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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON PIX 11'S MORNING NEWS

Dan Mannarino: And after nearly three months of New York City on pause, the Big Apple finally reopening. Of course, it's just phase one, but it is a start and a start we like to see. And this morning we have New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio joining us live to talk about that plus the last ten days of civil unrest. Good morning to you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for making the time for us this morning.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Dan. It is a beautiful day for New York City in every sense of the word. This is a big day, important day.

Mannarino: It certainly is. You know what, I'm going to get to the reopening because it is a big day for New York city, like you said, in just a second, but I also want to highlight some of the other things that happened over the weekend, and that begins, of course, with the last ten days of this civil unrest and the issues surrounding the curfew, which you ended actually a night early, right, one night earlier than expected. So, do you feel, looking back, that the curfew was necessary or implemented, even, properly?

Mayor: Oh yeah. Dan, look, I didn't originally anticipate a curfew at all, nor did Commissioner Shea. The first few nights of protest, there were some issues and there were some problems, but we did not see that kind of property damage. We didn't see something spreading in the way that was dangerous to people or property. But Sunday night started to change that. The curfew was the right thing to do, moving it to 8:00 p.m. was the right thing to do. And you can see the proof.

Mannarino: Yeah.

Mayor: You know, it got safer each night. There were problems. There are issues that still need to be investigated. There are some police officers who have gotten disciplined, others who require it. But the bottom line, Dan, is the NYPD worked very, very hard to keep peace all over the city. We did not see the property damage again after Monday night, we never needed to, thank God, bring in the National Guard. There was no loss of life. There were a few major injuries. We had a situation where it could have been like other cities, Dan, where they used tear gas, they used mounted units, they used rubber bullets. We don't do that here in New York City. So, we managed to keep the peace and it got more peaceful each night. There are things to address. There are problems to address, but why do you use a curfew, an exceptional measure like that? To make sure that everyone comes out of it alive. And that's what we ended up being able to achieve.

Mannarino: Yeah. And you're talking about disciplinary action with the NYPD. Two officers already suspended without pay, Brooklyn DA now looking to actually bring charges or even arrest them. Do you agree with that?

Mayor: Look, the DA has to make his own judgment based on the law. What I think is important is the piece of the equation that I'm responsible for and the Police Commissioner's responsible for. There has to be a full investigation whenever there's an allegation of wrongdoing, it has to be speedy. They have to bring charges quickly. That has not been good enough in the history of the NYPD. We need to fix that. But remember, that's for a very few people in a very few incidents. Overwhelmingly the vast majority of our officers do a good job and they do it the right way. There were questions about the approach to protest and if we need to do things differently going forward, those are valid questions. There are independent reviews going on. We'll be looking at it closely, but I do want to remind the New Yorkers, the vast majority of people who came out to protest were peaceful, for an important cause. Overwhelmingly, the NYPD showed restraint. There are problems to fix, but at the end of the day, this city came out of this whole difficult sequence peacefully but with the resolve to change. We're going to take money from the NYPD, put it into youth programs. We're going to have faster police discipline. We're going to change some of the way the NYPD approaches communities because there's some things the NYPD doesn't need to be doing anymore. I use street vendor enforcement as an example – let that be done by civilians. We're going to be making a lot of changes going forward, but let's be thankful that we come out of this week peaceful.

Mannarino: You just mentioned those cuts to the NYPD. Do you have a number of how much will actually be cut and where that will actually be going? And is this in response to what the protesters were asking for, right? A lot of elected leaders –

Mayor: Well, the protestors, Dan – the protestors raised a very good point that especially against the backdrop of COVID-19 the disparities we've seen, which are horrible, which we've been talking about here for months, the fact that our young people have been hurting so much in this crisis, we do need to reorient towards young people. And this is something we're going to decide the final dollar figure in our negotiations with the City Council. But the bottom line is, look, this whole administration historically has been about young people. Pre-K for All, 3-K for All, free afterschool for every middle school kid. Dermot Shea talked months ago, before all this about reorienting the NYPD toward the work of helping young people. He said yesterday that if his budget ever had to have some money taken out of it, the one place he would want it most to go is to helping young people. So, it's been brewing, the protestors though raised a really valid point. I heard them, I felt it. And we want to show that there's an action that's going to address the real concerns.

Mannarino: You mentioned Commissioner Shea – there were rumors over social media this weekend about Commissioner Shea, Chief of Department Terry Monahan, stepping down. And we have one of our reporters claiming that there was an argument between you and Chief Monahan this weekend. Do they both have their jobs? And do you have full confidence in them?

Mayor: Dan, this is – I'm going to be blunt. This is idiocy. First of all, these are two leaders I've been working with constantly for years. They are in their jobs because I put them there. I think very, very highly of both Dermot Shea and Terry Monahan. They both had to deal with an extremely difficult situation this week. We're all going to look at everything that was done. I

think we'll all agree, there's some things that need to be done better. There's going to be full reviews internally, externally. There were some mistakes made by individual officers. But on the other hand, the vast majority of officers did their job right and showed a lot of restraint.

