Background Interviews on Mr. Michael Harrison
Nominee to lead Baltimore City Police Department
March 1, 2019

Prepared by:
Bernard C. “Jack” Young
Robert Stokes
Kristerfer Burnett
Dear citizen,

Beginning in late January, and over the course of several days, a two-person delegation of members of the Baltimore City Council spent nearly 11 complete hours conducting background interviews with roughly 23 individuals in New Orleans and remotely via telephone.

The purpose of the delegation’s trip to New Orleans and subsequent interviews was to inform the Baltimore City Council as it prepares to conduct a confirmation hearing for Mr. Michael Harrison, Mayor Catherine Pugh's nominee to lead the Baltimore City Police Department.

What follows are firsthand accounts gathered from subjects who’ve encountered Mr. Harrison during his time as Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department.

A licensed court reporter was used to create transcripts of meetings with elected officials and community leaders. The transcript appears in its original format and provides an unedited account of dialogue during interviews conducted in New Orleans. In order to preserve the authenticity of the transcripts produced by the court reporter, we have refrained from editing those sections.

The interviews that were conducted by phone were transcribed by staff to the Baltimore City Council and appear with limited editing.
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Schedule:

- **Friday, January 25, 2019**
  
  o 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
  
  Telephone interview with Councilwoman Cyndi Nguyen
  
  *(Councilwoman Nguyen’s schedule conflicted with the dates members of the Baltimore delegation were schedule to be in New Orleans)*

- **Tuesday, January 29, 2019**
  
  o 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
  
  Telephone interview with Tania Tetlow, President, Loyola University New Orleans
  
  *(President Tetlow’s schedule conflicted with the dates members of the Baltimore delegation were schedule to be in New Orleans)*

  o 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
  
  Telephone interview with New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell
  
  *(Mayor Cantrell’s schedule conflicted with the dates members of the Baltimore delegation were schedule to be in New Orleans)*

- **Thursday, January 31, 2019**
  
  o 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
  
  New Orleans City Hall – 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA

  o 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
  
  CC’s Coffee House – 2800 Esplanade Avenue, New Orleans, LA

  o 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
  
  Corpus Christi – Epiphany Catholic Church – 2022 Saint Bernard Avenue, New Orleans, LA

- **Friday, February 1, 2019**
  
  o 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
  
  Fraternal Order of Police, Crescent City Lodge #2 – 101 West Robert E. Lee Boulevard, New Orleans, LA

  o 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
  
  New Orleans City Hall – 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA

  o 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.
  
  New Orleans City Hall – 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA

  1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

  New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation – 1615 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA
Telephone interviews
1. Councilwoman Cyndi Nguyen
2. Tania Tetlow, President, Loyola University New Orleans
3. Mayor LaToya Cantrell
Councilwoman Cyndi Nguyen  
Friday, January 25, 2019

Q: Last May, a report in The Times-Picayune noted that Mayor Landrieu’s office expected the New Orleans Police Department to come into full compliance by the end of 2018. According to the article, “if that happens, and the judge is later satisfied that the department remains in compliance during the two-year sustained monitoring period, federal oversight of NOPD will end.”

But a December report in The Times-Picayune noted that ‘Substantial work’ remains on NOPD’s consent decree. Can you talk about why you believe the NOPD, under Superintendent Harrison, failed to live up to the promise of exiting the federal consent decree by the end of 2018?

Nguyen: I believe … I’m a new city council member. I want to have that full disclosure. I came on in May and prior to that I was a citizen. What I was told was that NOPD was ahead of the consent decree, meaning the department was able to address many of the issues with the consent decree. Under the leadership of Chief Harrison…. You guys are getting an amazing guy.

I can share with you, as a citizen, before I came on the Council he was a commander in the district where I lived. The previous commander of the district office and I didn’t have a relationship at all. When Commander Harrison came on that whole dynamic changed. He was open to listening and engaging and trying new tactics. This district is the largest district in New Orleans.

We still have work to do in my district to reduce crime but he’s been engaged in the community. You guys are going to get a guy who’s equipped with all sorts of tactical skills but he’s also a very hard working person.

I’m disappointed that I only got seven months to work with him. I’m still trying to get the pulse of the consent decree but I know that we are ahead of the game, which I’m very proud of. A lot of his program has made national news and a lot of people from his department have traveled around the country helping other departments. I’m proud of the record that he’s been able to produce for us.

