21 24:4	94:8	63:23 68:9	
Workers'	wrong	69:6	
68:1,11	30:4 70:18	75:16,18	
workforce	www.	77:15,17	
18:1	oeoboard/	94:7 96:8	
20:21,25	phila.gov.	99:10,11	
21:11,16,	5:8	years'	
22 22:1,3,		75:2	
13 28:12,	x	yesterday	
14,22	Xfinity	60:6	
32:17	2:8	ying	
working		41:15	
13:3 17:7	y	young	
20:2 24:4	yang	23:15,18	
28:17	41:15	25:7,21	
31:8,25	Yard		
32:5 34:15	83:22	z	
41:21	yards	zip	
45:11,25	11:23	20:24	
47:2,22,23	year		
48:9	9:3 11:12,		
51:14,23	16,22		
55:1 56:25	12:10		
58:23	14:4,22		
59:23 60:2	15:1 22:15		
workplace	23:17		
60:9,10	25:10 34:4		
Works	39:3 42:22		
23:24	78:11 80:9		
world	99:3		
79:25			
81:23			