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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER O'NEILL DISCUSS NEW
YEARS EVE SECURITY**

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill: Good afternoon, everyone. Thanks for being here. Today, I want to tell you about some of what we've put together for our New Year's Eve celebrations. We want to let people know what they can expect as they brave the cold – and it's certainly going to be cold out in Times Square – and any number of other areas where festivities are taking place around the five boroughs. In a minute, Mayor de Blasio is going to say a few words, and we have Bill Sweeney, the FBI's assistant Director in Charge of the New York office, as well as our Chief of Counterterrorism Jimmy Waters, and Chief of Patrol Terry Monahan will go into some of the specifics about how we secure events of this size and scope. And then, we'll take your questions.

As we do every year, we began preparing for New Year's Eve just after the final piece of confetti was cleaned up last January 1st. As you know, the men and women of the NYPD do an incredible job of planning for and securing large-scale events like this on a very regular basis. This is part of what we do. But nothing we do in our profession do we do alone. All throughout the year, we work closely with Bill's people at the FBI and our Joint Terrorist Taskforce, as well as many other local, State, and federal agencies, including the ATF, the MTA, the Port Authority, and the State police. It's those professional partnerships that always make our planning successful. All of this helps us to live on our primary mission of keeping people safe. We want to make sure that the approximately 2 million people who will converge in the vicinity on Times Square on Sunday night also feel safe.

Here in New York – and again, it's always in conjunction with our law enforcement partners – we constantly monitor and assess the threat stream. It's an around-the-clock task and a necessary one. We employ some of the best intelligence analysts who constantly decipher and share data with our partners – add to that the literally millions of pair of eyes and ears of vigilant New Yorkers who recognize and understand that to achieve true public safety it takes everyone doing their part. It's definitely a shared responsibility.

You've heard it before and it definitely bears repeating – that if something doesn't look right to you, it makes you feel uncomfortable, call 9-1-1, or tell a cop and give us a chance to investigate. I can report at this time there are no direct, credible threats to New York City, to Times Square

specifically, or to any of our New Year's Eve events generally. Out of an abundance of caution, however, you'll see a stronger police presence than we've seen even in recent years, and that's prudent given the terror events we have seen and studied around the world, as well as the three incidents here in New York over the past 15 months, including the two attacks within six weeks of one another – on October 31st, along the West Side Highway; and on December 11th, inside the subway passage at 42nd Street and 8th Avenue.

In the lead-up to this Sunday, we've been working closely in recent weeks with the Times Square Alliance and more than 600 businesses in the immediate area, and the dozens and dozens of hotels and other venues in Midtown Manhattan. We know from experience that the first spectators on Sunday will begin showing up early in the day. It seems that every year they get earlier and earlier. And in addition to those enjoying the live performances and the ball drop in Times Square, there will also be thousands of Broadway theater goers and thousands more enjoying private parties, concerts at bars, clubs, restaurants, and other spots around the City. By now, New Yorkers are used to seeing a large counter-terrorism presence employed at all major events since 9/11. And obviously, Midtown is going to be exceptionally crowded on Sunday. I urge anyone coming into the City to leave their cars at home and use public transportation. If you do drive, you can expect to see safety and DWI checkpoints. The bottom line is this, there will be much the public will see and much the public will not see. And the takeaway from our preparation is this, people will be safe and they should feel safe too, because the NYPD and our partners are well prepared.

This is going to be one of the most well policed, best protected events at one of the safest venues in the entire world. We will ensure that New York City has yet another safe and enjoyable New Year's Eve celebration as we do every year.

Mr. Mayor?

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Commissioner. And Commissioner, I want to commend you and your team for the exceptional preparations that you've made in anticipation for New Year's Eve. A particular thanks to First Deputy Commissioner Ben Tucker, to Deputy Commissioner John Miller, and to Chief Jim Waters for all of the work they have done to get everyone ready for this crucial moment. And I want to acknowledge and thank our partner from the federal government, FBI Assistant Director in Charge Bill Sweeney, who has been a tremendous partner in all we do.

I want to say at the outset, we're going to talk about this topic and take questions on this and other police matters, and then we're going to be talking about the property tax issue in light of the federal tax legislation. Just want to let everyone know there will be an update on that before we go into general off-topic questions.

This event every year – New Year's Eve – is one of the things that people all over the country, all over the world most associate with New York City. It's a moment of great pride for New York City – a huge, joyous event. And literally people all over the world ring in the New Year through watching this event in Times Square, and they think of it as the ultimate expression of crossing over into a new year. That puts a huge responsibility on all of us to keep it safe. It's a

point of a pride for New York City. New York City is one of the few places in the world that could host an event like this and provide this level of security. It makes us very proud, but we're also quite aware of the amount of work that has to go into it and the agility – the ability to constantly update our strategies and improve them as we get new information each year. So, the NYPD has done a great job preparing to protect the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people who will be coming to New Year's Eve.

We understand why we are a target. Unfortunately, it's a sad reality, but we understand it and, bluntly, it is because of our values as New Yorkers, because of our success as a pluralistic city. Terrorists regard New York as the exact kind of place they want to disrupt, and New Yorkers respond consistently with strength and resiliency. We saw it after the two attacks in the fall – people in this city handled it with great strength and in a very adorable way. As did the NYPD, and the NYPD proved once again its ability to handle and respond to any situation. We are clear that those characteristics – that strength, that resiliency, that unwillingness to ever bend in the face of threats – marks the character of New Yorkers and is something the City should be proud of as well, and that will again be on display. We are ready to have a great celebration.

And I want to emphasize what you heard from the Commissioner – there are no credible and specific threats against New York City at this point in time, and no credible and specific threats against the New Year's Eve celebrations. But we are still vigilant at all times. We are very proud of the fact that the NYPD this year proved its ability to achieve even greater results. We're proud of being the safest big city in America. We're proud of the fact that we're getting even safer. This NYPD has managed to achieve that while facing an ever more complex terrorist threat. They've done both with tremendous ability and professionalism. We know there's more work to be done, but we take heart from the fact that just in the last few months we had a very successful New York City Marathon, we had a very successful Macy's Thanksgiving parade. These big events came off without a hitch because of exceptional planning and because of the use of exceptional resources to secure them, and that's the exact model we'll use again on New Year's Eve.

We have put the patrol officers out in numbers we need for this situation. We've made very clear in the last few years that we will continue to use the number necessary to secure each situation, and, again, the vital cooperation with our federal partners has been crucial to ensuring that we're ready in all ways. That being said, and the Commissioner said it so powerfully after the last incident, the NYPD is the best police force in the world, we have tremendous cooperation with our partners, but we must have the help of the people of this city to do everything we need to do. So, that phrase – if you see something, say something – that means something. You have to feel that phrase. Any one New Yorker can save countless lives by being vigilant and reporting information to the police. So, please, I want to urge everyone – help each other be safe. If you see something, make sure a police officer knows about it.

With that, before a few words in Spanish, I want to just wish everyone – the members of the media, and all New Yorkers – a very happy and safe new year. We're all looking forward to great things ahead in 2018. And it's going to be a cold New Years, but we'll have a warmer new year ahead.

In Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, it's my pleasure to turn to Chief Terry Monahan.

Chief of Department Terence Monahan, NYPD: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Planning for this event began January 1st. It's been constantly adjusted and updated as events occurred in the city, in this country, and around the world. It's been a tremendous effort on the part of Chief Billy Morris and Chief Jimmy Waters from Counter-terrorism and all their personnel assigned to Manhattan South and the Counter-terrorism Bureau to put together this plan to make sure that everyone that comes to Times Square that day can come and be ensured that they will be safe.

