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

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill: Alright, everybody good? All set? Alright good afternoon, everyone. Thanks again for being here. I can't believe it's September already. We're looking forward to going over the August crime figures for you and reporting even more gains not just for August but also in terms of an overall crime reduction citywide year-to-date.

After that, Mayor de Blasio is going to make some remarks. Lori Pollock – Chief Pollock will talk about all the crime stats for August and then Dermot, I think, has some updates on some cases he wants to talk about. Then we'll take some on-topic questions and off-topic questions.

First I want to thank everyone involved in the planning of J'Ouvert yesterday morning. It really was a unified effort between then NYPD, J'Ouvert City International, members of the clergy, the people who live and work in Brooklyn, the violence interrupters, and many of our elected officials. I especially want to commend all of the police officers who worked again to ensure for another year that all those who wanted to celebrate the event for its intended purpose could do so without fear.

And as you know thousands of people look forward to this annual celebration of Caribbean life and culture but in the past many also feared J'Ouvert because of the history of violence associated with the event.

Last year we successfully addressed those concerns with a time change for the start of the parade and with checkpoints. And this year we built on that success. We added another checkpoint to help people get through the lines quicker but just as safely, and overall we had very good results.

Our cops, during the 24-hour period prior, we had 11 arrests for firearms within the three precincts – I think it's the 7-1, 7-7, and the 6-7 – including one man who had an active parole warrant.

Simply put, those people shouldn't have been on the street. And I can tell you this, the NYPD's precise focus on deterring acts of violence will continue to be the standard going forward for both events. Later on yesterday – the West Indian American Day Carnival stepped off at noon along Eastern Parkway. That too was largely incident free attributable, I think, to the close

partnership of the NYPD, event organizers, and community members – and certainly due to the tireless professionalism of our men and women in uniform.

It was – I don't know if you were out there but it was unbelievably hot. It really was. I've marched in a lot of parades but that was especially hot. I really can't say enough about our cops. I only had to be out there for a couple hours. Many of them were out there for over 12 hours.

I want to thank them for the job that they did at the parade yesterday and for the job they did at J'Ouvert earlier that morning. At its height, I think the parade has over at least – they had at least one million spectators along that parade route. The event ended just before 8:00 pm and all pedestrian and vehicular traffic was reopened by about 9:30 pm.

I know the NYPD handles these large scale events better than anyone else in our nation could and I'm very proud of what we regularly accomplish. I'm even more impressed with the increasing level of assistance we receive from the people that we serve. Many people believe and know that things can be done different here in New York City.

Things can always be done more safely while still maintaining all that is great about these celebrations and that's what makes our city so great. As we shift from summer to fall now and our city's children return to school tomorrow, it's important for all 8.6 million New Yorkers to renew their commitment to helping the NYPD keep safe every block in every neighborhood and we'll continue to do that together by sharing the responsibility for public safety. Mr. Mayor –

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner, congratulations to you, all the leadership of the NYPD that's here with us, and most especially to the men and women of the NYPD, of course, for the extraordinary efforts in the month of August – and we'll all be talking about that in a moment – but I want to amplify the work that was done yesterday.

First of all, it was unbelievably hot. I was like you, only a few hours out there – really credit those who were out there all day for the great work they did. But the outcome when you think about it – over a million people gathered, and thank you so little that happened that was problematic.

Our officers did an outstanding job. This new approach to J'Ouvert – we now have two years under our belt. It works. We always will keep working to improve it. We're always going to be vigilant but it's a new model that has really proven itself and I want to commend everyone who is a part of putting that together.

I also want to note – of course, today I signed the legislation reauthorizing the speed cameras at our schools and as is very clear, the intent of the Council and certainly my intent as well to get all those cameras back up and running tomorrow and then build out from there. We want more and more schools to be protected.

And this is crucial for our kids. It's crucial for our families. It also allows the NYPD to do all the other work that it needs to do keeping people safe. It allows our traffic officers the opportunity to do the work they need to do. These cameras are a force multiplier and we need them and I'm so happy they're back, and now we're going to get about the work of expanding them further.

As we look at August, we continue what has been an outstanding trend – of course, continuing to be the safest big city in America, continuing to match or exceed the record from last year. I want to remind everyone that 2017 was a miraculous year in the eyes of many. It was a year that was supposed to be unbeatable. Right now in a number of categories the NYPD is actually showing that even the unbeatable year can be beaten and we're on pace to match or exceed 2017.

You're going to hear the numbers from Chief Pollock but a couple really stand out to me. At the end of August, year-to-date, crime is down 1.2 percent overall, shooting down year-to-date 3.6 percent, and the month of August '18 versus August '17 for the month August, shooting down 8.4 percent.

So, you know, we all remember the concept of the long hot summer, and we all looked with a certain dread towards July and August. Well, what the NYPD has done in August of 2018 to actually take shootings down even further is extraordinary.

Also, all of this continues to be done with fewer and fewer arrests, and I think this is an example of that the NYPD is achieving that's really going to resonate not only in the communities of our city but well beyond our five boroughs because we're proving there's a better way to police. And I give tremendous credit to everyone up here for that.

Arrests down year-to-date 11.4 percent compared to last year. That's over 20,000 fewer arrests year-to-date while achieving even better results. So, that's extraordinary. So, I'll conclude by saying – I'll just say a few words in Spanish – but I'll conclude by saying we have not sacrificed fairness in our effort to make the city safer. We've in fact embraced fairness and that is what has made the city safer and we continue to see that with fewer arrests and more safety.

Just a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we'll turn to Chief Pollock for an update on the numbers for the month of August.

Chief of Crime Control Strategies Lori Pollock, NYPD: Thank you, good afternoon, everyone. This summer was the safest summer on record. We saw the lowest August number of overall crime finishing 34 fewer crimes than last August and over one percent down for the year or 737 crimes. Within those crimes there are some increases we will discuss and some significant decreases particularly overall crime in housing is down 20 percent. That's 378 crimes versus 482.

Year-to-date at the end of August we are up four murders, 195 versus 191. At the end of August we are plus six murders for a total of 23 up from the 17 murders we saw last year which was the lowest August on record.

