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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER O'NEILL HOLD MEDIA
AVAILABILITY ON CRIME STATISTICS**

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill: Good morning, everyone. Thanks for being here. In a moment you're going to hear from Mayor de Blasio, then you're going to hear from Lori Pollock, our Chief of Crime Control Strategies. She's going to talk about the month of September and also about the third quarter.

Summer is definitely behind us. I find that pretty hard to believe. It went by pretty quick. It was a very busy one as usual and overall it was a very safe summer – and you'll hear that from Lori.

We've just come off some major annual events here in New York City with the U.S. Open tennis tournament in Queens and the U.N. General Assembly in Manhattan. And I want to congratulate all the men and women of the NYPD, and all the other agencies that helped, who should yet again why we are the best police department in the United States of America.

From traffic agents to patrol cops, from intel analysts to counter-terrorism experts, the NYPD did a great job of safeguarding all the visitors to our great city from far and wide while balancing that with the absolute need to relentlessly fight crime and keep New Yorkers safe in every neighborhood.

Our reach and expertise goes beyond the borders of our five boroughs as you know. There's a press conference later on today over at OEM, and I just want to quickly commend the approximately 100 New York City police, fire, and other emergency personnel who, as part of the elite FEMA task force, recently got back from North Carolina.

They checked in on and rescued literally hundreds of people and animals in the wake of Hurricane Florence. Our agencies have responded to disasters like this since the early 1990s. New York City has some of the finest, highly trained professionals anywhere. We know it's always our duty to help others in dire need whenever and wherever our skills are needed.

So, I thank our FEMA team for what they did down south and for what I'm sure they'll do again in the future.

I'm going to turn it over to the Mayor. Mr. Mayor –

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you very much, Commissioner. Congratulations again to you and all the leadership of the NYPD here – another very strong performance in the month of September. Before I speak to the statistics that have been put out today I want to talk about another issue that’s very much on the minds of all of us and all New Yorkers. And I want to frame it by saying this, this is going to be a very bipartisan statement because the concern I’m going to raise is really a call to conscious for everyone in the federal government – for the President, for the Senate, for the House, Democrats and Republicans alike. All of them like to talk in terms of patriotism, all of them like to honor our first responders.

Well, this is going to be the moment of truth because we have learned about a very painful reality that has now been confirmed publicly that the fund that has been put aside to care for those sickened on and after 9/11 – those who went and did the right thing, the first responders who went to save lives and then try and make families whole again, who participated in the recovery effort. All those first responders who were sickened have depended on the federal government to be there for them.

But here’s what we now know. The fund that was set up for victims and survivors is running out of money and it is set to expire in 2020, and that is unacceptable. Anyone who says they care about first responders in Washington has to step up. This is clear as a bell. This fund must be made permanent. There must be enough money to take care of those who served us all so valiantly, put their lives on the line, and are paying the price for it right now.

So, if ever there is something that should be bipartisan it’s this. But remember how many times we had to fight for this basic funding, this basic support for our heroic first responders. Again, this is a moment where, you know, it’s really, really simple – all of you should ask every member of the House, every member of the Senate, and the President, will they support a permanent fund for the victims and survivors of 9/11? Will they fully fund it? Period.

And I want you to know that we are going to demand that Congress do the right thing. We’re going to shine a light on those who do the right thing and those who don’t. But I am going to make sure that all of the resources of this city are brought to bear to honor those who sacrificed so much and do all we can for them.

Just want to very quickly summarize that in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, I want to turn to the information that’s been put out today about our continuous fight against crime. It’s very clear after nine months, three quarters of the year 2018, New York City is and continues to be the safest big city in America.

The efforts of the NYPD have been extraordinary but we also see very clearly, this year the NYPD is comparing itself to the record setting year of 2017. And that’s not easy. We do see some challenges we need to address and we take them very seriously.

Writ large, as you’ll hear from Chief Pollock, crime is down – a lot of very positive trends continue. We continue to be concerned about what we’ve seen with an increase in rape and that is obviously directly connected to an increase in reporting. That increase in reporting is

necessary to turn the tide once and for all and make sure that perpetrators are brought to justice. But it's an area of continued concern. We do see a noticeable uptick in terms of homicide. We take that very seriously.

I am absolutely convinced that the NYPD has the approach and the resources to address that issue. But when you look overall, crime is down one percent compared to last year and last year was the all-time record year. So, the NYPD continues to achieve. And very importantly, shooting incidents down almost five percent compared to last year.

So, in a country where we are rightfully focused constantly on the issue of gun safety and where there's too many guns in circulation, the NYPD continues to do extraordinary things in terms of reducing the number of shooting incidents. And I want to give tremendous credit to the men and women out there protecting us on our streets and also commend the department for the use of technologies like ShotSpotter which have made a big difference.

So, we know neighborhood policing continues to produce results. We know precision policing continues to produce results. We are going to drive those strategies further but I'm going to make the point again – if there is something that needs more attention in this equation, it's that the NYPD has achieved all this while continuously reducing the number of arrests.