Q: There’s a wealth of information online related to NOPD’s compliance with the federally-mandated consent decree. Could you talk a little about what, in your experience, Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he prepares to tackle Baltimore’s consent decree?

I’m still trying to get a full understanding of the consent decree because it’s thousands of pages. One of the aspects of the consent decree deals with serving bilingual people. Prior to the consent decree, we did not do an extensive recruitment for bilingual officers. When you have officers come out and there’s a lack of cultural understanding and language barriers. In the past that’s been ignored. When the consent decree identified that as a problem the chief immediately jumped on it. We have at least 15 bilingual officers. That number may seem small to you but it’s more than we used to have.

Q: In the first few years after NOPD entered into a consent decree, how did Superintendent Harrison handle that process? Were there areas where he needed improvement?
I don’t think I have enough information on when the consent decree came out. I was a citizen and was not engaged in it. this is just my opinion but when you lead a department and a consent decree comes down on you of course it’s disappointing. But he also understood that having the consent decree allowed him to address issues within the department. He embraced and tackled the issues and did not avoid them. Working with the police monitoring, the judge and the community and all sorts of advocacy groups he handled it in a way that people had faith that it would be addressed. He’s one that would embrace other perspectives. He’s open.

**Q:** In Baltimore, we’ve heard stories about officers who are afraid to engage in policing for fear that they’ll violate the consent decree. Did Mr. Harrison face a similar challenge in New Orleans? If so, how did he manage that process?

I have not witnessed that. Michael Harrison has always engaged well with the community. No, I have not heard that from the rank and file.

**Q:** How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to implement community-based policing practices? Can you speak to specific examples?

My district never had a relationship with our district officer. When Harrison came in it all changed. He met monthly with community groups. It was a standing meeting. The commander at that time would share the data with the community and open up for questions and concerns. He’s also engaged in community events. He mobilizes his team to be involved. I just recently did a shop for a cop. I recognize that I also need to be a partner with the chief and the commander. I do community events where I invite officers to attend and speak. You want to create an environment where they see officers out in the community. I witnessed his community involvement. Getting to know people in the community and not just people who look like him. We do Coffee with a Cop and Shop with a Cop. The district office also holds events with the community like Trick or Treating and provides resources to the community.

**Q:** Can you speak to NOPD’s seized asset forfeiture process and whether Mr. Harrison has made improvements to the practice?

NOPD is much better now than it was before, I can tell you that. I’m pretty sure that I have not hit on all of the strategies that Michael Harrison has implemented. When issues come up Michael Harrison is always available to address it with the City Council. He’s always been in the front and has a very positive attitude. There was an incident of a new recruiter that came on the force. The officer was off duty, went to a bar and got into a fight with a civilian and beat him up really bad. Instead of covering up the incident, Michael Harrison immediately addressed that matter. He came to the City Council and shared with us what he did and provided the public with the information they needed.

**Q (Stokes):** My question was has Mr. Harrison made improvements to the practice of seized asset forfeiture?

I would have to double check on that for you. No one has ever asked me that.

**Q:** Can you speak to Mr. Harrison’s ability to conduct and implement “top to bottom” policy review changes?
Most of the programs were in place when I came in. I can’t recall any new program that was created.

Q: Did Mr. Harrison incorporate an equity lens in policy implementation and tracking? Was Mr. Harrison able to implement training programs for officers around constitutional policing, implicit bias, and community based policing?
No, I have not been able to attend any of the trainings. I know that the instructor they have has extensive years on the force. I want to sit in on their training sessions. Just to see how things are going. Based on the number of recruitment classes that we’ve graduated I have to assume, because I haven’t been a part of the training, that they are receiving it well. Training is something you do on an annual basis. He recognizes that ongoing training is critical.

Q: How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers if necessary?
He is transparent and non-biased. Looks at both sides. I feel like he doesn’t have any bias. He looks at everything and makes a decision that is fair and right.

Q: How does Mr. Harrison create an environment where his officers can get the support they need?
He’s always advocating the City Council. We just had a budget hearing in November and he advocated to make sure there was funding and support there to help the officers as they deal with trauma. He recognizes that and his advocacy through budgeting shows that he thinks it’s important.