Mannarino: So, no shake up?

Mayor: And we need to strike a balance. So, look, I want to finish. No, I have total faith in both Dermot Shea and Terry Monahan. Terry Monahan, he went to Washington Square Park where there was a real tense moment with protesters and police, diffused it and then when protesters said, show us some respect, take a knee with us, he joined with the protesters and took a knee. The most – the highest ranking uniformed officer in the most important, biggest police force in America, took a knee this week with protesters. That didn't get the attention that deserved. And no, there was no argument with Terry Monahan. That is ridiculous. I give them both a lot of respect. We also have a lot of change we have to make in the NYPD and they understand that that's where we need to go next.

Mannarino: We highlighted that, by the way – I just want to point, we highlighted Terry Monahan taking the knee many times here on PIX-11 –

Mayor: Thank you.

Mannarino: Because it was an important moment. So, let's shift now to phase one, because like you said, this is a big day for New York City, right, one so many were waiting for. I want to start with contact tracing. So many people on the streets will begin heading back to work. How do you plan on contact tracing when there were also mixed with people heading back to work, thousands that were out there demonstrating over the past week?

Mayor: Well, Dan, it's a great question. And the bottom line is I want every New Yorker to get tested and anyone who needs a test and doesn't know where to go, can call 3-1-1. It's free for everyone. And more and more testing is available. That allows now our Test and Trace Corps to go and find anyone who tests positive and say, hey, who have you been in contact with the last few days, close contact, we want to make sure those folks get tested. If anyone needs some time to isolate from their families, we're going to provide hotel rooms for free and all the support that people need. Look, you can stop this disease if you manage it the right way, which means helping people get tested and then helping people to separate safely from their family, if they need that time to ride out the disease. So, we're putting huge resources and focus into this. Again, 3-1-1 for anyone who needs a free test or anyone who knows that they have tested positive and wants to make sure that the people in their life are protected.

Mannarino: What do you think New Yorkers need to know heading into today? Besides the fact that they have to wear their mask, practice social distancing, to actually move forward then to a phase two.

Mayor: It is those basics. It's still stay in to the maximum extent possible if you're not going to work. It's the hand sanitizer to wash your hands. It's all the basics. We need the work sites to be really scrupulous about the standards that have been set. We'll have inspectors out, making sure they do it. We're going to have folks out, giving out free face coverings all over at worksites, MTA, you name it. But I think the bottom line is we got this far because New Yorkers did such a

great job and we're going to have to keep at it so people can't get too loose. Got to remember if you want to get to the next phase, which is even bigger, if you really want to fully restart and get back to normal, stick to these smart rules. They've been working and let's see it through. And let's kick this disease out of this town.

Mannarino: And if the numbers don't go up, right, they continue on the trend they are now, you don't see an uptick because of demonstrations outside, is there a way you can expedite phase two? Or are you still sticking with what you've been saying which is late June, early July?

Mayor: Yeah. Officially, it could be toward the end of June, but I'm being a little cautious. This is a big, big step. Remember other places have not felt the disease the way New York City did. And when we do phase one, it means hundreds of thousands of people coming back to work. Let's make sure we got it right. We'll be working closely with the State on what that exact day is. It could be later June, I think more likely beginning of July. But, you know what, we got to get there. We got to hold the line. We got to do this piece right so that we can get to that next, even bigger phase.

Mannarino: Mr. Mayor, I do want to give you a chance – in about 45 minutes to an hour from now, current and former staff members of yours plan to March from City Hall to Gracie Mansion. I just want to give you a chance to address those members of your team and former members of your team, if you have a message for them.

Mayor: My message is clear. I respect that they have heartfelt concerns, but we are changing the city all the time. And I need people to just remember that history. We have, as is the fact today, the lowest number of people incarcerated since World War II in the city, we have been constantly driving down arrests while driving down crime at the same time. All of these reforms we've made in policing, we've just begun. And now we're going to take money from the NYPD, put into youth programs. We're going to speed up the discipline process. There's a lot of change coming. So, anyone who's watched the work we've done so far should know where we're going, which is more change quickly. I have a year-and-a-half and I'm going to get a lot done in that year-and-a-half.

Mannarino: And lastly, Mr. Mayor, I do want to ask, you're speaking to change. I'm looking for change on the streets of New York City in terms of garbage cans. They were taken away, of course, because they were being used during those protests and demonstrations out there. Can we see them put back on the streets? You know, a lot of people with dogs are walking, they're carrying some stuff around with them and they're looking for a place to throw it out. Any news we can make here?

Mayor: Yeah. Dan, you can make news that because of your personal request, the trash cans are coming back today.

Mannarino: Mr. Mayor, I do appreciate your –

Mayor: People can thank you for it, Dan.

Mannarino: There we go. Okay. There we go. Mr. Mayor, thank you for once again making the time for PIX11 this morning and our audience. We do appreciate it.

Mayor: Take care, Dan.

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