I don't see – honestly and respectfully, I don't see this story being told enough. I think it's an incredibly powerful story. It speaks to a police department that is using all its tools properly, that is using its training to maximum effect. Also, in an era where there is tremendous concern about justice and reducing mass incarceration, what better way to reduce mass incarceration than to reduce unnecessary arrests?

If you look at the numbers – this year compared to last year, arrests down 12 percent. Crime down as well – very powerful fact. All this comes down to human beings. Every time we talk about stats, it's really about the human beings behind them. It's about the families that are safer, the people that are safer, the neighborhoods that are safer. And the NYPD has done an extraordinary job this year and certainly in the month of September.

Just very quickly in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that we turn to Chief Pollock for the details of the update.

Chief of Crime Control Strategies Lori Pollock, NYPD: Good afternoon, thank you. As the Mayor said we continue to make unbelievable strides in reducing overall crime. We are down almost two percent in overall crime for the month of September and one percent for the year. That is a reduction of over 700 crimes year-to-date. Again we're in trend for another record setting year of below 97,000 crimes. However, year-to-date we are up 13 murders – 228 versus 215. 228 is still the lowest number through the third quarter in history. And I would like to give some perspective on the murder increase. So I'll break the year down into quarters. But when we're talking about murders in terms of numbers this is no way shape or form meant to minimize the impact that you know tragic loss of life means to family and friends. The numbers serve to inform us to where they're happening and why and what we're doing to prevent crime.

So in the first quarter we had a record breaking low – 57 murders versus 66. 66 was the previous low. So that was a decrease of nine murders. The second quarter is where we saw a marked increase – 92 versus 70. The Bronx drove these murder numbers for the citywide second quarter with an increase of 20 murders – 33 versus 13 with no singular defining motive. However, notably stabbing murders were up 11 versus one in the Bronx, and domestics were up five versus zero. We made tremendous adjustments going into the third to address the homicides and gang violence citywide and specifically in the Bronx. We deployed [inaudible] heavily in the Bronx, we increased the CeaseFire Catchment area to include the 4-6, and 5-2 Precincts in addition to the existing Catchment areas of the 4-0 Precinct and PSA seven which covers housing in the South Bronx. We worked closely with our partners in parole and probation to add geographical and curfew restrictions and gang and crew members to prevent retaliatory violence and these weren't just one size fits all steps. A perfect example is the citywide Trinitario enforcement action, which prevented parolees and probationers from attending certain events, like Dominican Day parade. And we continue to work closely with prosecutors to enhance all gun prosecutions. These measures have brought the Bronx murder down – excuse me, the Bronx murder number down significantly in the third quarter 18-versus 26 that's a decrease of eight. Year-to-date the Bronx is still showing an increase of 14 murders – 66 versus 52. The Bronx increase of 14 may be hard to overcome by the end of the year but their shootings are down 31 year-to-date and down five shootings in September from 25 to 20, which is an unbelievable reduction in gun violence in the Bronx.

In the third quarter as the Bronx was trending down overall, Queens was 20 versus 18 but specifically Queens North saw an increase of 10 murders versus three. We saw two domestic violence tragedies that took four lives and two additional murders giving the 1-1-4 Precinct six versus one in the third quarter. Again, through analysis and redeployment we are seeing significant reductions in violence in those areas. We finished the third quarter with a total of 79 murders, which tied with last year for the lowest number of murders in any third quarter. When we talk specifically about murder in September we had an increase of three murders 27 versus 24. The murders were spread across five boroughs. Brooklyn saw an increase of five murders 12 versus five. Queens an increase of three – six versus three. Bronx saw a decrease of one – six versus seven. Manhattan saw a decrease of two – three versus five. The majority of our 27 murders involved people known to each other. Majority had an underlying crime nexus that resulted in the murder.

Of these September murders we have seen a significant increase of people dying from being shot and 16 of our 27 murders were from guns, which is an increase of six over last year. Four of 27 murder incidents were the result of domestic violence. Two of the four incidents involved families that had no prior history of reporting with the police and in general 70 percent of our murders have no prior history of reporting.

So to that end we have been working very closely with our federal partners in the southern district to prosecute domestic violence offenders that possess a gun or ammunition. And that's a huge step towards keeping these people in prison not to increase family violence, which leads to shootings. The year-to-date number is down 28 shootings – 573 versus 601. The city has now seen increases – excuse me, the city has now seen decreases in shootings in eight consecutive quarters. September's trend was no different. We had historically low number of shootings in September, which was 70 versus 79. Our rape numbers – yes they are trending up. We had 22

percent increase – 144 versus 118 and 24 percent or 35 of those reports occurred outside of the Comp Stat that year. Our robberies are down two percent – 1,128 versus 1,151. Our felony assaults are also down 6.5 percent. Burglaries down 2.9 percent. Grand larceny down 1.2 percent. Our housing crime is down 32 crimes – down 7.7 percent for the month. And in closing I would like to emphasize that this is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and every contact we have with the victim of family violence an opportunity to provide services, document and incident that can be followed up with an order of protection, remove a gun from the household. Friends and family often know that there are people in crisis and there are discreet ways of helping them. So I am going to leave with this phone number 6-2-1 excuse me 1-8-0-0-6-2-1-H-O-P-E or 4-6-7-3 and if you can put that our there –

Mayor: Could you repeat that so that –

Chief Pollack: Sure, 1-8-0-0-6-2-1-H-O-P-E, the last numbers being 4-6-7-3. Thank you.