Q: Why do you think Mr. Harrison wants this job?
I think he’s crazy but that’s just me. I think the City of New Orleans is the best place to work for. When I ran I felt like I could do more than the position I was in. I feel like he’s one that would want to share and give back to community. With his talent and skills, I think it’s humbling for him. Many times when you’re in a position where moving forward is the right thing. It’s a very sensitive question. I think that sometimes people need change in their career. I believe that what he’s bringing to you guys is of value. You are getting one that will be proactive. He’s a team player. He will take the lead when it’s needed but he will engage people in the process. I continue to struggle with that because there are so many components to engaging. He’s very intentional and he does care about people. I understand why he’s leaving.

Q: Who were some of Mr. Harrison’s best hires, and what made them assets to the department?
When he left my district and became chief he appointed commander Dupree. He had big shoes to fill and commander Dupree has filled those shoes. When he left us he didn’t abandon us. He put someone in place who could continue the work. I was at a ribbon cutting today in the Lower Ninth Ward and commander Dupree was there and I was shocked to see him because it wasn’t his area. But the commander for the area couldn’t attend and he was there to be a representative.

Q: How are police officers evaluated in performance reviews?
I’m not too well versed in that area but I know that at several meetings we’ve had they are evaluated psychologically. They’re also rated on their community involvement and also ongoing
trainings to sharpen their skills. Those are the three areas that I’m most concerned about. I’m still getting my feet wet.

**Q: How does Mr. Harrison approach police recruitment?**

I would say well because the recruitment class has been in a good number. The last one I attended there were at least 35 officers and the classes are growing in numbers. Now we’re able to recruit more people to become officers. As I said earlier his embracement of bilingual officers has helped.

**Q: Baltimore is tasked with policing gang and drug commerce related activity. Does New Orleans face similar issues? If so, how has Mr. Harrison addressed them?**

I’m not a crime fighter. I know that we have had several drug busts in our areas that have been going on quite a long time. Because many of these activities are not shared with us but I know that when I report to commander Dupree they notify me that they are working with different agencies to address these issues. It takes a process or time to address these matters. They don’t give up. They continue to work with other law enforcement agencies to address that. In my district we also have dumping and trash. My district is considered the dumping district because we haven’t really came back as far as development. Community members have complained over and over. About seven months ago, NOPD busted a guy who’d dumped thousands of tires in my district. We finally arrested the guy and I’m happy to say that he’s been sentenced to the maximum. I think this is going to send a strong signal out to people who are illegally dumping.

**Q: How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to explicitly address institutional racism/bias?**

Michael Harrison is a very fair person. I have not witnessed any discriminatory behavior from him. Of course the city of New Orleans is predominately black but he has handled situations that involve different races without any bias.

**Q: Do you consider Mr. Harrison a responsible steward of the police department’s budget?**

Yes. Every line item in his budget has been accounted for. I haven’t gotten involved in the detail of money management.

**Q: Did he ever go over budget?**

Yes, overtime for officers. In New Orleans that’s something he recognized. They did put some checks and balances in. they came and asked for $5 million from the City Council to cover for their overtime. But he was able to justify that. With the shortage of officers they have to use overtime to cover for the shortage. Sometimes you go over your budget. But he justified it and the community benefited from the hours that the officers were on duty.

**Q: How would you contextualize the following information that was published in a recent article in The Baltimore Sun that chronicled Mr. Harrison’s tenure leading NOPD:**

“While homicides in the Louisiana city of 393,000 fell to 146 last year, the fewest in nearly half a century, the number of killings has fluctuated over Harrison’s tenure. Meanwhile, aggravated assaults have increased. Armed robberies were down last year, in part as a result of a targeted enforcement campaign that Harrison launched, but robberies are higher than they were the year before he became chief. From 2013, the year before
Harrison was appointed, to 2017, the most recent year for which crime data is available, the overall violent crime rate increased 43 percent, according to figures tracked by the FBI. Property crime rose 10 percent.”

Oh, wow! But I know now that crime is going down in New Orleans. I’m not a crime fighter. My background is in social work and community development. The chief also believes in prevention to help decrease the percentage of all those crimes that you presented. Hopefully, my statement doesn’t sound like I’m blindly advocating for him, but crime is committed by individuals. Michael Harrison put resources into crime prevention. I don’t know if that’s an answer but that’s my answer. With where we’re at today he has engaged the programs to help decrease crime in New Orleans. I don’t believe a department should be rated based on the percentage of crime.