Although we are up six murders, 23 is the second lowest number for any August and 2014 was the third lowest when we saw 31 murders.

The borough of Manhattan saw the increase in August, five murders versus one with no common location or motive. The Bronx, where we saw an uptick in murders earlier this year is down in

overall crime and shootings more than seven percent. The summer months in the Bronx saw marked decreases in murder, 12 versus 19.

All these gains are from proper deployment and the hard work of the police officers and detectives who are working 24 hours a day, seven days week in the Bronx. Citywide, to put this July and August into perspective, this is the lowest summer on record for murders. A total of 48 murders between July and August which is seven fewer than the 55 murders we saw last July and August.

We also celebrate that – I mean not celebrate but we are at the lowest shooting for any August, 76 this month. It's the lowest August on record. Last year was a record-setting August with 83 shootings so that number has been reduced by seven.

In the last two years, the only time we have seen double digits in August – and I find it amazing that just two years ago in 2016, we had almost twice as many shootings with 145. In July, we did face some challenges in northern Brooklyn where there were pockets of gang-related violence. The borough of Brooklyn went from 43 shootings in July to 28 shootings in August – another remarkable decrease. We focused our efforts on the few who commit the majority of crime.

We tap gang violence by using varied approaches. One successful approach has been Ceasefire which is a collaborative deterrence program where the NYPD works with our law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners like clergy, community leaders, and social services to offer housing assistance, employment, educational opportunities, and resume building to incentivize gang members to end the violence.

Summer All Out and Ceasefire are just two initiatives that support our tactical crime analysis which literally occurs on a minute-by-minute basis to deploy resources citywide in response to crimes like disorderly groups. Those can be groups that are gambling, playing dice, noise complaints, harassments, assaults, and shots fired that often linked to subsequent shootings or homicide.

Because of this precision policing, we are down 19 shootings for the year and down over 50 percent in shootings in housing for August ten versus 21.

As far as rapes – there were 150 rapes reported this August compared with 123 in August, 2017. Of these 153 incidents, 122 occurred this year and 31 in prior years. That 122 is actually lower than four of the five previous years, second only to last year's 104 same-year occurrences. Over 90 percent of rape complaints involve an offender who is known to the victim whether it is domestic or acquaintance. Since the Our Call is Yours campaign, calls have increased to the rape hotline and people seem to feel more empowered to come forward.

Robbery continues to reach record lows. In August we had 157 fewer robberies than the previous August record low of 1,280. Felony assaults are relatively flat. They are up four – 1,820 to 1,816. Burglaries are also at a record low – a tie with last August at 150 burglaries for the month. Grand larceny is up 59 crimes. The increase is being driven by theft from mailboxes known as mailbox fishing. This is a somewhat preventable crime. When you place your mail in the mailbox is important and how you write your checks is very important with what type of pen you use when you are mailing checks or other forms of payment.

[Inaudible] auto-thefts on an uptick as well in parts of Queens and upper Manhattan. As discussed every month, cars are being stolen when they are left running. In the month of August, motorcycles and scooters are being stolen of the street.

That's my crime brief for August.

Commissioner O'Neill: All set?

Chief Pollock: Thanks, Lori. Dermot, you have some cases you want to talk about?

Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea, NYPD: I just in general, I'll bring you up to speed on a couple of cases that I'm sure will come up. On this past Sunday, September 2nd, at approximately 9:00 pm at 110 Reade Street we had a female, 15 years of age, fall from ten-story window ultimately to her demise.

At this point, what we know about this incident – we have approximately 15 people in the apartment. She was left home, invited some friends over for a gathering. At some point during this gathering one of the individuals left their phone in a room – it was not the individual that ultimately fell to her death – left the phone in a room and that room was locked. Attempts to get into that room were met with negative results and at some point the individual, 15-year-old climbed out of a window along a ledge in an attempt to get into the other room.

Ultimately the 15-year-old fell, was pronounced DOA at the hospital. At the point it is an active investigation but I'll stress this point – all indications are it was just what I outlined, a tragic, tragic accident and our thoughts go out to the family.

The second incident I'd like to highlight is this past Wednesday, August 29th within the confines of Brooklyn we had an incident where an 11-year-old child, asleep in her room, was the victim of a sexual offense. I just want to commend the men and women of Brooklyn Special Victims for their speed and efficiency in this case in bringing a predator to justice as quickly as they did.

Under arrest is Julio Cesar Ayala, a male Hispanic 18 years of age. He is facing a slew of charges in Brooklyn – and we thank the Brooklyn DA's Office for their help with this case – including rape, burglary, criminal sexual act, and sex abuse.

Commissioner O'Neill: That's it, alright. Questions about crime, on-topic on crime?

Mayor: On the monthly statistics, right?

Commissioner O'Neill: Jonathan?

Question: [Inaudible] stats and how do you account for that and [inaudible].

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright, Lori you want to get into the numbers a little bit more and Dermot you can talk about how we investigate that alright.

Chief Pollock: Well, I don't have it all broken down right now. But there is certainly a category for credit card fraud, identity theft situations where bank accounts are open under fraudulent names or stolen names. I can give you that later exactly what the breakdown is of those particular crimes.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Pollock: Well that's included in the grand larceny numbers, yes.

Chief Shea: Yeah, Jonathan the biggest, the biggest crime that you talk about there really is the grand larcenies. I mean it can spar a lot into some other ones but the biggest one is the grand larcenies when you talk about the world of checks, fraud, taking over accounts. Credit cards especially, I mean it's a complicated crime. A couple of years ago we staffed the Detective Bureau Grand Larceny Division with a number and it's quite a number of detectives that really at the state level and the federal level work on task forces to combat justice crime. We've said in this meeting a number of times that we've seen over the couple of years gangs really get into this area to really sometimes generate money which then that money can be used to purchase guns and then that fuels that violence. So we are very much on top of this crime. But it remains when you look at mail box fishing this is just something in the last year or so I would say that really – it's been around much longer than that. But it's definitely become one of the crimes of choice of late by these gangs.

Commissioner O'Neill: Tony.