Commissioner O’Neill: I would take some on-topic questions about crime. Marcia?

Question: I noticed that the rape numbers are up and they have been up for a number of months now. And I wonder if you developed a team to investigate these increased rapes? What are you doing to deal with [inaudible]?

Commissioner O’Neill: Dermot?

Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea, NYPD: Yeah, Marcia, so when you look at the rapes it was actually this point at last year. When the increase really jumped up – October 17’ is when that spike started and to some level it’s continued since. In recent memory we’ve added some significant resources to the Special Victims Division. Earlier this year we put 34 additional investigators in too to catch those cases. We’ve also added recently a significant number of resources in terms of supervisors into the Special Victims Division. So there’s a lot going on. As has been mentioned one of the first tasks I did in taking over the Detectives Bureau is really look at the entire division how it’s operating, what’s working well, what could use some improvement with a fresh set of eyes. Analyst was put in to try to streamline some of the work that’s done in freeing up resources of existing detectives has been an emphasis. So there’s a lot going on. In terms of – Lori mentioned what we’re seeing is still out of period rapes. But you know in terms of Special Victims I think that when you look at some of the cases that have been highlighted in the news recently. The men and women overall in the Special Victims Division they’re doing phenomenal work in trying to apprehend as quickly as possible rapists when these crimes do occur.

Question: [Inaudible] are you having to investigate each and every one of them? And what are you finding? Are you able to solve some of these cases?

Chief Shea: Well I think, I don’t want to generalize but first I’ll start with the beginning. Every rape complaint that comes to us is investigated. And they are investigated thoroughly, each one though is unique in terms of when it happened, the individuals involved, each will get an investigation really tailored to the individual circumstances and we have gone on record many times in trying to stress that we have victim centric model that we have really been pushing. So taking the complaint in, communicating right from the start with the victim what the process

entails, what the options are, the time table, the ability to step in and out of the investigation really and many people do opt to step out of the investigation. For many they want to report it, they want to get it off their chest but sometimes a prosecution is not what's sought. So it's really, it goes to the training that our Special Victims men and women receive. They are well versed in this and I think they handle this crime with the utmost of compassion.

Mayor: Marcia, Marcia let jump in. I just want to emphasize, we want all victims to come forward. This is really important and I want to urge all the media here to get this message out. Dermot makes the point in the last year we've seen a lot more reports. I think that is directly connected to the kind of conversation we are finally having in our society – acknowledging the horrible number of sexual number of sexual assaults against women that have been tragically, inappropriately the norm for too long in this country and must stop but it stops by people coming forward and giving the best police force in the country the ability to go after the perpetrators. We do not want them ever to harm another woman. So we have got encourage everyone, if you know something bring it forward. It doesn't matter if it's from the past, we want these reports so we can bring justice.

Question: I'm just wondering, have you seen an uptick because of the things that have been going on in Washington, the Kavanaugh hearings, the women who have come forward to testify about being raped, if there is any you know connection to that? Or have you just been seeing an increase because of all of the #MeToo Movement that has been going on in the last year?

Chief Pollock: The #MeToo has been the year's trend. We haven't seen any perceptible difference in the month of September.

Commissioner O'Neill: Tony?

Question: For Chief Polluck, you mentioned two strategies that seem to have helped decrease the quarter's homicides. You mentioned a Ceasefire zones or initiatives – could you basically explain that? And could you also comment if I heard you right, you are barring or through probation or parole, you are actually constricting where certain gang members can go to, highly congregating areas, parades – can you explain that?

Chief Polluck: Yes, that is worked through with Ceasefire, Ceasefire is a focused deterrence intervention program where all probation, parole, prosecutors, NYPD, they sit on a board and they – I'm not that, my explanation might not be as thorough as it should be but the basic idea behind it is to offer as many services as possible to gang members and people that are involved in the violence and if they don't take advantage of those services there are consequences and they are told of those consequences and part of the agreement is that if they are on parole of probation, they have to abide by certain restrictions.

Question: And restrictions would be stay away from [inaudible]?

Chief Polluck: Correct. Yes, or areas that might result in retaliatory violence.

Question: Are you seeing compliance with that or do you not know?

Chief Polluck: Yes, we didn't have any incidents at the areas that they weren't supposed – you know, Dominican Day parade, certain other events that they were told to stay away from.

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco?

Question: Chief Shea, Commissioner to you also – with all the rhetoric coming out of Washington regarding the Kavanaugh hearings, criticism of her testimony, the President [inaudible]. Is there a concern that, what [inaudible] fought for, meaning for victims to come forward no matter how old the case might be, that that gets offset by something like this?

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco, I don't think so. I think the work that we do with the advocates help us get that message out there – that we are looking for all victims of sexual assault to come forward so we give us the opportunity to stop it by investigating it. So might be too soon to tell, but we don't see that happening in New York City because of what's going on in Washington.