So, as we move forward – 11 am, crosstown traffic will be shut from 37th Street to 59th Street, 6th to 8th Avenue. At that time, we'll begin to seal off the entire bowtie area with concrete, a block of cars, and sand-trucks. Within that area, there are 125 parking garages. Each and every one of those parking garages will be closed and seals – cars will not be allowed to come in or to come out. There will be a truck restriction in place on 6th and 8th Avenues, starting at 11 am from 34th Street to 59th Street – no trucks will be allowed within that area.

Once we're into the zone, there are 12 access points for spectators to come in. Each one of those access points will have vapor wake dogs assigned there, and there will be heavy-weapon teams. Spectators will be walking through a checkpoint area where they will be checked. Bags will be checked and screened, there will be no large bags, no coolers, no umbrellas into the area. You'll go through a magnetometer, so we'll make sure there are no weapons. Once you go there and you process to the pens, you will again be screened a second time before you're allowed to enter the pens. There will be heavy-weapon teams and dogs assigned throughout the entire viewing area. In addition, we will have our Emergency Service Unit working hand in hand with the FBI and Secret Service, and we will have observation teams with counter-sniper capabilities assigned throughout the entire viewing area. In addition, every hotel within the Times Square area will have uniformed officers assigned to those hotels, working hand in hand with the hotel securities. Our transit hubs – transit will be fully staffed that day. We will be conducting train inspections and bag screenings at locations throughout the city, not just in the Times Square area. Transit will also have dogs working throughout the transit system. Our aviation unit will have a ship up the entire night and it'll be covering the entire Manhattan area. There will be at least one ship up at all times.

In addition to the Times Square area, we have major details going on in Coney Island, and we have the Central Park Run. We will have heavy-weapon teams out in those locations and we will also have sand-trucks and blocker vehicles. There are numbers other events taking place throughout the City and we will also have coverage at them. Every precinct, housing, and transit facility throughout the City will be fully covered, and the commanding officers of each and every one of those units will be working that evening. Our highway units will be fully staffed, working the highways to deter any drunk driving. So, the message out there is, be responsible. Don't get behind the wheel of a car after you've been drinking. This is a shared responsibility. Whether it's in the Times Square area, or anywhere else around the City – as it's been said before – if you see

something, say something. There are going to be cops out throughout the City, in Times Square and everywhere else in the City. Do not hesitate to go up to a cop if there's something that makes you feel uncomfortable, and let us investigate it. That's what we're here for.

With all of this done, I can really say that this should be a very safe and happy new year for everyone.

Commissioner O'Neill: Jimmy Waters –

Chief of Counterterrorism James Waters, NYPD: Thanks, Commissioner. As the Mayor and Police Commissioner have already said, there's no specific or credible threats to the New Year's Eve event. We are aware of the propaganda that has been disseminated by ISIS and its affiliates. We follow the attacks that occur around the world, our analysts are at work each and every day looking at those attacks and analyzing them. They inform our training and our deployments. We are conducting executive meetings today with personnel that will be assigned to the detail. So, all the executives, captains, and above are downstairs in a training informational session right now with people from Operations, Manhattan South, and Counter-terrorism and Intelligence Bureaus.

In addition to that, as a result of the events of December 11th, we have prepared a tactical bulletin – a response to suicide bombers that will be disseminated to the police officers starting tomorrow in preparation of Sunday's events. These will be some instructions and some level of training. We also prepared a training video that they'll be able to see. And with the latest of technology, they'll be able to review both the tactical bulletin as well as the video on their Department phones. You will see an increase in heavy weapons, bomb-squad personnel, radiological detection teams, and our technology to include over 1,000 cameras in and around the area of Times Square for the event.

So, very briefly, I'll take you through a quick visual of what one would see if they were to come to the event. On Sunday night, as they access one of the access-block points – they will first walk past the Sanitation sand-trucks and NYPD blocker vehicles that will be positioned at the intersection of 6th of 8th Avenue, as well as they will see some NYPD cement block out there. They'll walk past a vapor wake dog, which works off of the air displacement off one's body. And so, those dogs will be deployed at all those access points. They will go through a magnetometer, or they'll be wanded for weapons, and, at some point, they will come to a table where they will have their bags inspected. In some cases, we will randomly take those bags and swipe the handles with explosive detection equipment, followed up and supported by the Critical Response Command or the Strategic Response Group heavy weapons teams at all locations. They will then proceed onto the pens, where this process will be repeated a second time as they enter the pens. They will again be wanded. They will walk past another dog. There's radiological detection equipment on all of the officer's gun belts. And then they will proceed into the pens, all with an overwatch from not only the observation teams of emergency service, but the Critical Response Command and the Strategic Response Group long gun teams.

Commissioner?

Commissioner O'Neill: We're going to take some on-topic questions.

Question: How do you stop a suicide bomber from going into the area where someone is going into the pens – just blowing him or herself up right there.

Commissioner O'Neill: This is why we have the checkpoints – the multiple-layer checkpoints in place with the vapor wake dogs. That's part of the process – the vapor wake dogs, I don't know if you've ever seen them in action, but what they can detect and how they work – they work as a team. They're extremely effective.

Question: Couldn't someone just go to the crowd where everyone's going –

Commissioner O'Neill: You have to pass through a checkpoint before you go to the pen. You're actually passing through two checkpoints.

In the back?

Question: [Inaudible] what's new this year as opposed to last year?

Commissioner O'Neill: [Inaudible] between this year and last year. The difference between this year and last year is we're putting out more Vapor Wake dogs. We're also putting out more observation teams with sniper – counter sniper capabilities. And we're increasing the size of the detail – the uniform detail too. I'm not going to give you the next number, just before you ask.

Question: Second question, you mentioned the hotels. In Las Vegas the shooter was from up above, is there some sort of plan to –

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes, there is. In each hotel we're going to have uniformed officers working in each hotel and we'll have multiple emergency service and critical response command response teams located throughout the venue.

Yes?

Question: You mentioned global events is something that you pay attention to. We've seen in recent weeks a lot of anti-US demonstrations since the Trump administration announced moving the embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. I'm wondering if those kind of things factor into your security plan. How do they factor into your personal sense of worry going into this?

Commissioner O'Neill: There's a – there's a tight ring around the bow-tie area. It actually goes from 40 – I think 40th Street all the way up to Central Park South from Sixth to Eighth Avenue. So, it'd be very difficult for a large demonstration to get into that area. But this is something that we constantly monitor.

Question: But in terms of your worry about that fueling interest in an attack –

Commissioner O'Neill: It's – New Year's Eve this is – I've been doing this for a long time it's – there's been ups and downs in this country for a long time. It's something that we pay attention to but it's not something that causes me great worry at this time.

In the back row?

Question: You briefly mentioned the cold can you say what [inaudible] out there and also how, if at all, the amount of clothing people are going to be wearing is going to impact security approaches. [Inaudible] hard to identify people –

Commissioner O'Neill: It's – I don't have – I'm sure you've paid attention to the weather forecast. I think as the ball drops it's going to be somewhere in the vicinity of between 12 and 15 degrees. So anybody that comes they have to prepare for that, especially if they're going to be standing out there for 12 to 16 hours. This is the sensitivity of the Vaper Wake dogs, are of great importance on a night like this. People are going to be wearing heavy clothing but at each checkpoint we have heavy weapons teams too. So, we're preparing for anything that happens – that might possible happen.