Question: Chief Pollack, the Bronx had been through the year – through this year a particular problem with homicides, and other crimes. But you seem to have tampered down the certainly the homicide [inaudible] increase. You mentioned "Operation All Out" is contributing to that. When all that ends, it's going to end at some point, I would suspect soon. What are they going to do to [inaudible]?

Chief Pollock: Again, we'll analyze. We'll look at those [inaudible] like I said where there are occurring shots fired, where the concentration of those are, different variables and we'll re-deploy according to that.

Commissioner O'Neill: So it's a 90 day temporary assignment, it will be ending sometime in September as it has for the last I think four years. So during the summer months as you know Tony doing this job for a long time. That's when the numbers especially the violence numbers have gone up in the past, and that's why they're out there. So once the fall hits the street violence usually goes down and we'll pay attention to it if we need to put more uniforms on the street, we'll do that.

Question: Regarding J'Ouvert, do you have an estimate of how many people were in the J'Ouvert event this year, and last year? And then suddenly on J'Ouvert the problem, one of the problems you identified last year after this event was [inaudible] at checkpoints. I saw the same thing this year – hundreds of people trying to get through problems at the checkpoints. It seemed like you were successful in changing that. So can you address that as well?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, so I'll start with the second one. And then Rodney jump whenever you want to. So I was there, I got there around 6:15am/6:30 am or so. I get some maybe an estimate from Operations as to the number of people that attended the event. But it was – but there were thousands of people on the street when I was there. As far as the checkpoints, we added one. I know it's a bit of an inconvenience for people to go through those checkpoints but once they get through them we can ensure that there's a safe event on the route and I think that was a success this year.

Chief of Patrol Rodney Harrison, NYPD: Thank you, Commissioner. I just want to take advantage of this opportunity to thank the men and women in uniform. It was a very long day, it was a very hot day and the effort that they put forward to make sure it was a safe event for all the Caribbean individuals that participated and I felt was remarkable. And yes it is a little bit of an inconvenience that comes along with a checkpoint. But there is a reason behind the madness. And the most important thing we want to make sure that the event is after for everyone that's attending so overall I thought it was a successful Labor Day festivities.

Commissioner O'Neill: And if you look at some of our other events in New Year's Eve – we utilized checkpoints and every once in a while especially during the crush – those hours between 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock there's a backup there too. I think it's an inconvenience of course but I think it's necessary.

Question: On the numbers you said you would be able to give me the –

Commissioner O'Neill: I'll see if Operations has an estimate, alright. I'll get back to you on that.

Question: On J'Ouvert – I knew you were mentioning the successes. But there were some complaints on social media about people who felt it was too strong of a police presence or flood lights that they felt were unnecessary. Is that a balance you're trying to strike between when you find the right approach. Or do you think if the method you took was –

Commissioner O'Neill: No, no it's a balance. And it's not, this is not a unilateral decision by the NYPD to police this event like this. We work in conjunction with the electeds, we work in conjunction with J'Ouvert International, with the clergy to make sure that this is a safe event. So, this is in 14' and 15' if I'm not mistaken there was some pretty serious crimes. You know what's the price here? Alright, we do have to strike that balance and I think we did that this year.

Mayor: I just want to add to that. We're always going to focus on safety, and the benefit of the doubt is going to go to ensuring a safe environment. So I would much rather have too many officers than too few, too much lighting than too little. That said we're in a new situation now. This is a parade and a celebration in J'Ouvert that for years was plagued by violence. We saw a real change last year; we've seen further improvement this year. We're going to keep assessing year by year. And the safer it becomes the more options we have. But for now we're course we're airing on the side of the safety.

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco.

Question: Chief Shea, can you fill us in J'Ouvert? On the – I guess as to acts of violence connected to J'Ouvert and either the parade. And also there is a missing adult male with a mental capacity of a five-year-old. Can you tell us what's happening?

Chief Shea: Hey, Rocco were you talking about the one at 706 Nostrand? I think that was about 7:30 am about 11 blocks north and then at 668 Flatbush that was 2:30 am. That's about eight blocks south so that was well off the route.

Question: [Inaudible] connected [inaudible] or motive or?

Commissioner O'Neill: It was not on the route. I mean any night unfortunately in parts of this city there is violence and I think to control the route I think the men and women of the NYPD did a great job. Dermot?

Chief Shea: Yeah, Rocco. I'll just give in the confines of the 7-7 Precinct at about 7:30 am. Roughly, 706 Nostrand Avenue. At this point it's still fairly fresh but at this point if I was going to put a label on it. Indications are it's probably narcotics in nature with an individual on a bike, and then we had an individual on foot. The individual on foot is – they are together. Is the one that actually that fires in this incident and strikes another male. So again, blocks – a good distance from J'Ouvert, I wouldn't put this in the category of J'Ouvert at all. And there was a quantity of crack/cocaine recovered at that shooting.

Mayor: What about the missing male he was talking about?

Chief Shea: I'll have to get back to you on the missing male.

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright, so crime, August crime stats we're done? No, okay, Dean.

Question: So we're saying this is the safest summer. Can we go back over those murder numbers and shooting numbers for the summer and are we just looking at July, and August and not June in those numbers? Would you go over those again?

Chief Pollock: July and August was 48, and 55 last year for July and August. Those are the murder numbers.

Question: So in August we had an increase in murders am I correct? So last month did we have a decrease?

Chief Pollock: Yes.

Commissioner O'Neill: Lori just do July 18' versus 17' and do August 18' versus 17' and then do them both.

Chief Pollock: Let me, yes. Let me – the numbers are lower on the whole so – so this year our July murder numbers were 25 versus 38.

Mayor: Someone's got a phone on, okay go ahead.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Pollock: Yes.

Question: [Inaudible] for July 2017.

Chief Pollock: Yes, and then this month we saw the decrease of – I mean excuse me the increase of 623 versus 17’.

Commissioner O’Neill: Hey Dean if you want me to drill down a little bit more I can go from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Yeah I got it. 18, it’s 84 murders, 17, it’s 85. That’s minus one, in case you didn’t want to do that in your head.

[Laughter]

18, for shootings, it’s 257, in 2017 it’s 261. So that’s minus four.