Mayor: I just want to add Rocco, the President of the United States mocking a victim of sexual violence is disgusting and he's done many things that do not mark him as a leader but this is one of the all-time lows. But I also want to say our society has moved way past Donald Trump. He has an attitude that's like lost in the 1950's but today what is happening all over this country is that people are believing victims and survivors. That's what we see more and more. That's the norm. And families are having really honest conversations they never had before. It's tragic that it has had to come out of some people's pain but it is sparking a whole different national conversation and I don't think the President's disgusting comments will change that one bit.

Question: Can you say what the percentage of reporting increase is? In other words there are 22 percent more rapes, is there a percentage of how many more women are reporting this year from last year?

Chief Polluck: 35 were out of the period from the total number. I will give you the total number. Yes the month of September was 144 versus 118, and 35 of those reports occurred outside of this year.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes, in the back row?

Question: [Inaudible] New York Times. So we are hearing a lot of anger and confusion from attendees of this Saturday's Global Citizen Festival about the mixed messaging from police response, about struggles they are having finding their lost property, recovering that. For the Mayor and the Police Commissioner, do you have a response to the attendees? A lot of them came from outside the city, assumed the way that Saturday night's events unfolded, will you be events?

Commissioner O'Neill: Chief Harrison, Rodney?

Chief of Patrol Services Rodney Harrison, NYPD: Yes good morning. So Chief Kathy O'Reilly and Jimmy Waters had a great strategy prior to the event. We had over hundreds of police officers assigned to the concert. And anybody that attended was [inaudible] so the security was there. Before Janet Jackson performed there was a dispute in the front left pen between two individuals, I think that kind of cultivated a little bit of a fear factor where people started

scattering. And then once that occurred, some individuals stepped on what seemed to be water bottles, plastic water bottles which ended up sounding like gunshots. So that's what started the stampede. We did a, I think a very positive job of getting the information out to the people at the event as well as people throughout the city regarding that there was nothing going on. We calmed everybody down and was able to continue to have a successful concert. Going forward, one thing that I always preach about is we always take a look at ourselves regarding what we can do to do better going into the future. So yes there is an evaluation process that we will have in place and we will make sure that things like this are somewhat reduced going into the future.

Question: Regarding restricting people, parolees going places under Ceasefire – in this the first year that that's happened and what's the [inaudible] with those events?

Chief Polluck: I can speak to, sorry.

Chief of Department Terrance Monahan, NYPD: With Ceasefire, it had been utilized a lot when one gang and another gang have had issues in certain developments. So we were able to restrict parolees from going back into their gang hangouts were. This year was the first time that we did it during the Dominican Parade and that was in response to the Junior homicide. We had information that there may be retaliation at a couple of these parades, specifically at the Bronx parade. So working hand and hand with parole and probation, we were able to get those restrictions put in place and both parades went off without incident.

Commissioner O'Neill: Any other crime related questions?

Question: Chief Polluck said, I remember a couple months ago, particularly in July, there was a large proportion of murders had a gang nexus, I'm wondering given kind of the efforts you all have taken to target gang violence, and limit that activity, have you all seen so far this year overall, like an uptick in the number of murders that have been gang related as the, you know, the number of homicides have increased overall?

Chief Polluck: No. The month of September we have seen the same as last year's seven versus seven. As far as the year goes, it vacillates. Right now it's on the lower end. It vacillates between 20 percent and 35 percent.

Question: So there's hasn't been, despite kind of –

Chief Polluck: No, there's no uptick. It's a factor, it's been a factor but there's been no rise.

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco?

Question: Chief Polluck, in Manhattan the numbers are up overall, I guess it's three or four percent [inaudible]. Other than rapes, there seem to be large spikes in burglary and GLAs – is there is one [inaudible]? Stolen laptops or electronics, or [inaudible]?

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco, I can talk about GLAs. We just had auto crime in the other day. Most of those GLAs, grand larceny autos, are scooters and motorcycles. That seems to be contributing to the increase.

Chief Polluck: That is the lion share of Manhattan North was motorcycles and mopeds, things that are easily removed from the street. The grand larcenies again, that does vacillate a lot. Manhattan South seems, is a driver of grand larceny crimes, so.

Questions: What electronics mostly?

Chief Polluck: Phones. I can't say that I have the information on the trends right now. I can get that for you later.

Commissioner O'Neill: In the back row.

Question: Just a follow up on the remarks about Global Citizen. So the information [inaudible] that's new to us. Can the Mayor or the Police Commissioner say something with regards to that? Second of all regarding the former Brooklyn Vice cops that were arrested in September and charged with running a gambling and prostitution ring, are there more arrests coming in that? Do you all feel that you have actually swept the table with that? I know Commissioner that you talked about overhauling Vice's structure, supervisory structure –

Mayor: Can you do me a favor, can we just do the first one first because it is getting kind of deep. So first on, on Global Citizen.

Commissioner O'Neill: So this is a – I happened to be the CO of the Central Park precinct way back in 1998 and it's a large venue on the Great Lawn. We have a great history of keeping events safe there. The way we have it segmented with the emergency lanes is very helpful. I think our use of social media, I think our first hit on social media was about 12 minutes into it. We could do better there, I think that would be very helpful. And I think getting Kathy O'Reilly and Chris Martin up on stage to calm the crowd. I think that was a good move. Maybe we could have done that a little bit quicker. But as Rodney said, whenever you have an event, we go back and we take a look at what happened and see how we can prevent it in the future.