Question: The Chief spoke of ISIS propaganda, is that the usual [inaudible] just terror tactics or are there any additional propaganda that has been an issue that would specify –

Chief Waters: Well as reported in the media in the last couple of days there's been a number of videos that have been put out, you know, showing different parts of New York City, Cardinal Dolan, etcetera. But this is their regular run of the mill propaganda. But they've been talking about Christmas and New Year's now for quite some time. We're now past Christmas and approaching New Year.

Question: Commissioner, are you guys other than uniformed cops in hotels, are you looking at the guests at all? [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: I don't want to go into specifics of how we're vetting out people going to hotels but it's an important part of planning for the event.

Josh?

Question: This is actually a question for the Mayor. Mr. Mayor, given the weather forecast, in addition to the NYPD and FBI have you had to change or increase your deployments in terms of fire, EMS personnel because it does – it seems like it's going to be so cold it that no matter how many people – how heavy people dress there may be a difficult cold related illnesses that arise with people locked in there for so long?

Mayor: Look, the broad point I'd make is we understand this time of year we can get this kind of weather so everything we do as a city is with the understanding we may have to respond quickly to a severe weather situation. Obviously, we have special protocols if we think there's going to be people out in the street in larger numbers who may be in danger. We have special

protocols around addressing homeless people on the street, etcetera. That's something we have in place consistently whether it's New Year's Eve or any other cold time of the year.

In terms of anything particular to the Times Square area, I'd bounce it back to PD in their coordination with FDNY if there's any special ambulance allotment beyond what we normally have. Obviously we normally have quite a lot of capacity there.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes we are working in conjunction with Dan Nigro's people at the Fire Department and EMS to make sure we have the appropriate number of personnel there and the ability to get around through the emergency lanes. They'll be part of the meeting we have – an interagency meeting right before the event. So, and they're also down at our operation center. We have FDNY and EMS stationed at our operation center.

Yes?

Question: Regarding the threat of a Las Vegas style sniper from high up in a building are you also putting some kind of markers or reflective signs up –

Commissioner O'Neill: I'm not – I'm not going to talk about exactly what we're doing to counter that threat.

In the back row?

Question: Commissioner, my own friends and family have sometimes asked well what is suspicious activity. If I see something or somebody is – is there anything I should be specifically looking for. So what would you say to people that are visiting New York, not used to New York that may want to be on the lookout. What [inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: Just in general, you know, as you come into the event in the subway or you're walking down the street. Maybe not look at your phone, maybe not – take your headphones off and just pay attention to what's going on around you. And if you see something or someone that might look nervous or suspicious just make sure you call 9-1-1 or grab a cop. There's going to be thousands of cops in that area there. Give us a chance to investigate it. It's an important – an important component here is the millions of extra eyes and ears we're going to have. And if you see something that makes you uncomfortable let us know and we'll investigate it.

Yes?

Question: [Inaudible] can you go a little more into the anti-suicide bombing bulletin and video that you're going to be showing the officers who are assigned to Times Square?

Chief Waters: So we're just going to give them some guidelines. We owe it to the cops to give them some kind of guidelines in what they can do or what they should do including getting hard cover, getting innocent bystanders out of the way if they suspect somebody in a pre-blast situation. And then addressing that individual and trying to safely make him stop, make him go

to the ground so that we can take him into custody with the assistance of the bomb squad. In a post-blast situation we would wait for the arrival of the bomb squad and emergency service to make an approach if that's practical. Always rendering aid to the victims if there are any, God forbid, at the scene first and then allowing the bomb squad to render safe and make safe that individual.

Question: How do you incapacitate a person who has detonated a suicide bomb?

Chief Walters: Well as a last resort deadly, physical force.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes, in the front row. Colleen?

Question: You might have already answered this, I'm sorry, it might have been Graham's question but are you working with the hotels specifically to do some sort of screening ahead of time for people who are staying in the –

Commissioner O'Neill: I'm not going to go into specifically who and how we're screening but I will tell you that there are going to be uniformed detectives assigned to each of the hotels. And that's not just on the day of, it's the days leading up too.

Down in the front row?

Question: Will you also have people on the office buildings surrounding the area?

Commissioner O'Neill: We are working closely with the private buildings – the corporation buildings in the area.

Yes?

Question: Mr. Mayor, I'm wondering, I'm sure there's a lot of people dead set on going but I'm sure there's also a lot of people looking at the weather or thinking about safety and deciding whether or not to go. Do you – at this point this year encourage people if they're on the fence to stay home?

Mayor: Look everyone has to decide what they prefer. I've said I admire people who want to stand there for many hours in the cold. That takes a special personality. But the fact is it will absolutely be safe as you can hear from the preparations. But I'd say this much, if you're going to venture out bundle up, wear long underwear, bring hand warmers, all those basics. Take the weather very seriously. I'm not going to tell people what to do but I'm going to tell them if they are going out be really careful and take precautions.

Commissioner O'Neill: In the last row.

Question: Commissioner, is there an official crowd estimation number? And how the weather might be playing into that number at all?

Commissioner O'Neill: I think last year, Terry you went with two million?

Chief Monahan: Yes, two million.

Commissioner O'Neill: In the vicinity of the bow-tie area. So, what was the second part of the question?

Question: If the weather is factoring into a crowd estimation number for this year at all?

Commissioner O'Neill: We don't do pre-estimates. So, we'll see. There's a lot of brave people in New York City and the United States. So, I'm sure there'll still be millions of people in Times Square not matter how cold it gets.

Yes?

Question: [Inaudible] cost estimate on all these preparations for –

Commissioner O'Neill: I don't have that right now but we can get you – or around number.

In the back row?

Question: [Inaudible] any of the NYPD brass up there, have any of you worked the event from a foot patrol perspective?

Commissioner O'Neill: From a what?

Question: From a foot patrol perspective?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, I think we all have. And [inaudible] were you in New York City in 1996 when it was 15 degrees. Yes, I think we all worked that detail and we still have pleasant and unpleasant memories from that night. It was cold.

Question: Was the overtime worth it?

Commissioner O'Neill: I was on straight time.

Question: Commissioner you or the Mayor, the resource [inaudible] federal resources [inaudible] you have the money and resources that you need to do all this this year. Are you confident that you have what you need?

Commissioner O'Neill: For New Year's Eve? Yes. Absolutely. And then working in conjunction with our federal partners. I know I talk about Bill and the FBI all the time but we also have the Secret Service is helping us too. So, we're getting plenty of help from the federal government. Anything else? Can I go off topic on the NYPD? Yes sir.

Question: You sir, do you attribute the drop in murder rate recently to community policing efforts? If so, can you speak to what specific aspects of community policing are responsible for it.

Commissioner O'Neill: That would be an excellent question for our crime press briefing next week. But I will speak generally that I do. I think it's all about building relationships with the people that you're sworn to protect and serve. We're up and running in 51 of our 77 Precincts and we're up and running in all of our housing PSA's and it is definitely helping us reduce crime by establishing those relationships and making them better and better every day. The community we're getting positive feedback from the community and we're getting positive feedback from the cops. I think those two combinations are going to help us continue to reduce crime.

Mayor: I just want to jump in on this. I want to keep emphasizing neighborhood policing is leading to many more New Yorkers sharing information with the police. Just like we talk about – if you see something, say something. A lot more people are offering the police tips, are offering them you know information that stops crimes before they even happen in some cases. So there is no question in my mind that neighborhood policing is a major contributing factor to the huge declining crime we've seen.