Question: Do you have a message to the people of the city, because obviously people still have this notion when they watch the news or read articles; they think New York City is crazy, they still feel that way but you’re saying this is the safest summer we’ve had on record. What’s your message to New Yorkers?

Commissioner O’Neill: This and – this is something – every month I think I speak about this – it’s about the reality of safety in the city and the perception of safety in the city. So if I live on a block and there’s a violent crime maybe not too far away from I don’t feel safe. Or if I see on the news, and that’s your job is to do that, that there’s a nasty homicide or a number of shootings and then I don’t feel safe. But the reality is, these numbers; we haven’t seen numbers like since the 1950’s. But it’s up to us, the NYPD, and many other people in this city to let people know that this is – things are, things are well. And the cops are doing well, and law enforcement, federal law enforcement is doing well, and the prosecutors are doing a good job, the local prosecutors in the Southern and Eastern Districts. So things are going in the right direction. Can we do more; of course we can do more. Zolan?

Question: Just for the chief, wondering in terms of the 15-year-old that fell to her death in Tribeca, she was underage and it sounds like this was a house party of some sort so are you considering any charges for the parents or any of the adults that may be attached to that apartment?

Chief Shea: Yeah Zolan, so I think the – the immediacy, the priority in this incident obviously was did we have a crime here, did we have a homicide or do we have a tragic accident? You know, that was the immediacy of the incident. Once that’s put to bed there will be some other issues looked at including just what you said. I’ll tell you that we are working closely with the Manhattan DA. I wouldn’t rush to judgement on that; I think that family has been through more than any parents want to go through and, you know, we’ll balance out any decisions we make as we go forward. But I would lean away from what you were just suggesting.

Commissioner O’Neill: Will?

Question: I may not have heard this when it was read out but what is the year to date on rapes this year and last year?

Chief Pollack: I don't have year to date number in front of me, I'll get it to you at the end?

Commissioner O'Neill: Tony?

Question: Question for you. Are you still on track for releasing the Sentiment Meter data in October, and a sort of a related question to that is with so many NCOs and sector cops, is the Sentiment Meter process somewhat redundant because of course you should have the cops out on the street gauging the sentiment of people?

Commissioner O'Neill: No, we don't – I mean this is, this is why we engage in this project in the first place because we don't want it to be anecdotal. We want it to be, you know, some survey research, and, will it be done in October; that's what we're shooting for but it's – we want to make sure that numbers are right and we want to make sure that our precinct commanders know how to use it effectively and incorporate it into CompStat. I mean, we get feedback, obviously, from the NCOs, the sector cops, the response cops, from the precinct commanders, but it's good to see that that information is done in a scientific way. Rocco?

Question: Do you have any early marijuana summons numbers from the first four days?

Commissioner O'Neill: As a matter of fact, I do. Thanks for asking that question. So, obviously arrests are way down for the three day period since this started. In 2017, we had 118 arrests for marijuana; in 2018 it's 21 so it's down significantly, down 82.4 percent.

Question: And summonses?

Commissioner O'Neill: Summonses are also down. In '17 we had a 143; in '18, it's 111.

[Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: Yep.

Question: I think it was here last month where the administration pledge to produce the – to comply with the fare evasion reporting law, in the coming weeks, I think the Mayor said. It's a month later; I was told that the administration is still working issues out with the City Council before they publish these demographic reports. Can you elaborate on what's keeping these reports from being published at this point?

Mayor: I'll just say, to begin, we're very close.

Commissioner O'Neill: Moment – you want to say when it ends—

Mayor: I don't know—

Commissioner O'Neill: we're very close to—

Mayor: you could say we're very close again—

Commissioner O'Neill: This is a – we are close. We're working with the Council to make sure that we do this, I believe, in transparency but we also have to balance that with public safety. So we just have to make sure, as we release these figures, that they can't be used in a way where it will end up affecting the safety of the people that ride the subway every day.

Question: Can you just elaborate on what those—

Commissioner O'Neill: No, I'm not going to talk about. We're in discussion with the Council about that. Yeah?

Question: Question for the Mayor, in 2015 you announced that you were going to – that the city was going to be fighting more of these frivolous lawsuits against the NYPD. Just wondering if you're satisfied at this point with the Law Department's crackdown on kind of the ambulance chasing lawyers and do you think that \$384 million in settlements over five years is an acceptable amount?

Mayor: I absolutely believe we've changed the culture about the lawsuits, that for too long lawyers, I think in some ways that were unscrupulous, brought these lawsuits hoping for an easy settlement. We said we would break that pattern and we have. A lot more lawyers were hired to fight these cases. We've seen a real reduction in the filing in these kind of lawsuits against officers because now it's quite clear that we're going to take them on. So, you know, and in the cases that we are taking on, we're winning. So I'm actually convinced we're in the right direction here, I think we have more to do. I want to keep driving down that number further because we don't want a single frivolous lawsuit against our officers, and I think it's very important to our officers and their ability to do their work, to not have that hanging over them, that's entirely why we put this strategy in place and we're going to keep building on it. As to the overall number, I mean, it's a huge city, we know this, 8.6 million people, 36,000 officers, there's always going to be settlements, we want to make that number as small as possible. So it's absolutely we're going to keep working on.

Question: Can I just ask you about the reduction in lawsuits, do you attribute that more to people thinking they're not going to win some of these cases or do think it's actually the reduction in police interaction?

Mayor: Both contribute. Obviously, I'm most interested in addressing the root cause, which would be to, whenever we can, improve the relationship between police and community. I think neighborhood policing is doing that. I think the de-escalation approach is helping. I think there's a lot of things as a matter of policy and training that are helping to improve the relationship between the police and community and I'm sure that has an impact. But I also think it's really important we're dis-incentivizing lawyers who want to try to bring these lawsuits for reasons of profit, or anyone who thinks they can make a quick buck here, we're showing that's not the case.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah?

Question: I have a question, I guess, for the Mayor and the NYPD. Is there an update on the placard abuse report, I know back in July you said it was soon, and I don't know if you have any update on I guess that.

Mayor: No, you're right I said that then, and soon, in this case it means getting real soon because I've been demanding sooner – I have been demanding both an update but more importantly the next phase and we'll be announcing that shortly.