Mayor: Go ahead with the second question.

Question: [inaudible] by the former detective, do you feel like – are there more arrests coming—

Commissioner O'Neill: Hey Ben, you want to talk about that?

First Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Tucker, NYPD: Sure, so nothing really has changed. The information you have already is pretty much where the investigation is for now, so there's no new information to – to speak about or that we can speak about at the moment.

Question: Is there any family involvement? Our understanding is some non NYPD systems were accessed by those detectives.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: No, I'm not going to get into that.

Commissioner O'Neill: Marcia.

Question: Commissioner, the police in Yonkers have tried out or are looking at a new way of stopping emotionally disturbed or other people who may have weapons. Instead of using [inaudible] Taser, it's a device that fires a rope like a bolo that flies around in circles. I wonder if the NYPD was [inaudible] using that.

Commissioner O'Neill: We are always looking at new technology. At some point – we're not looking at right now but I'm – at some point I'm sure we will, and we'll confer with our partners up in Yonkers to get their thoughts on it, but we're always looking at new technology. John?

Question: [Inaudible] a spike in – I guess of tourists taking risks like say climbing on the Brooklyn Bridge and things like that, taking [inaudible] taking pictures and videos. Are you seeing any kind of trend like that?

Commissioner O'Neill: Nothing's been brought to my attention and you know anybody that does climb on bridges, we get them down pretty quickly. I think we had two bridge rescues by our – involving emotionally disturbed people last week and I'd like to commend the officers from ESU that did that climb. I don't know if everybody watched the video – I don't know if you'd get me up there doing that so—

[Laughter]

—one of them was the same one that did the rescue on the Statue of Liberty, so I commend ESU. Marcia.

Question: So last Friday you and I discussed a homeless encampment at Fordham Plaza which is compounded by the use of drugs. I wonder if any action has been taken since we discussed this last Friday.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, Terry – Chief Monahan. Terry.

Chief Monahan: Alright first off, Marcia, it's not an encampment. You know, we had encampments here in the city years ago but we've done a tremendous job of responding quickly to these incidences. We were out there again just yesterday which a bunch of Department of Homeless Services, our homeless outreach unit, and we did a clean-up. What we found was five individuals who were homeless, who were in the area. So we spoke to all of them we offered them services. A couple of pieces of cardboard in and around the area – that was cleaned up, but it's an area that we're back on a daily basis. We work with the BID. We work with all the local businesses over there, and if we look at just the complaints in the neighborhood, for the year, there've been 19 911 calls and three 311 over in the area, so not really a big drug location. We don't see much K2 – I think we've had two calls year to date involving use of K2 in the area. So it's a place that we're going to visit on a regular basis but again it's not an encampment. It was a couple of homeless people who were in the area with their shopping carts. Again, we can't arrest our way out of something like this, but we're going to constantly try and create that trust and see if we can offer them services and get them help.

Question: Just out of curiosity, what would – I mean is there like a number that would create an encampment? I know a lot of people when they see a cluster of—

Mayor: Yeah let me – let me speak to this first and others chime in. The – for years, under, bluntly, the previous two administrations there were encampments, there were permanent places where people lived. Some of you, I think, were with us we went and oversaw one being dismantled up in The Bronx a few years ago. We do not allow any permanent, outdoor, homeless encampments in New York City – we have not for the last few years. I want to commend the NYPD, Homeless Services, Social Services, Sanitation; everyone’s on the same page, it’s not allowable. If, as Terry said, someone shows up with a shopping cart or someone puts down a piece of cardboard to sleep on, we’re going to go address that. But what we used to have was a bunch of mattresses, a structure that people created to sleep under, that was somehow tolerated in this city. I think it was a tremendous example of disorder that we no longer tolerate. The order is clear, I’ve given it personally to all these agencies: if they see one, they take it down immediately.

Question: Are you saying that in your two administrations there are no encampments because I think people—

Mayor: No, no encampments, what I just described, a place where people permanently sleep with physical structures, in this city if you know of one, tell us, we’ll go take it down immediately. It’s not allowable in this city.

Unknown: One or two more on these issues?

Commissioner O’Neill: Yup.

Question: There’s an off-duty police officer who had a service weapon and car stolen reportedly by a prostitute in Brooklyn. I’m just wondering if you’ll press charges or disciplinary action—

Commissioner O’Neill: Well he was immediately suspended and he’ll be facing some disciplinary action and we’re working on the investigation. Rocco?

Question: No question.

Unknown: That’s all guys? Police matters? Okay, thanks everybody.

Mayor: Okay. Here we go other topics. Yes?

Question: [Inaudible] from WNYC. So, in the New York Times investigation into the Trump family finances there were a couple of places where it seems like there were indications that the city could have done more to accurately account for the money that was flowing in and out. Specifically as it related to rent regulations and major capital improvements which I understand could still be a problem today in terms of tracking and keeping records of what qualifies as a major capital improvement and the other one is appraisals of property. What could the city have done differently? What should it be doing differently now to deal with such things?