Commissioner O'Neill: Lenny.

Question: Commissioner what's holding up the [inaudible]?

Commissioner O'Neill: Nothing is holding us up. Nothing is – we haven't decided anything definitive yet. We just want to get through New Year's Eve. Terry is the Chief of Patrol who historically has been in charge during the New Year's Eve celebration. So this is will all be settled up in the first couple of weeks in January. Willie?

Question: The Mayor just said that a lot more people are sharing information with the police. Do you have something that quantifies that [inaudible]? How do you measure it?

Commissioner O'Neill: We measure that in reduced crime. The number of contacts, I am probably not going to have a number for that.

Question: But I want to ask the Mayor, how do you quantify what you just said?

Mayor: Because I've talked to say many neighborhood policing officers and community leaders who have given me numerous examples of information they've gotten has helped them to fight crime and have made clear this was information that often didn't get in the past. It's a fair question to say how are we going to show the results of neighborhood policing overtime as you know it is being studied in different ways. There is just no question in my mind based on the numbers we're seeing how well the Precincts are doing that have the NCAO program. Everything we're hearing from community residents and police on the ground. There is no question in my mind of what's happening here. But I do think it's important that we show objective analysis over the coming months and years to help people understand just how big an impact there has been.

Question: On Crown Heights murder of a young woman. Can you say [inaudible] if it relates to the suspension of the two officers?

Commissioner O'Neill: We're conducting an internal investigation to look at the actions of those two police officers and quite frankly everybody involved in response to that incident. We don't have anything finalized yet. I talk about my pride in the NYPD each and every day and if unfortunately there are times that we don't live up to that standard it's up to us that we make sure that we fully investigate that and if discipline needs to be dealt out we'll do that.

Question: Any updates on the case at all?

Commissioner O'Neill: Bob Boyce, Chief Boyce we'll talk about that.

Chief of Detectives Bob Boyce, NYPD: Hey good afternoon. I do have an update on the case. Last night we were able to apprehend with the help of the New Rochelle Police Department, Barry Wells. At about 6 o'clock last night we brought him to Montefiore hospital last night in the Bronx to get checked out because he had mentioned that he tried committing suicide, he did not. We also met with family members and friends who also helped us bring him in. it was important that we did that. Right now he is at the 7-7 Precinct. We're waiting for the results of the autopsy of Tonie Wells. He does have one prior arrest for assaulting her in Manhattan that was in September of this year. He is out on – he was out on \$5,000 bail on that case. That's where we are right now. We're in the midst of an autopsy. We'll know more as we go forward this evening.

Question: Chief Boyce can you say more about the two DIR's [inaudible]?

Chief Boyce: Sure, we have the one DIR of course from the assault in Manhattan and another one prior to that also in Manhattan. We made the arrest on the one; the other one was for harassment. So there was no arrest made on that.

Question: [Inaudible] dates?

Chief Boyce: I can get you that. One was the date in September I believe and the other one was sometime in the springtime. They had been married sometime I think since April of this year and they've had been going on their problems. Mr. Wells did make statements to us in regards of the problems they were having.

Commissioner O'Neill: Ashley?

Question: I want to ask two questions on that. One, can we just get a rundown of what happened yesterday morning, particularly with the response. And then was that couple under any sort of monitoring by the NYPD at the New York Domestic Violence Initiative to check on recidivist households.

Chief Boyce: We do have a recidivist household list. They were not on it from what I understand. They just had recently had these problems, two of them in Manhattan. They lived in the 7-7 Precinct on Sterling Place. So they were not – from what I understand any visits by anybody in the NYPD prior to do that. This was an, again living arrangement because she was also living with her mom in Manhattan, that's where the assault occurred.

Commissioner O'Neill: I don't have the chronology available for you right now. That's part of our investigation. Once we finalize that we'll make sure to tell you about it.

Question: Can we get some numbers on the rest of domestic violent acts, and homicides, and as well [inaudible] – conversation right now I just wondered if where you are with implementations of the task force on domestic violence.

Chief Boyce: Well, I will tell you next week. We'll have all that for you. So you know when we do the end of the end of the year. I don't have this now.

Commissioner O'Neill: Ashley we'll get you the DV – sorry Bob. We'll get you the DV and the DV homicide numbers at the end of the press conference. You're welcome.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I am sorry I was being handed a note. Go ahead.

Question: I was just wondering where – Commissioner O'Neill is part of this too. I was just wondering where the city is with the implementations of the Commission on Domestic Violence?

Mayor: Look, as we've said before – one the NYPD has changed many of its approaches to domestic violence in ways I think are very powerful including the huge focus on the follow up visits, and the persistent visits at the Precinct level. But there are number of other recommendations that we are going to be implementing. We'll have more to say in the New Year about the schedule for how we're going to do that.

Commissioner O'Neill: Question?

Unknown: Police questions?

Question: Yes Commissioner, can you talk about the CompStat program and talk about if it's had an effect or interrelates with community policing.

Commissioner O'Neill: Can I talk about the CompStat program? I can probably talk about that for about five hours if you want me too. Listen, I've been going to CompStat since 1996. I've seen it evolve over the years and with Terry, Chief Monahan involved, and CompStat as Chief of Patrol and Dermot Shea. – The metrics that we're using for the neighborhood policing program constantly come into play. We want to see what NCO's are doing, what the sector cops are doing too. Yes?

Question: So I have two questions, but one is regarding that Crown Heights incident. So when the two officer's responded to that initial call to check on this woman, do you know what time that call was? What time that 9-1-1 call was?

Chief Boyce: I think right now we're developing a timeline on this right now. But that was prior to when we – the second call where they went to. We'll get that forward to us as they do the investigation.

Question: Can you just answer whether it was like hours, minutes, or –

Chief Boyce: I think it was probably close to an hour prior to that.

Question: Okay, and then my second question is regarding a different incident on – this was in the Lower East Side, someone had put a mural of a penis on a building and we have heard that the NYPD is looking to charge the person.

Chief Boyce: We're discussing with the owner of that building if they want to go forward with the complaint against that individual who has identified herself through social media. So we'll see what the owner of that building wants to do.

Question: Okay, got it.

Unknown: Any other police crime questions?

Question: Commissioner as you know Erica Garner suffered catastrophic heart attack, she's not going to recover. Looking back on that entire sequence, circumstances in advance. Do you feel that the department acted completely appropriate in the aftermath of that incident? Or are there things that you feel you could have done better, more, other, when this happened since then?

Commissioner O'Neill: We're going to talk about what the department has done since July of 2014 and after November and December of 2014 when both Ferguson and Garners decisions came down. Just take a look at how much we've evolved. And we're up and running in 51 of our 77 Precincts with neighborhood policing. And a big part of this is what occurred during that incident and quite frankly and the atmosphere in this city and the trust that we've lost during that incident and the trust where each and every day we're building back here in New York City. So I think our response was appropriate and continues to get better and better every day. Yes?

Question: Commissioner for you. There is a lot of talk is if the primal of this drop about you know stop and frisk has been reduced so much and crime continues to drop. But how do you think about sort of the arc of the use of stop and frisk. Do you think that the current numbers could have been used eight, 10 years ago and you would have still seen the drop?

Commissioner O'Neill: I am not going to talk about what — I'm talking about what's happening now. I'm not going to talk about what happened in prior administrations.