Question: What would the next phase of the plan be?

Mayor: More crack-down.

Question: Cracker-downer.

Mayor: Cracker-downer, yes, that's a quote.

[Laughter]

Commissioner O'Neill: Yep?

Question: Commissioner, what do you make of the, we've had a few viral videos over the past month that showed people berating cops and then we got the Sergeant's Benevolent Association announce this reward for people that are going to help cops that are in a confrontation. What do you make of, kind of the general temperature coming out of the SBA and criticizing kind of an increase in hands-off type of policy?

Commissioner O'Neill: That is a – obviously, by what we just talked about for the last 40 minutes close to, close to 40 minutes, you can see that no one's standing down. NYPD police officers are the best in the world. I've been a cop for almost 36 years now and there are people that, believe it or not, that talk to police officers in a way that is disrespectful at the very least. And that's been going on since, I guess, policing was invented. As far as the SBA, he's the president of the union he can say whatever he wants. As far as his idea to offer \$500, I'm not in favor of it. The police are the police. You know, if you see a cop in trouble and you can call 911, that's good. And I've been involved in many incidents over the years where we needed additional assistance and New Yorkers have come forward, as they always do, to help the men and women of the NYPD.

Unknown: [Inaudible] other topics?

Mayor: On still police, let's finish on police. If there's anything else, cases, anything else?

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco?

Question: To the Mayor, I guess to the Commissioner as well, regarding Argus cameras, is there – the way it's structured now is that the installation of Argus cameras is generally a byproduct of an elected official having [inaudible] so to speak, wants to put up a camera goes to a precinct commander, they start it on the location. Is it – is that the, and what we have now is sort of a –

kind of a wide range of numbers where in The Bronx for instance, further down on the ladder in terms of the actual number of Argus cameras. Is there a better template that might offer more equitable distribution of these cameras?

Mayor: Well I just want to give it a little frame, I want to give this a little framing as a formal councilmember also and then pass to the Commissioner and his team. I think it's important to put in perspective the City Council has a variety of areas where they provide value added parks, schools, public housing, you know. The notion there is that council members look at particular needs in the community and want to go above and beyond what is in the City budget already, and certainly is value added. The City budget itself proposed by the administration reflects what we think are the priorities. There's obviously a lot that we've put into public safety and a lot of things we think are high priority, and, most importantly – and we did this with the Council – was adding 2,000 officers on patrol and improving training – really elemental things that we think are the key to safety. So, I just wanted you to hear that context. Now, in terms of how the NYPD in the budget process looks at [inaudible] cameras compared to other needs, I'll let the Commissioner speak to that.

Commissioner O'Neill: Rocco, I think you're specifically referencing what's going on in the Bronx. In the last two years, we put 172 cameras. We have plans to put more – about 50 more by the end of the year. That 172 represents 82 percent more than in all the prior years. So, maybe there is a better way and we'll work with the City Council and the elected officials to make sure that it's done in a way that continues to keep New Yorkers safe. And we do rely on Argus cameras, but, again, that's just one piece of the NYPD camera system. Argus has 1,600 cameras and we have thousands of other cameras that we can see in the Domain Awareness System that help us solve crimes and prevent crimes.

Dean?

Question: I'm sorry, I meant to ask this, it's very quick –

Unknown: [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

Question: Any update on the case of Brandy Odom, the young lady who was found this spring. I know it's been a long investigation. Any more leads? Any closer to an arrest? And over the weekend, I think there was a cyclist killed in the 1-0-4 as well, on their bike. If you have any information –

Chief Monahan: I'll handle the Brandy Odom question. In the 6-9 Precinct, back as you said in the spring, the incident is still at the top of our priorities. I think I've said it at a prior press conference in this form, that I expect to have an arrest in that case. The men and women of Brooklyn South Homicide and the 6-9 Detective Squad are working literally on a day-to-day basis on that case. I'm not going to go into specifics, and I wouldn't go into specifics last time, but I will tell you that I expect an arrest in that case and no one would be happier than the men and women working on that case to bring justice for that family.

Chief Chan: In the 1-0-4 Precinct on August 28th, approximately 47 minutes after midnight, we had a bicycle involved in a collision with a group of motorcycles at that location. That was in Seneca Avenue, approximately near Woodbine Street. We have a male, Hispanic, 65-years old, that died as a result of his injuries. At that time, it appears that ATV riders struck that bicycle at that intersection, at that location. Currently, we are investigating that under CIS – Collision Investigation Squad.

Commissioner O’Neill: Just want to add one thing – and I don’t do this very often, but there was an article in one of the papers this morning about a promotion we had on Friday – Inspector Mike Kltetzel. Now, I think you’re very fair, but Mike is a person that I’ve known for many, many years now and the work he’s done over the years – his years in the NYPD – Mike deserved that promotion. What he does every day, and the people, the men and women that he works with every day, they are one of the real drivers of this crime reduction. The work that they do in the warrant squad – every day waking up at 3 in the morning, getting to work at 4:30, knocking on doors at quarter-to-5, 5 o’clock in the morning, locking up the people involved in violence and crime. I just thought that I needed to remind everybody of what a good man and good cop Mike Kletzel is.

[...]

Mayor: Okay. Yes, sir –

Question: Mr. Mayor, on Friday, the City announced that it would remove a protected bike lane on Dyckman Street in Inwood, which I believe is the first time in the Vision Zero era that a protected bike lane has been removed. In May – as recently as May, the DOT said that, that safety measure was indeed working. So, maybe you could explain to us why you and the DOT decided to remove –

Mayor: Well, you said me without having your facts. We’ve known each other a long time, so I think you want to ask the question – was this something you authorized? The answer would be no. It’s a very big government and sometimes things happen that do not reflect my will, and I appreciate you raising it so that we can look into it. I’m going to look at the situation. There is a history – just generally, I’m not talking about protect bike lanes here, I’m talking about bike lanes – there’s a history of bike lanes being implemented, and, in some cases, needing adjustment, and that’s fine. Some of those adjustments can really be sensible both in terms of safety and in terms of the needs of the neighborhood. We should never look at any of this stuff as static. But a protected bike lane is obviously there for a reason and alteration to that should be done very, very carefully. So, this was not brought to my desk. It should have been brought to my desk. It will be brought to my desk and I’ll render a judgement, then we’ll let you know. So, that decision’s on hold until I review it.