Mayor: Okay let me break it down. There’s a couple of elements to say the least. First of all tremendous appreciation to the New York Times for one of the most exhaustive stories we’ve ever seen in our lives and it could not be a more important topic and an extraordinary amount of resources obviously went into uncovering all that. But it’s also an indictment of the culture of

New York City and New York State going back decades – there was a good old boy network that obviously Donald Trump played like a fiddle and evaded the kind of regulation and investigation and prosecution he should have received many times over. It's quite clear and not just in these matters, the tax matters, but in other matters as well. I think the bigger history will come out about at some point about how he, you know, finagled and paid his way to being somehow able to escape the kind of scrutiny and prosecution he deserved and honestly if a lot of people in New York State had done their jobs he would never have been president of the United States, so that's unmistakable in this article but we knew a lot of that already.

Second, it's clear to me that there are real ramifications right now to what has been disclosed. That there is either potential violations of the law or in the cases where the statute of limitations has ended that there may be very serious civil penalties that can be applied by both the State and the City. We are looking to recoup – and let's be really clear – City of New York is looking to recoup any money that Donald Trump owes the people of New York City, period. And we will work with the State and we're going to look under every stone because I said earlier this morning, you know, that's money that could be going to veterans, could be going to seniors, could be going to kids that he should've paid in taxes and didn't. So we're going to go pursue that with all vigor.

On the question of insuring that our own house is in order, the MCIs – to the best of my understanding of the way that MCI regulations works that is the State that's DHCR, first and foremost - I don't think MCI regulation is being handled properly right now. But I think it's because the law is too weak and we have a chance in Albany to go strengthen that law. The MCIs are not only being assessed inappropriately in many cases, but the law allows permanent rent change based on a MCI that should only merit a temporary rent change. That's a law problem, first and foremost, but in terms of everything we need to do rent regulation, we've strengthened it, but we've strengthened it but we got to go farther.

So I think job one is stronger laws in Albany in the next legislative session, but it's absolutely clear that the city needs to use every power we have to make sure that our part of rent regulation is being applied strenuously. State has its own piece, but wherever we can, and I think our Buildings Department needs to do more, our Housing Department needs to do more, the City Council has been great about giving us some additional tools like the anti-harassment law but I don't think we're done yet by any means in terms of improving our own approach to regulation.

Question: And what specifically could be done, for example last month I think the Housing Rights Initiative had this report about all these fines that haven't been collected, so what could the city departments do differently?

Mayor: Just, I think it's clear that there has been an uptick over the last five years, but we need to go farther. So I would argue that before this administration there was a pretty lax approach towards developers and landlords. We changed the rules of engagement and we have obviously cracked down on a lot of things that used to be ignored. The council gave us greater power, greater penalties to work with.

I'd like more penalties, I'd like stronger penalties, something, you know, long ago worked on a thing called the Worst Landlords Watch List when I was Public Advocate, and what we still need is stronger penalties via State law to hold accountable landlords that do the wrong thing and

that's another thing we're going to fight for in Albany in the legislative session and I think a change in the State Senate will – I'm very hopeful – will allow that. But within the law and within the tools we have now, I want to see a more aggressive approach. I think it's been improved, I don't think we've reached everywhere that we need to reach. Yes?

Question: I want to ask you about Mark Peters, do you think he has done a good job as the Investigations Commissioner, and given that you considered firing him earlier this year, is that still under consideration [inaudible]?

Mayor: In light of what?

Question: [Inaudible] investigation.

Mayor: Yeah that, so there's obviously an investigation underway and I'm not going to characterize anything in the midst of an investigation. Let's let that investigation run its course, let's see what it yields. I've said on all personal matters, I don't project, I don't critique publically, I will reserve my rights when I see that information to determine what I think is best for the city.

Question: [Inaudible] he has done a good job?

Mayor: Again, I don't think it's appropriate to comment in any way, shape, or form while an investigation is underway.

Question: You said in the past you strongly defended Shola Olatoye at NYCHA even though there was an ongoing federal investigation into her ten-year at NYCHA. You strongly defended Joseph Ponte even though the COIB was at that point –

Mayor: Sure.

Question: [Inaudible]. So you in the past have –

Mayor: That's true.

Question: Spoke out in favor of your commissioners when they were under attack.

Mayor: I think in this instance, each instance is different, it's not appropriate to comment. Yes?

Question: Mayor, this is a school food question. For the last several days I've been doing stories about moldy bread that has turned up in a lot of schools because the bread contract was changed. Instead of fresh bread being delivered daily, delivered twice a week, it turns moldy. I wonder in any way, shape, or form find this acceptable and what are you going to do about it?

Mayor: It's absolutely unacceptable. Our children need the best available food and certainly not moldy bread. Everything related to school food is now being reassessed. As you know the previous leadership has been removed and there is new leadership tasked with evaluating everything that has happened there and there is other key figures in DOE looking at the situation as well. We don't accept anything but the best for our kids and you know my kids went to public

school, it's not acceptable to me think that anyone was providing a product to our kids that we wouldn't eat ourselves. So we're going to get down to the bottom of that, we're going to make sure the food is good, but more importantly we're going to also make sure that entire operation is reviewed and any further changes that need to be made there will be made.