Unknown: Wrap up on police right now and then we will move on okay?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes sir, in the second row.

Question: [inaudible] hate crimes, hate crime numbers this year – I asked about this last month as well. But through this Sunday, the 24th, they were down very slightly compared to the same period last year but still not quite back down to where they were in 14 and 15. I've spoken with some academic folks who study hate crimes across the nation. They said there appears to be a kind of this sustained increase, with the spike that was seen after the election last year has sustained itself to some degree. I wonder what you make of that assessment and if, again if there are any new or different tactics you are taking in terms of hate crimes or if you –

Commissioner O'Neill: Bob, you want to talk about the Hate Crimes Task Force and the things that we have done.

Chief Boyce: Sure, sure. We have the largest hate crimes task force in the country. We have the largest police department in the country. So we've seen though they are up from last year – I think about 11 percent the last time I looked. I don't have those stats with me right now – at one time they were up 30 percent. So there's been a gradual, even though it's still up, a decrease.

So we look at things that are happening and a lot of those was – we saw a tremendous increase in people, criminal mischief – people putting swastikas all over the trains and gas stations and bathrooms, public bathrooms everywhere. We've seen a reduction of that. That's a, we look at almost as an actual discourse, what's going on, how people are speaking in the country, what's going on around the world. So we've seen that tone down dramatically as we go into the latter part of this year. So this is what I can speak to thereof now. It looks like it is winding down from what we saw.

Unknown: Up front, last [inaudible] on police [inaudible] up front.

Question: Commissioner, how many officers have received implicit bias training since Eric Garner's death?

First Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Tucker, NYPD: So we are in the process of beginning the implicit bias training. We've been piloting a number of classes and courses and writing curriculum and also doing some research with respect to what the best training might look like. And most recently, two months ago we finalized the contract with an organization who will do the training.

So that training will begin for sergeants, supervisors, recruits, as well as, the executive staff. Not necessarily in that order. And they will, we will train everyone, the entire 36,000 officers by the end of 2019. And that training will begin with – I said recruits, executive staff, senior executive staff, sergeants, lieutenants and so on.

Question: I'm sorry and when does that begin?

Deputy Commissioner Tucker: That begins, probably late January, early February.

Unknown: Let me get a few seconds just to transition if we don't –

[Inaudible]

Mayor: okay, last chance guys. All ashore if you are going ashore – a little nautical phrase there.

[Inaudible]

Mayor: Okay. Alright we are going to talk about the property tax situation. So let's get that door closed please. Okay, I want to take about, excuse me I want to talk about the Trump Tax Plan and what it's going to mean for New Yorkers. The bill that President Trump signed into law last week was a very thoughtful Christmas present to the wealthy and to corporations in this country but for a lot of New Yorkers there's going to be a whole different reality. A lot of New Yorkers are going to unfortunately suffer as a result of this legislation.

And the alarm was sounded in a bipartisan manner by members of congress, both republicans and democrats from New York State. But the president and the republican leadership persisted and have now created a situation will mean many New Yorkers will experience double taxation in a very unfair manner.

About 600,000 New York City tax filers will see a tax hike as a result of this legislation. The average predicted is about \$5,000 per household – so very, very substantial negative impact. And most of the people will be affected, most of the 600,000 New York City tax payers who will be negatively affected, average income under \$75,000 a year, so this is working class and middle class people who are going to take the hit in this city.

We understand this is going to make for a tough situation for many people who have already been struggling to make ends meet. We want to lighten that burden in any way we can no matter how unfair this legislation was, no matter how mean spirited. We need to do everything we can to lighten the burden so what we want to urge here is that New Yorkers take advantage of the opportunity in the coming days to prepay property taxes if you can. Now obviously some people are not in a position to do that in terms of cash flow. I certainly can understand that. For the vast majority of my life, I would not have been able to prepay taxes but some people can do it.

And what we are allowing working with the state is the prepayment of property taxes for the first two quarters of 2018 – so again, up through June of 2018, so basically half a year. Now, because this is something that's only been fully worked though in the last few days, it's important that anyone who feels they are in a position to take advantage of this opportunity and avoid some of the additional federal tax exposure next year – if you think you might be able to benefit from this, go see or call a professional tax preparation specialist. It's very important, to get specific help in doing this because it is an unusual situation to prepay.

You can also get information from the city website and it's a special web address I want to give people – probably one you haven't seen previously. It's on.nyc.gov/propertytax. So literally the

letters [O-N.nyc.gov/propertytax](https://www.nyc.gov/propertytax), you can get more information. We are very, very concerned about the impact that this tax plan is going to have immediately on so many New Yorkers. I'm also worried about the larger ramifications of it going forward and what it could do for federal support for New York City on many other fronts.

That still remains to be seen. That will be played out in the budget process in the weeks ahead. But we know what the impact on individual New Yorkers is already. We know how negative it is, we know how harmful it is. We hope at least some New Yorkers can take advantage of this opportunity to prepay. Let me just say a quick summary of that in Spanish.

[Speaks Spanish]

With that, just want to see if there are any questions on that and then we will go to other topics as well.

Question: Yes, first off that figure of \$5,000 – is that [inaudible] over the ten years of the legislation or is that just in the first year –

Mayor: I'll get you the calculations but remember that for so many New Yorkers, now you have your state income tax, your local income tax, and your property tax that are exposed now in a way that they weren't before. All of that used to be deductible. And so the numbers that we derived are from the final legislation and calculated based on how many New Yorkers paid how much tax in each of those categories. We believe that's the kind of exposure will be typical.

Question: And to follow on that – aren't you concerned about misleading people a little bit considering the IRS's own statements and interpretations of this – I mean you would have to challenge it in court in order for the people to get that deduction for 2017—

Mayor: Well no, we believe that based on the work we have done with the State of New York and the state's specific directives that we are fully within the law in giving people this opportunity to prepay it. Again, I understand not everyone will be able to take advantage of it and I understand there's only a few days left. But if it is something that will lighten the burden, people should take advantage of it and from our understanding it is appropriate and effective. I don't see any harm in it if people are able to do it. We want to make sure that they don't have that additional tax exposure. I think it's a worthwhile thing to do.

Question: So you agree with the IRS's interpretation of the law—

Mayor: I'm agreeing with the state's and the city's interpretation. Yes.

Question: Mr. Mayor, this has been a nightmare for a lot local tax accessor offices for New York City to have these [inaudible] a little bit bigger. How can people pay and what has been the plan at the Department of Finance to kind of process this influx?

Mayor: Yes, I mean this was the decision made obviously in consultation with the state and the actions the state has taken. There is prepayment, it's not something that is unheard of, it's not

something people do necessarily do so typically but you can do it. There's a methodology for doing it. If there's additional numbers that come in, we can accommodate that and we will do whatever we have to accommodate because we want to try and give people a break here. But, yes it is a complicated situation to say the least. It's not a fair situation but this is something that we hope will lighten the burden for something people and we are ready to accommodate whatever additional influx there is.

Question: [inaudible] be able to pay online?

Mayor: Again, I'm not the expert on the methodologies so again consult a tax preparer or go to that city website for how you can do it. It's something that is available to people. I don't think I've personally taken advantage of it but it is something that's available to people, has been available before. On the tax issue first and we will go to other topics after.

Question: Have you seen an influx? I mean you've seen places on Long Island where there's like lines out the door, have you heard reports or?