Question: [Inaudible] work is being done?

Mayor: Again, it’s on hold. I’m saying that, and if there’s any work being done we’ll make sure that’s on hold too.

Yes?

Question: Mayor, 17 years after 9/11, the South Tower remains incomplete. What is the City doing to expedite that process? And what can you do?

Mayor: Honestly, from everything I've seen, that work has been the focus of, of course, the Port Authority, and the State, and the private entities involved. We've tried to be supportive. I have not gotten an update on that recently. I would tell you, obviously a number of other buildings have been built and there's been a sea-change there and it's been an extraordinary, positive story, after years where things appeared to be static – almost everything is complete now. But we'll be happy to get you an update. Again, primarily, that is a Port Authority issues, working with the private sector.

Question: Are you satisfied with the progress?

Mayor: In general, yes. I don't – again, I have not been updated recently on this particular building, but, in general, yes.

Question: Mayor, regarding ongoing problems with NYCHA with mold, with lead, FOX 5 just did a story yesterday of a resident at the Ford Independence Houses who has mold and there were pictures and video of NYCHA workers just coming in and covering it up rather than moving it. I'm wondering how concerned you are with the ongoing remediation, or lack-thereof, of problems and children and other residents getting sick from this ongoing mold?

Mayor: It's a great question. We're in the middle of a sea-change at NYCHA. There's new leadership, there's a huge infusion of new resources. We chose to work with the federal government to come to a settlement that included not only a commitment over these next years when I'm mayor, but a commitment of resources for years to come to address mold, among other issues. It's going to take a lot of work. The overall need now in NYCHA, which was just recently documented, is \$31-or-\$32 billion, and there's no way the City can handle all of that on its own, so we're going to have to do a lot of things differently to generate that money and hopefully get some real federal help and some state help. Remember, we have not seen hardly anything from the State over the last five years. But we are adamant about changing the situation. A good example is Queensbridge Houses where all the roofs have been redone, and that's getting at the root cause of the leaks and the mold – the biggest housing development in the whole city. So, that was done successfully. We look forward to doing that in a lot of other places. We've got 900 roofs that we're replacing. I think it'll make a big impact, but it's a very serious problem, but we're throwing a lot at it.

Question: Are you concerned though this resident and the pictures and video of workers literally covering up the black mold with sheetrock as opposed to tearing down that –

Mayor: I have not seen the case and I certainly want to bring it to the attention of our General Manager, so if you could make sure to let my team know the specifics. We want to go at the root causes, so we want to go with the roofs that allow the leaking to happen to being with. We certainly don't want to cover up a problem, we want to address it foundationally. Now, sometimes there's a situation where that can't be done without a lot more work and you need to provide a temporary fix to protect a family. So, I can't judge this one without knowing all of the facts. But I can say to you, is it a real problem? It's absolutely a real problem and it needs to be

addressed throughout all of our buildings. And it will take billions of dollars, but, at least from the City perspective, we are putting that money in.

Question: Mayor, also on NYCHA, last Friday, prosecutors filed in federal court documents saying that the City still isn't complying with the consent decree on NYCHA, that there aren't appropriate precautions being taken when remediating lead and mold and that NYCHA had not responded to requests for meetings on this, and that they weren't going to have people trained on doing this properly until next year. I just wanted to get your response.

Mayor: No, that last piece is not right. I've checked in on the finishing the training. I believe two-thirds of the workers involved have been trained, the final third will be trained by the end of this month, so that will be complete. Look, we have comported ourselves, meaning the City of New York, certainly NYCHA as well, in a cooperative spirit with the Southern District. We agreed to a settlement. In the meantime, we have work to do, pending the partnership we look forward to having with a monitor, with an action plan that has to be approved by a court, but that's going to take several months. So, we, of course, have continued with all of our efforts to address lead. We've announced a brand new thing that's totally separate from the settlement, which was the use of the X-ray technology to go back over 130,000 apartments and determine once and for all if they have lead, that's never been done before. But, you know, the issues raised by the Southern District, I would say, from my point of view, these are all things that are works in progress. A lot of money has been devoted, we put a compliance officer in place, we're training those workers. Everything is moving. We're taking it all very seriously. And then we'll have more that we'll do together as soon as the next elements of the settlement are in place.

Question: Do you think there's some kind of communication issue, do you think, between NYCHA and the prosecutors, because it seems here that they are saying they couldn't get an appointment to sit down and discuss what was going on with the remediation until this week –

Mayor: There may have been some crossed wires that we need to fix, and obviously this is a new relationship. But I will say, during the discussions that lead up to the settlement, which were very, very extensive, everyone ultimately got to a cooperative place and a productive place. If there's some kind of speed bump here we have to address, we will address it, and we look forward to more dialog. But where this is leading, of course, is to something more formal, which is when there's a monitor in place, and we look forward to that.

Question: Now that the Soundview and Lower East Side ferry routes are up and running, do you plan to bring Staten Island into the NYC –

Mayor: As I've said, that's a decision we'll make by the end of this year for all of the other sites that have been proposed. Staten Island – there's several different options – Canarsie, Coney Island, you name it. We're going to be looking at all of them and we'll have a decision by the end of this year.

Question: Do you have any particular sites that you're looking at on Staten Island?

Mayor: Well, as you probably know, we looked at some sites on the South Shore with the elected officials. Each had their advantages, but also real problems. So, we've said to the elected

officials we like their ideas. On other sites – EDC is looking for other sites. Those are all going to be assessed, but we'll make those decisions by the end of the year.

Question: There's a report out today from a group called the Housing Rights Initiative that says there's \$1.5 billion in uncollected fines, real estate fines, quality-of-life fines, going back to Fiscal Year 2010.

Mayor: Wait, I'm sorry, help me out – what kind of fines?

Question: They're from Department of Transportation, they're from Department of Sanitation, and Department of Buildings amounting to \$1.5 billion. This report also looks specifically at the Kushner companies and cited \$500,000 in the uncollected fines. I just wanted to understand how that could be possible and what's to be done?