Question: There's also allegations that you're not getting the best bang for your buck. That so many things are being – you're paying too much for. I have like a full stack of things. Are you going to be auditing the contract –

Mayor: Yes.

Question: To see if you could possibly [inaudible].

Mayor: Unquestionably. Everything that was done by the previous leadership of that unit is now going to be under review. As we've learned more it started with some of the particular problems with the school bus service earlier this year and that has caused more and more reevaluation – obviously we have a new Chancellor who's taking a new look at things. And what he found was unacceptable. And everything is going to be looked at when it comes to school buses, when it comes to school food, and there's not going to be any sacred cows. Whatever we have to change, we are going to change.

Question: Can I ask about the presidential alert that will be going out today from FEMA? What is your reaction to it and maybe the Police Commissioner can talk to it as well because we are getting a national alert in this city for something that impacts us. Does that conflict with maybe the message you want to get out in an emergency?

Mayor: Look, let's try our damndest to be above the fray on this question. Is there a place for a national alert under certain circumstances? I would say objectively yes, if it's done the right way – if it's only done in very specific context, very carefully, very responsibly, very maturely. But there could be a circumstance in which it's needed. One could have argued on the day of 9/11 for example, that would have been an appropriate day for a national alert. We have done it here, obviously – when we experienced a terror attack and that was an appropriate use of it here. So I'm not against the concept but I sure as hell hope it is handled very rarely and maturely and carefully.

Commissioner O'Neill: And if and when, when it does happen Dean, we just have to make sure we are in communication wherever that alert is coming from and their messaging is consistent with ours.

Question: Mayor, on NY1 Monday night, you tried to make a case that your office is all about transparency based on the release of the emails last week. How can you say that when you were forced by the courts to do so and then you released the emails on one of the busiest news days of the year?

Mayor: So a couple of things – on the release, we've been working for a long time, I was not involved in the specific logistics of it, but we've been working a long time to get that information out. It's all out and I think you would agree when something is put in the public domain, particularly something that extensive all of you and the public can look at it as long as they want

and discuss it and bring it up at any point. So I'm a little less obsessed with the release date than all of you because I think transparency is transparency. It's out there in the public domain permanently. I do believe there's a lot of things we've done in this administration that make us more transparent than any previous administration, including what we are doing around lobbyist disclosure for an example. No previous administration did that. We've done it, we've expanded it. We continue to in every way we can, find new venues to add to transparency but my point was not that the court didn't require it and I still think that was wrong because everyone was operating under legal guidance and thought they were doing things appropriately. But my point was all that information is out. I don't think you've ever seen as many emails from a mayor to a mayor in this much detail in the history of the mayoralty. I don't think you have another mayor who has ever disclosed all lobbying contacts in this way and had other figures in the administration do the same. We got a lot more work to do, the work of transparency is ongoing. But I'm very comfortable that you all have a whole lot of information and I think arguably more than you have had with any of mayoralty. Please, oh wait Juliet hasn't gone yet.

Question: So just to kind of follow up on Rich's question. You brought up lobbying, these emails also show that former employees of yours who went on to work for Hilltop were then sort of pretty quickly reaching back out to City Hall on behalf of their clients and not registering as having lobbied for those clients even though JCOPE now says even just reaching out and trying to schedule a meeting should count as lobbying. Do you think this a problem, is this something that City Hall should be doing?

Mayor: I don't know, I just don't know all of the rules. Obviously anyone in that situation needs to seek guidance, the place I would turn to is not JCOPE but turn to Conflict of Interest Board for the city in that instance. And they should follow that guidance so it's each case is individual. I'm not familiar with all the specifics but that's the standard that should be held.

Question: Just on the Trump issue, you were speaking about you know making sure that new York City gets its money from Donald Trump. I'm curious if you've reevaluated at all the City's contracts with him in city parks, particularly where most of them are. Councilman Mark Levine over the summer had argued that the City should consider trying to get out of those contracts because of his, because of what had come out in Cohen's trial and other trials of people, or court proceedings of people related to Trump and sort of a [inaudible] for getting out of these kinds of contracts if there was potential [inaudible].

Mayor: Look, the last time I looked at this, and it may be a little bit farther back than you're referring to, but the last time some issues were raised about the contracts, there was not a grounds that we had to get out of those contracts. Now, if new information comes up that suggests a contract was inappropriately gained or is not being fulfilled or there is some kind of fraud, of course that could be grounds for getting out of a contract. So, I'll certainly have my team look at whether there is any new information that might lead to that. But I wanted to emphasize, you know, this is an area where we have to be careful. It's not about politics or different views, it has to be about the legal merit.

Question: You just hired a Chief Democracy Officer who hasn't been a consistent voter. Why should New Yorkers look to her as a leader on voting issues when she skipped numerous primary elections including the one last year when you were running [inaudible] –

Mayor: Because she has devoted her life to empowering people in a whole variety of ways, not just in terms of voting but in a number of other important venues to encourage grassroots involvement and participation. Look, I agree with the statement that she put forward that everyday people, real people, struggle to vote in the current system because there's no early voting, because there's no same-day registration, there's no vote by mail.