Mayor: We have to get you from our Finance Department what they are seeing. Again, this came together in the last days as the state clarified the rules the regarding this. So I know there is a tremendous amount of interest but we'd have to get back to you with how much people have been calling in. Gloria.

Question: Mr. Mayor, you're a home owner, do you plan to prepay property taxes yourself?

Mayor: We are talking to our tax specialist this very day to figure out if that's something we can do and if we can we want to. I would say our cash flow is limited due to somebody's higher education. But we will do our best if we can.

Question: You've also spoken about wanting to take on the property tax [inaudible] as part of our second term.

Mayor: Correct.

Question: Does this bring any added urgency and are you – is the administration working on that plan yet?

Mayor: Remember, we are working on the plan and we will have announcements on it in the New Year. But the goal, I've said this at a bunch of town hall meetings to a bunch of home owners – goal is to create a more open, transparent, consistent plan around property tax but not one that reduces the overall revenue of the city.

I think it will still be significantly better to have a more rational and transparent system. But if we reduce revenue in any substitutional way, that effects our ability to provide policing, education, sanitation, everything. So I don't think it's fair to say it will solve the problem created by the federal tax law, I think it's much bigger what's been created by the federal tax law. But I hope it will at least make our system work better. And the urgency is the same, we want to get it

done as soon as possible but Gloria, you understand it will take both state and city legislation and that's going to take some time. On the tax issue, yes.

Question: A couple of things, you mentioned that for the 600,000 people who are impacted that the average income is less than \$75,000 a year. Do you have any more information [inaudible] these taxpayers and these folks who itemize their deductions, are they getting actually hit by the limits on property taxes or are they taking it on [inaudible] tax payments [inaudible] –

Mayor: Our folks can get you whatever background we have but we do know – look, a typical New Yorker pays state, local, and property tax if they are a property owner, obviously. So, they're going to be hit across the board.

And even if someone – you know, were talking today about one thing we could do which is about property tax and one of the areas where we think we can provide a little bit of help, but even folks who don't own property still have a lot of exposure in terms of the two income taxes.

So, it's a very, very serious hit on New York and other parts of the country – 100 million New Yorkers took advantage of the deductions allowable whether state taxes, local tax, or property tax.

And as we talked about during the whole debate over the bill, it's something that's been in place since 1913 – a mainstay of Democratic and Republican administrations alike was to allow for this deductibility.

So, this is going to be a shock to the system, I think one that's going to be – be seen by a lot whole lot of people as very unfair and very arbitrary. We're going to do anything we can do to help but it's a really broken piece of legislation.

Question: And you mentioned the future possible impact on the City budget with mandatory cuts going on at the federal level. The State Comptroller released a report last week that called the tax bill the biggest threat, essentially, to the City budget since the Great Recession. I wonder now that the bill's been passed and signed and you know it's happening, what's happening in the budget side as you go into the budget [inaudible] –

Mayor: We have to see what the impact will be in the budget process. I mean obviously they're coming back – the Congress is coming back on a continued resolution. That's going to tell us something right away. But it's exactly the same plan that we've enunciated from the beginning. We have heavy reserves. We're going to protect those reserves. We'll be ready for anything thrown at us.

I maintain hope that the new U.S. Senate – the 51-49 U.S. Senate – will help a little bit. I certainly think Senator Schumer's leadership helps a lot.

So, I'm going to hold out hope that there are still budget battles that can be won. And remember it's going to be an election year for the majority in the House and Senate and they may want to

think twice about some of the things that they would love to cut. Maybe they wouldn't love to cut them so much when they think about what their constituents feel.

So this ball game ain't over. It's a serious threat but we're ready for it.

On the tax bill? Anybody else?

Question: Mr. Mayor a lot of folks are saying – or at least there is some rhetoric going around – that this tax plan is [inaudible] targeting states with taxes that are already very high. Your thoughts on that [inaudible] targeting and [inaudible] –

Mayor: Well, I'd say a couple things. I believe there was some conscious targeting. I believe it was political and arbitrary, and I believe there were certainly some who loved the idea of attacking government in all its forms. Right, so, if you talk about states that have stronger governments and provide more policing, more education, more services to their people, there are ideological Republicans who certainly want to see those governments undercut and limited in every way possible.

But I think there's more to this than that. I think this was, first and foremost, an effort to give a massive tax giveaway to the wealthy and corporations. They had to find money to do it. I mean in the end you could see the mad dash to find money and this was one of the places that at least the Republican leadership thought was the most palatable of imperfect options. Very cynical, you know, to take an action that hurts working class and middle class people and then take the vast majority of that benefit and give it to the wealthy and corporations.

About 81 percent of the benefit goes to the top one percent. The surprise they will find, and you see it in the public polling pretty consistently, is that people have seen through it, understand it's a giveaway to the wealthy and corporations, and it's not just blue states in the end. It's 100 million taxpayers and that's a huge percentage of this country in lots of places that aren't blue states and they're going to be very upset too.

Last call on the tax issue and then we'll go to other issues, yes?

Question: Mr. Mayor [inaudible] –

Mayor: Okay, let's just try the last call a little bit tighter there. Last call on the tax issue – taxes, once, twice. Go ahead.

Question: [Inaudible] What are you doing as we enter the budget season to also deal with those possibilities other than the likely cuts [inaudible]?

Mayor: You are on top of your facts. There's a lot of elements to this that are very damning not just for New York City but for localities all over the country. This is what we do in any budget process is we evaluate all of the factors whether it's in the private sector economy, whether it's federal actions, state actions, and that determines revenue estimates. It determines our assumptions about how our different programs are going to operate.

Look, we're going to have the preliminary budget coming up in a few weeks and then we're going to go through a larger process that will allow us to see what actually happens in Washington on the federal budget. We're going to go through a process with the State budget. And we're going to have to access it all.

And as we do we'll be able to give you really clear answers about what we think each of those pieces means for New York City. But right now, obviously, you know just days after the bill was signed, we're still accessing the full impact.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Louder.

Question: Do you think PEG or any smaller program is on the table?

Mayor: Look, I'm not going to foreshadow. I'm only going to say we have always held the option available to determine additional savings. We've had savings programs in other budgets. If we need to go farther into that area, we will, but I don't want to speak to any specifics until we formulate it.

Okay, Maya.

Question: Yeah, two-part question on the inauguration. So, Senator Sanders, as you announced yesterday, is going to be swearing you. Can you tell us a little bit about how that came together [inaudible]?

Mayor: Yes, I picked up a telephone and I called him. I said, "Would you swear me in?" He said, "Yes."

You know, I have had the tremendous honor of getting to know Bernie Sanders and starting to work with him on some important issues. And I think the world of him. I think no one has done more to change the discussion in this country on the question of income inequality and to, I think, usher in the beginning of a whole new form of progressive activism.

And to me, I thought about the moment and I thought about what I wanted to say to people in this moment as I started a second term. And I wanted to make very clear that we remain committed to addressing income inequality and creating a fairer city, and no one personified that better than Bernie Sanders, and on top of that he's a born and bred Brooklynite and very proud of the city he comes from. And he still feels very attached to New York City as I saw when I had lunch with him at Katz's Deli a few weeks back. He feels a very, very deep connection to his city and I think that was something that meant something to him. I won't put words in his mouth but I think because it is his home city, it took on some added value to him.

Question: And then as a follow up, have you received a response to the invitation to former President Bill Clinton [inaudible] and Hillary Clinton? Do they plan to attend? [Inaudible] –

Mayor: I have not heard of a response but our team can update you.