Mayor: I want to see it before I respond. I appreciate the question, it's obviously a serious issue, but I don't know if those numbers are accurate. I do know there's a constant effort to collect fines. I know Department of Finance has done some really good work, in particular in finding ways to get people to pay who are not paying as well as they should have before. But this is a problem always in government to get people to pay promptly and to make sure they pay fully. Let me let a look at that and then we'll have a formal response to you.

Question: Can I ask you about your reaction to First Lady McCray endorsing Zephyr Teachout and do you plan to endorse her or anybody else in the '18 race?

Mayor: So, as to me, when there's obviously an example of the modern couple and two people who have two independent lives and Chirlane is going to speak her mind and do what she believes is the right thing to do when it comes to political matters. My statement remains the same, I'm going to, by definition, at some point this week, certainly by the end of the week, decide what I'm going to do in the outstanding races and I'll make that public at the time, but I have not made that decision yet. As to her decision, look, I think she laid out her reasons and they're very consistent with her values.

Question: Is that something that you guys discussed?

Mayor: We always discuss things, but, again, I don't think this is a foreign notion anymore. You can have a couple that's very close – and we certainly have a partnership in terms of governance – but Chirlane comes from a very strong political tradition of her own and she's been an activist for many years and she has strong views and strong values, and she said that she might run for office herself. So, I think it's the time – the right time that if she wants to make an endorsement that's different than what I want to do, that's normal, that's fine, and here's an instance of it, it may not be the last one. But I think she's articulated her reasons and they fit who she is.

Question: I wanted to go back to NYCHA and the issue of [inaudible] the number of kids who registered high levels of lead and it kind of grew from November when we first learned this from the DOI report. At the time, the figure that was put out publically was 19 kids. And as you know it later went up to 820 and then 1,160, I believe.

But when the administration in November – NYCHA put out a fact sheet saying 19 kids have been impacted and Dr. Palacio testified at City Council that the figure was 19. At the time they were only counting cases at or above ten micrograms per deciliter and they were excluding any cases where the Health Department identified lead hazards in the apartment but NYCHA subsequently appealed it –

Mayor: Okay, before – no disrespect. You’re getting a lot out. So, let me start to respond and then you’ll do follow ups. You just hit the nail of what’s happening here. There are different standards that have been held over time based on federal guidelines from HUD, based on the CDC, based on the City’s own law. There has not been a continuity of a single standards over the years.

And in fact, what has happened is that the health authorities of this nation decided over the years to put a more stringent standard in place which is now the standard that we are using across the board. So, that explains some of why you’ve seen different numbers at different times.

The important thing now is we’re talking about an extraordinary stringent standard, the five micrograms, and we’re giving now comprehensive information regularly. That’s what we’ve committed to but those are the statistics. Let’s talk about the human beings.

We know that once we identify a child there are several things that are happening. One, we’re following to make sure that the child gets whatever care they need. Two, we’re addressing the source as best as we can determine it to make sure the child is no longer exposed. What we’re seeing is a very substantial number of cases – we can get you the exact percentages – where the follow up is leading to those exposure levels going back down and back down to a safe level.

Every child reacts differently to exposure and there’s no way to trace exactly how much exposure – meaning the period of time. But what we do know is exposure levels are down 90 percent since 2005. We believe we’re going to drive them down a lot more now. We’re taking a Vision Zero approach. And the amount of resources that are now going into addressing this issue and hopefully ending this challenge once and for all is unprecedented, and I believe it’s going to make a huge, huge impact.

Any child who needs help, our Health Department will provide it. That’s the bottom line.

Question: I understand your point about the differing guidelines from different sources but those all govern City action, when the City needs to act, and what they need to do. But as far a reporting it – why did the City not report all the cases and not the CDC recommended guidelines where it is unsafe. It seems like it was kind if purposely trying to minimize the number –

Mayor: That’s just not true. The fact is the CDC put our guidance but not a requirement. The first requirement occurred in the second half of last year as I understand it with the HUD regulations. So, look, I’m not an expert on all the different pronouncements of the CDC over the years but I do know that there’s a difference between the advice and the guidance they give versus a requirement. The bottom line is we’re now working from a very, very stringent standard across the board and that’s a good thing in terms of making sure that everyone is on the same page about what we have to do to protect kids.

And we're doing things now that have never been done before to address the underlying problem. When we finish going through the 130,000 apartments we will have an entirely different understanding of what we have to do from that point on because we're going to be able to rule out a huge number of apartments, I believe, focus all of our energies on addressing, once and for all, the ones that remain.

And as you know, as part of the settlement, we agreed to put billions of dollars into addressing issues like lead. So, this has been brewing since 1960 in the sense of the knowledge that lead was a problem. That's the first time it's outlawed in New York City.

But this is the first time there's going to be a true Vision Zero approach that we believe can eradicate the problem once and for all.

Question: Last point, so you believe the City was being as transparent as possible –

Mayor: Based on the standards that everyone was using, yes.

Question: I have a question regarding that the U.N. General Assembly is coming up and I was wondering what the security protocols are going forward regarding the U.N. as President Trump visits the city. Commissioner if you could –

Mayor: Yeah, I'll let the experts speak. I'll just say they've done an outstanding job the previous four years I've been mayor and I think it's the gold standard for protecting foreign dignitaries. Take it away.

Commissioner O'Neill: Okay, so as we get closer to [inaudible] we will have an availability to talk about our security preparations but it's been going on for a long time. Chief Galati – I think this will be his 12th year in working with Chief Hughes who is now the Chief of Manhattan South. They do a great job each and every year.

We had at one point last year, we had 170 motorcades riding around the city so as you can see that's a bit of a logistical nightmare but this is something that we do well and we've been doing it for a long time.

Unknown: Two more.

Question: Just wanted clarification here. When you were asked about your wife endorsing Zephyr Teachout, you said that you discussed it and you said if she wants to make an endorsement that's different than I wanted to do, that's fine.

Different than I wanted to do – that sounds like there was a disagreement there that you did not want to make an endorsement of Teachout.