And I think her explanation of some of the things that were going on in her life at various moments rings true. I also think some people don't choose to vote in primary elections. That is a very different matter than choosing to vote in a general election.

I would love to see everyone vote in all primaries and all general elections but the one that people, I think civically have to focus on the most, of course, is the general election. And from what I've seen, she voted very consistently in general elections. So, I'm perfectly comfortable with the situation.

Question: [Inaudible] encourage 'always voters' that was your phrase –

Mayor: Yep.

Question: Now, you're saying that skipping primary elections in New York [inaudible] –

Mayor: No, I am saying I understand – don't creatively reinterpret my words. I just said –

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I just said –

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: No, I just said, right this minute, I have an audience that heard it. I'd like to see people vote in all primaries and all general elections. I understand that some people regard primaries differently and the ultimate, decisive election, of course, is the general election. My goal is to see the most consistent participation possible.

Question: Mr. Mayor, getting back to Donald Trump and the MCIs, it's clear from the Times story that he got a number of [inaudible] based on bogus MCI reports. Is it possible for the City to force him to roll back the rents in those buildings and for those apartments where the rent increases were based on false numbers [inaudible]?

Mayor: It's a great question. I don't know the answer yet. Again, with MCIs, there's a State regulatory role so we have to figure out what they do and what we do. Is it conceivable? I think it is but I don't know enough about the facts yet to say if we can definitely do it. If we can do it, we should.

Unknown: We have time for two more.

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: I have to ask about Raise the Age [inaudible] –

Mayor: Well, that's a reinterpretation of where my pen was going. We'll do these three, go ahead.

Question: Mr. Mayor, do the FOILs and the email dumps make you more cautious about using email or what you say in emails? Or do you use a different kind of – form of communication now as a result of having read some of your own emails?

Mayor: Yes.

[Laughter]

Look, I know, I think – I know about myself and I believe it's true about a lot of people that we got so used to using email that we would express ourselves very openly, very bluntly. I don't think there's anything in those emails that all of us don't say in everyday conversation, if you will, stylistically.

But, yeah, it has caused me to email less and, to some extent, speak differently in emails. And, you know, as I said, I think everyone believed that they were doing the normal back-and-forth kind of conversation that you do with your colleagues. No one thought these were things that were going to be published one day, and it definitely is smart to use email less. That's the bottom line.

Question: Mr. Mayor can you talk about NYCHA, the Executive VP for Real Estate who abruptly resigned, and the City Council had to cancel a hearing that was scheduled for today. Is there anything you can tell us about her resignation? Or anything you know about it?

Mayor: I can only tell you that it didn't work out. My understand is she had been there a year or less and it just didn't work out for her in that role. I don't know the specifics around the timing or the hearing. We can get you follow-up on that.

Question: [Inaudible] why it didn't – what about it didn't [inaudible] –

Mayor: I don't, I mean obviously I heard about it as you did just in the last night and so my understand is she had been hired into a role by the previous leadership. As people worked with her, one way or another it just didn't work out. I don't know the specifics but I'll make sure we follow up.

Question: Can I just [inaudible] Working Families Party moving Cynthia Nixon off the line to Cuomo on the line? Just generally if you are supportive of that move – you've been obviously closely involved with the party. Do you think that they should do this?

Mayor: I said on Monday and I'll say it again, I am not going to comment on their process. I want to respect their process. They should do as they see fit. I've made clear that I'm endorsing the Democratic ticket. But I think for a lot of reasons it's just important to let them make their own choices.

Question: [Inaudible] Raise the Age, your comments about the 16 and 17 year olds now not being charged, prosecuted as adults but also at the Horizon, there are issues because the Correction officers are saying the kids don't have a lot of, I guess, structure now and the officers can't use their [inaudible]. I've received videos of fights on Rikers. I've received photos of some of the kids wearing C-O uniforms at Horizon already.

Mayor: Okay, well, I'm not going to comment on photos I haven't seen and have not – no disrespect to you but I haven't seen those photos nor has anyone in my team reported those to me. I'm just going to comment on the broader point.

We were put under a very strict timeline to get all juveniles out of our jail system. A lot of people thought it was a timeline that could not be met. I want to commend everyone at Department of Corrections, at ACS, at City Hall who did extraordinary work achieving this deadline. As of the afternoon of September 30th, there were no longer any juveniles in our jails.

That's a stunning achievement and I commend them all. The new facilities have been set up to be secure and there's been a lot of cooperation in putting that together. It is a brand new approach. It's certainly going to take some work to perfect it but we must keep those facilities secure. There's going to be a lot of programming – I think one of the things we found in the whole history we've had here with Corrections is the more programming the better to engage all detainees to make sure that they are doing something constructive.

But let's be clear, if there are any instances where one of these young people acts violently, one, they will transferred to a more restrictive setting; two, depending on what it is, they can be charged with an additional crime and that can lead to additional consequences including longer sentences, and that's been true in the jail system as well.

So, we're going to be very stringent about that but I think, as something that's just begun and begun on a very tight timeline, I think it's gotten off to a start that shows us we can get the job done.

Thanks, everyone.

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