Any other questions? Yes?

Question: Mayor, I just wanted to go back to the topic of NYCHA and lead tests and notification of tenants. We had a couple stories this week. One was a case of an apartment that had been checked for lead when it was vacated. NYCHA says it was abated. A tenant moves in, isn't told because NYCHA says the lead is fully abated and removed. In the coming years the child who lives in the apartment tested for high levels of lead in her blood. And course knowing what we know now that some of these abatements were done by people who were not certified to do them, are you concerned that people who moved into apartments that were abated before October when people didn't have the proper licenses in all of these abatement situations, or in some of them – are you concerned that those people weren't notified that there had been abatement before they moved in? And then I have another one.

Mayor: First, I'm concerned about children and I'm concerned about people's health and well-being across the board and we're not going to stop until we feel we are addressing this issue in every conceivable way as effectively as possible.

Second, I want us to do, consistently, a better a job at communicating with the public and with the residents on these issues. That being said, respectfully, the Daily News story was just plain wrong and conflated a number of different things in an inaccurate fashion.

The actions taken when an apartment vacated, the full work done on an apartment, that was done in an appropriate way by certified people. If it's true in other situations, and we've been open about this, where there was only a repainting for example not because an apartment was vacated and went through a full checklist – in some of the other cases thing weren't done by certified people. That issue has now been addressed.

But on the vacating of apartments there was a firm protocol that did involved certified people doing that work.

Obviously, as well, on the question of the children, we have to be very careful – and I would urge the Daily News to be more careful – in assuming the situation [inaudible] children and I say this with deep concern for the children.

We don't believe that the information the Daily News has put forward accurately portrays the situation with these children. We all need to know what is the nature of their disability? Is it lead based? Is it lead that came from the living space or some other source? From what we've seen in the reporting, again, a lot of information is conflated that does not specifically provide the facts on what happened in this cases.

So, we're going to keep working with everyone in NYCHA. Anybody who feels their child has a problem, we're want to follow up. Our Department of Health follows up very aggressively.

We'll continue to do that but we have to be clear, one – some problems are not based on lead. Two – some lead problems sadly may have come from other sources.

We need to be very careful and scientific about that and not make assumptions.

Question: So, are you saying [inaudible] child had more than ten parts per –

Mayor: Again, I'm not here –

Question: [Inaudible] –

Mayor: I'm not going to go into –

Question: [Inaudible] –

Mayor: I'm not going back and forth with you, respectfully, because I don't think the Daily News looked at this carefully enough. We're happy to have our Health – we're happy to have our Health officials talk to you about what the situations were with these children, what the source may have been, what the impact has been on the kids. But again, I just don't accept the premise here that all these pieces connect the way your paper thinks they connect.

Question: I'm sorry, there was just another case of more lead being found in another building. I believe it was the Throgs Neck Houses. And they registered lead in some 70 apartments according to tenant leader there and those tenants have had their – people are coming in to repaint but they told the tenant leaders and others have told the Daily News that they weren't told by the people coming in to repaint it was for lead. Are you confident that people are actually being notified of what's going on in their apartments?

Mayor: I don't depend on the people coming in to paint to be the sources of public information. Our job is to alert people directly – NYCHA reaching out to their residents and obviously through public information through the media and others on our website – all the different tools.

We're going to keep doing that. We did that recently when we came forward and said we needed to do more on the common areas. We put that out. We alerted residents. We're going to keep doing that. I don't know about this case. We'll have folks look into that.

Question: In the past couple months, we've seen two [inaudible] of NYC Ferry [inaudible] leaks [inaudible] out of service. So, at this point especially in the cold months, now, why should anyone feel safe taking NYC Ferry at this point?

Mayor: Well, respectfully, your question overstates the situation greatly. The ferries have been safe, that is a fact. We've had a huge level of demand for the ferries. They've worked well. There were times when we had too much demand and we had to adjust and we did adjust.

Safety has not been a problem here. Now, that being said, I'm not happy about these two instances one bit.

From what I know, and this is preliminary information there needs to be a full investigation, both of them were based on human error but that doesn't make them acceptable. Again, thank God no one was injured in either incident.

But I am demanding real answers from the contractor as to why this has happened. It makes no sense to me. These are routes that are well known. The information is there about where there might be any problems along the routes that they have to move around.

This literally makes no sense to me. So, both of the pilots involved were pulled off their work and evaluated. We'll get back to you on the details about that situation.

But, no, there's no question it's safe. We have ample evidence it's safe and we're going to continue to make sure the service is run well.

Question: How is it safe for people to be stranded on a sandbar in freezing temperatures for [inaudible] –

Mayor: Look, it's not acceptable situation in the sense it was totally avoidable, this much we can say for sure. Shouldn't have happened. Not satisfying or acceptable to me at all. And we're going to take action. People are safe because people all came out of it safe, that's the answer.

Question: Just a follow-up to that question. Do you think that – does this reflect at all that you might have rushed to get the service done – whether it's the design of the boats, the staffing –

Mayor: Just let me, again – respectfully I just said very clearly, from what we understand, and we'll continue to look at it, both instances were human error. Human error is a part of human life but that doesn't make it acceptable to me. The boats have been fine. There were a few issues with a few boats, they were addressed and resolved. The routes, you know, everyday we've been running the routes without this kind of problem. I have no idea why in these two instances specifically these mistakes were made and we want to get to the bottom of it. We want to make sure that appropriate disciplinary action is taken. But, you guys, you've got to look at the totality of something that has now been going on for quite a while and it's had a huge number of riders. This has happened twice and we're going to take steps to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Go ahead.

Question: This is another question about community policing from before, are the efforts of the NYPD to target specific known criminal offenders and gangs working? And have illegal firearms been reduced in the city?

Mayor: I think that's a yes and a yes. Go ahead Commissioner.

Commissioner O'Neill: Did you want a detailed response or just the two yeses?

Question: I'd like a detailed response Commissioner.

Commissioner O'Neill: If – just look at the levels of crime and violence in New York City. I'm not going to talk into prognosticate about how we're going to end up the year, but just look at the reduction in shootings over the last two years. That's not – that's not an accident that that happened. Alright, there's a lot of hard work going in here and targeting – Bob Boyce's people targeting the people – the very small percentage of the people involved in violence and crime here. And that's an integral part of the neighborhood policing program.

Getting people to help us identify who is involved in the violence. We do it pretty well but I think in working in conjunction with the community we do it even better. So I think that, moving forward here, I think we can continue to push crime down as I said before. And then targeting gangs and crews is going to be the way we – that we do that. What was the second part of the question?

Question: I wanted to know if illegal firearms had been reduced in the city and how do you –

Commissioner O'Neill: Well we continue to work with our local prosecutors and the US Attorney's Offices when we do arrest someone with a firearm to make sure that they get the appropriate consequence for doing that. And there is – we continue to make firearms arrest each and every day.

Question: And lastly Sir, have there been increases in technology available to police officers at the lowest level, at the street level I mean?

Commissioner O'Neill: So this is your first press conference? Yes, okay.

[Laughter]

Yes, I mean look at the phones, look at LPR, look at AVL, each and every RMP has a tablet in it, ShotSpotter. So there's tremendous tech – we have tremendous technological capabilities.

Question: And has that been effective?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes. Next.

Question: Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: Yes?

Question: This week your office released a lot of emails in response to a FOIL request. I wanted to ask you about one specific thing, Ross [inaudible] who was the Finance Chairman I think was his title of your campaign –

Mayor: He was Finance Director.