Mayor: No, I mean look – I'll make it much simpler. We have a very, very communicative relationship both professionally and personally. I'm simply saying she made a decision that she wanted to make an endorsement. I obviously have not made an endorsement. I have to come to a final decision. I have, for example, experience with a lot of the candidates. I have worked with a

number of them. I have to decide if it's something I feel I should get into. She made a decision that it was right for her to get into it. That's all I meant to say.

Question: [Inaudible] to endorse –

Mayor: Correct.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Yeah, again, if she looked at four candidates and said I really feel I need to endorse one. I look at four candidates and I say there's a lot of good candidates. I have to decide if I want to get into it at all.

Question: [Inaudible] expect –

Mayor: As I said, this week – certainly by the end of the week because it's getting close to the election here but at this some point this week I'll make the final decisions and we'll announce them. Yeah?

Question: I have a question about the U.S. Open. I know a few months ago you banned cars in Central Park and said that parks were for people not for car but [inaudible] which is the third largest in the city, for a few weeks because of the U.S. Open, the park is essentially turned into a parking lot for this big tennis corporate event. I just wanted to know – I mean, it's been an issue. I know it's come up with some of the community members so I just wanted to know is there would ever be a plan to adjust the way that is because it seem unfair that in some parts of the city you get a car-free park but in other parts of the city for a few weeks, it's sort of taken over [inaudible] –

Mayor: Well, I appreciate the specificity of the question because you are making an exception for a particular big, national, international event, and it's not the same as what's going on for example in Central Park. Look, it's a fair question. I will say to you in – I always have a standard I hold and I try and be open about it. It's been 57 or 58 town hall meetings and all the call-in shows, you know questions from the call-in show every week, and every interaction I have with elected officials – I have to be straight up with you, no one has raised that as a problem to me that I can remember. And I think there's a recognition that the U.S. Open is a tremendously positive event for the city in every way including economically.

So, I think it's just an apples and oranges situation. It's very fair to say, do we believe it's worth it? Well, obviously, as a matter of policy, right now, we do. But if there is a concern about the number of cars during the U.S. Open, I'm happy to look at it. It's just the first time I've ever heard it raised to me.

Question: The community boards around the area have complained –

Mayor: I'm literally saying it's the first time I've ever had it raised to me. And again, I talk to elected officials. I do town hall meetings. I just don't remember it ever coming up. But I'm happy to look at it.

Okay, I'm going to get this group and then we'll be done.

Question: So, we learned that the three-year deer vasectomy program is running more than \$800,000 over budget and the Parks Department thinks that [inaudible]. How much more are you willing to spend on this program and are you willing to do into a fourth year if the Parks Department determines that's what's needed?

Mayor: Look, one, we believe it's working. The population – the deer population is going down. We believe there will be a greater decrease soon as a result of this approach. If it continues to play out the way we hope, you're going to see a greatly reduced deer population long term in Staten Island. That's worth a substantial investment. So, we'll stick with it. I can't put an exact dollar figure to it because we have to see what happens but at this point we have no plans to change the approach and if it costs more than originally projected, I'm sorry about that, but sometimes that does happen in life.

Bottom line is as a strategy it is working and it's worth the investment. There are real health and safety ramifications to reducing the deer population so we intend to do it. Okay, last two, go ahead.

Question: Mr. Mayor, just to go back to the endorsements. Can you give us a sense of sort of what's weighing on you here as we get closer and closer to the – as you pointed out yourself, the election is pretty soon. These are people you know pretty well particularly in the Governor's race – Cynthia Nixon and Andrew Cuomo are people you know very well and have extremely different relationships with –

Mayor: True statement.

Question: What's the hold up in making a decision between the two of them?

Mayor: I understand why it's your job to try and dissect my thinking and I'm going to not be able to help you on this one. There's a lot of factors I have to go into. And I have to think about a lot of things including all of the ramifications for this city. That's my first responsibility.

So, I'm continuing to do that and I will come to a decision this week and I'll tell everyone what it is.

Question: Do you think people should read into your comments about the debate last week which you sort of heaped praise on Cynthia Nixon and called her a great person and called the Governor desperate.

Mayor: I call them like I see them. I thought I was responding to a single debate. I'm not sure why there was only one debate to begin with but I was responding to a single one-hour debate and really was struck by what I saw. I thought for someone who had never debated in her life, particularly Cynthia did an extraordinary job and she raised a lot of important issues.

And I was surprised at the Governor's tone but the bottom line here is, you know, I will respond to each situation as I see it. I'll respond to what I see the campaign doing in terms of the kind of impact of this political campaign on the discourse of the state.

I think one thing we can say for sure is that this primary has been very productive as an airing of different views in terms of the future of the state, in terms of the future of the Democratic Party. It's been a positive experience and I think a necessary one. And I think you see this happening all over the country that there's a lot of change in the air and this primary is an expression of that.

But also, it's probably had some very immediate impacts and clearly the change that we see in terms of the State Senate and Democrats in the State Senate being reunified is one thing you can directly relate to the fact that there was a gubernatorial primary. Maybe things would have been different if there wasn't a gubernatorial primary. So, I'm glad there was one.

But as to where I stand, I just got to finish processing that and then I will certainly speak to it. Last call.

Question: Mr. Mayor, I want to ask you about the city's organic recycling program. We had a story today showing that you had said that there would be a mandatory implemented by this time that hasn't happened because of a lack of funding. Do you still plan to budget for that in the future or – what's the status of that program?

Mayor: Yeah, we believe in it. Look, this is a – as you know an incredibly important goal. If we could get all the organics in this city collected it would profoundly change how we deal with sanitation and it would be good for the environment, it would be good on so many levels – and reducing what we send to landfills which is a central role. But it's a very tough goal. Everything with recycling is and so we found that it's going to take more than we thought.

We're coming back with a new idea of what it's going to take but we're committed to getting it done. It will take longer than we hoped but I believe we'll get there.

Question: [Inaudible] priority of yours in the upcoming –

Mayor: Yeah – here's how I would say it simply. We've got to get there. In this last budget we realized there were greater challenges than we had originally thought. And we realized it would take more time certainly and probably more resources. But we've got to get there. We just got to find a way to make it work.

Thanks, everyone.

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