Question: There were a lot of emails between him and City Hall. I'm wondering if you think there's any issue there with someone who had been dealing directly with donors on behalf on the campaign also dealing directly with City Hall.

Mayor: Again, the specific emails, at least some of them as I understand it were about things like inviting people to events for example, because we're going back now years with some of these emails, when we were trying to win the Democratic National Convention. We put together a committee to show the Democratic Party that there would be tremendous support in New York City for the convention including fundraising support, which you know conventions are costly and the host city bears a lot of those expenses. So, it was natural for someone who had been the Finance Director, he came on toward the end of my 2013 campaign as the Finance Director, that someone in that position would provide names of people who should be invited to such a meeting. I think that's quite normal.

Yes?

Question: [Inaudible] couple of things about the inauguration. Is there an inauguration committee and is your approach to that different from last time [inaudible]

Mayor: So it's a whole different animal this time. Last time was first inauguration, a new administration, obviously for a lot of us particularly important first Democrat in 20 years. There was a lot of effort put in to having a big and important public event.

This time with a second term I think it's a whole different reality. We've had a mandate, I've said it from the beginning to my team, to keep it as modest as possible. We're not looking to do anything fancy here. And I think it's going to be a great event. We're going to try and keep it very time efficient given the cold weather. But I think it's going to be a great event but we didn't need to put together a committee or do any of the things we did last time.

Question: And the second part is, are you raising money to pay for the inauguration [inaudible]

Mayor: Yes, my team can get you details. But a small amount was needed – a certain amount of expenses can be paid for by the City as was true last time. Other expenses will be paid for through – again we're forming a committee but not forming a leadership group if you will. Just literally an entity that can take in donations and pay whatever needs to be paid for with private donations. I think it's going to be a small amount in the scheme of things but we'll get you that exactly.

Question: Are you personally doing the fundraising?

Mayor: I've done a few fundraising calls, yes.

Question: Just – I guess to quickly follow-up on that before I get to my question. You've done a few fundraising calls, can you give us a couple of examples. Types of people –

Mayor: It's the same thing we do with – it's the same rules as for the Campaign Finance Board normal elections. And everything follows the same – literally the same contribution limits, same rules, same restrictions, same disclosure concept. You'll see it all when it all comes out.

Question: My questions are, looking ahead into the early parts of the new year, we didn't see this as much last year but two years ago the Governor tried to off-set some costs to the City –

Mayor: Yes he did. Good memory.

Question: And the Governor's Office has referenced the City's surplus multiple times around the MTA and other things. Is that something you're actively in discussions with them or trying to pre-empt as another attempt to off-set some –

Mayor: I've been talking to the Governor. Look forward to having a broader conversation with him as he prepares for the State of the State. You know, I'm hoping for a good faith situation where there's a lot of communication and coordination. I don't know of any particular cost that is being suggested be taken up by the City, anything new that we haven't heard before if I can say it that way.

And I've been very clear – and I'll say it a thousand times if I have to. We understand the threats facing us. We used to think the primary threat was economic downturn, now we think the primary threat is policy changes in Washington. But we also know the economy could turn, you know, we've seen that before.

So we have very heavy reserves and we're going to protect those reserves at all costs. And the notion that we have strong surpluses is not an open season call for New York State to raid New York City's resources. We need them because if anything goes wrong, if we sustain federal cuts we will also sustain state cuts, and our ability to keep our police force at this level and continue so much of what we're going that's improved the quality of life. The only way we protect that is with those strong reserves and not allowing them to be undercut. So, they can talk about it all they want, it's not going to change my approach.

Question: [Inaudible] do you have any New Year's resolutions?

Mayor: I want to do better work in 2018. I am blessed in terms of my family situation and I feel wonderful about everything going on in my family, my wife, my children, we're at a really good point in life. But, my hope is to do better work in 2018 and keep learning and keep growing.

Yes?

Question: Can you tell us who is pushing the button for the ball drop and how that decision –

Mayor: That's not our decision the – I don't know all the nuances. Eric can follow-up but there's a whole effort that's not determined by the City of New York that decides who else is a part of that. And I can't tell you who else is a part of that.

Okay last call. Gloria?

Question: Mayor, do you plan on going up for the State of State?

Mayor: Yes.

Question: So can you just give us a bit of a broader idea of what you're looking forward to in terms of what will be included from the Governor's plans that effect the City directly. We're all expecting congestion pricing to be a big part of –

Mayor: Look, I don't – I don't know what's going to be in the State of the State, and again I'm looking forward to talking to the Governor about it. If there is some kind of plan but forward to fund the MTA, you know, I welcome any plan being put on the table. I obviously believe fundamentally the millionaire's tax is the best way to go. But I welcome any other plan being put on the table because it will further the whole discussion and hopefully lead to resolution.

You know, my hope always is to see improvements in the State's support for education. I think there's a decent chance that will happen this year. To see additional help in terms of affordable housing and supportive housing. It's the same things we've been talking about. That fundamental agenda doesn't change.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Say again.

Question: Does that also included congestion pricing? You said you're supportive of many plans –

Mayor: No, I've – don't worry I'm not going to pop that out on you. No, the – I believe in the millionaire's tax. But I have said many, many times if there is a congestion pricing plan, put it on the table. It would be good for all of us to see an alternative. The millionaire's tax plan that I support, introduced by Senator Gianaris and Assembly member O'Donnell, is a living, breathing, actual tangible thing. And some people can say they like it and other people can say they don't like it. But it exists, you can see it.

If people want to promote congestion pricing, put a plan on the table. And so if that happens, it strongly suggests that we'll get into a point, hopefully leading up to the State budget, where there'll be some resolution on these matters.

Last call.

Question: Erica Garner was brought up earlier. I'm wondering if you have spoken with her family at all or what words you might offer to them.

Mayor: It's a very, very sad situation. I saw her grandmother very briefly at the National Action Network event on Christmas Eve but – actually on Christmas Day. But, it's a horrible tragedy

and in a family that's been through so much, and this is very, very painful. She just gave birth to her child months ago and it's a horrible, horrible tragedy and I feel for the family.

Yes?

Question: Mayor if you could, these two quick ones in here. What's the status of the monuments commission? Should we expect news on that before the end of the year?

Mayor: You should expect news on it very shortly. I'm not sure it's going to be before the end of the year, but it's going to be days.

Question: Okay. And this is the end of your first term –

Mayor: Yes.

Question: – as mayor obviously looking ahead with the inauguration, obviously there's lots of hard work to being mayor but I'm curious, what was the most fun thing you got to do in your first term as mayor?

Mayor: A lot of fun things. Wow, I don't know if I have a most fun thing. You know, look, it's been a wonderful experience. It's been a fascinating experience. I always say it's, you know, there's lot of beautiful things that happen in this city and people who tell me their stories, and I don't have a perfect vignette for you but just meeting the people of this city in every borough and every neighborhood and hearing about their lives means a lot to me.

I met some extraordinary people along the way. I mentioned, you know, having this growing relationship with Bernie Sanders, that's an amazing thing. That's been a fascinating and positive thing. But so many other people as well. So, you know, I think for Chirlane and I it's been a very moving experience, you know, it's – I would say it's not fun in the conventional sense. But, it's rewarding, it's fascinating, it's moving in many ways.

Okay, last call.

Question: What is the least fun –
[Laughter]

Mayor: I'm not even going to take that question. I'm going to show discretion and say a very Happy New Year everyone.

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