**Q:** Can you speak to Mr. Harrison’s ability to implement data driven policing practices?

He’s one to share the data with everybody. He doesn’t shy away and deals with the real data. For the first time in history the data is on the New Orleans City Council’s website. It’s broken down by neighborhoods to help educate citizens. Every place wants to be crime free and we’re just not there in our society. He didn’t hide away from the real data. He used data as a way of crime fighting as well.
Tania Tetlow, President, Loyola University New Orleans
Tuesday, January 29, 2019

Q: How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to implement community-based policing practices?
I didn’t work as closely with him on that. Observing from a distance, I’d say he did it very well. Knowing him personally, he is incredibly empathetic and diplomatic. He is very good at listening to people and hearing criticism and taking it and using it. I think that is what emerges from his department: we make ourselves available to the community. They are our customers, the people we serve, and we need to learn from them. I also served on the Civil Service commission, and he was eager to allow the District Commanders to be entrepreneurial problem solvers.

Q: How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers if necessary?
On the Civil Service Commission, I sat effectively as judge on disciplinary hearings. He had an absolute zero tolerance policy for lying. This was a difficult culture change at first, and he lost a lot of officers. But he made it a bright line rule, and he stuck with it. It led to a remarkable culture change in the department. Epic Training (Ethical Policing is Courageous): A program that NOPD itself designed, and now has become a national model. We at Loyola host a national conference of police chiefs to learn about it. The idea is you don’t just train officers on how to behave themselves and do the right thing, but also how to makes sure the officers around them do the right thing. We teach them how to de-escalate situations where your partner is about to do a “stupid thing.” The training is about how to watch out for each other. The consent decree monitor can discuss that. He was on a ride-along. He saw a sergeant dealing with a belligerent, drunk guy on Bourbon Street. The sergeant was about to do something stupid, and a young officer stepped in and said “Sergeant, I got this.”

Q: We understand that you have done very important work to reform sexual misconduct policies in New Orleans. What type of partner has Mr. Harrison been in this effort? How did he support reforms to the way the NOPD handles cases of sexual assault?
Before he was chief, there were efforts at reform, but they slipped. The IG did an audit that showed serious neglect in the Sexual Assault Unit. The Mayor and the Chief asked me to lead a reform effort. I’d tried to work on these issues before with other chiefs, and got nowhere. But Chief Harrison admitted there was a problem and wanted to improve. I’ve never seen a bureaucracy, especially a police department turn around so quickly. Everything we asked for he gave us. Social workers embedded in the unit to improve relations with victims, check in during the case, etc. He found funding for these sorts of ideas, navigated the bureaucracy, and got it done. If I presented 50 ideas: 1/3 done, 1/3 in progress, and 1/3 to be completed in the near future.

Q: Why do you think Mr. Harrison wants this job?
He likes a challenge. He has skills relevant to Baltimore’s challenges. Our new mayor has given
him mixed signals as to whether she needs her own chief; she doesn’t trust people from the own administration. That could be a contributing factor.

Q: How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to effectively build relationships with community leaders?  
He is just remarkable at getting along with everybody, from little kids to members of the business community. He is emotionally intelligent, diplomatic, honest, and transparent.

Q: How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s level of responsiveness to community concerns?  
He’s totally responsive. I’m used to complaining about the police department and being met with resistance. Instead, his response was “I think you’re right and we need to do better.”

Q: How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to prioritize and connect with marginalized community groups, i.e. race, gender, sexual orientation, people with disabilities, the homeless?  
He’s been a creative problem solver about how to avoid criminalizing homelessness. He worked very hard with the previous mayor to end veterans’ homelessness.  
An overlooked problem that the DOJ has recently begun focusing on is gender bias in policing. There was evidence that NOPD had been trying to disprove rapes instead of solving them. He turned that around. He created a culture that does not tolerate that. A mix of “we don’t do the wrong thing” and “we are supposed to reach out to the people we serve.”

Q: What personal qualities made Mr. Harrison successful/unsuccessful in this role in New Orleans?  
He’s a great listener, empathic, emotionally intelligent, diplomatic, funny, unflappable, good in a crisis, eloquent, good leader of people.

Q: What concrete steps has Mr. Harrison taken to create positive points of contact between police and the community, like athletic leagues?  
I know he’s done a lot of that, but I don’t know with specificity.

Q: Has Mr. Harrison implemented a standardized method to file complaints against police and track progress of case?  
Yes. And he’s worked hard through the CD process to make sure Public Integrity (IA) works well, is open to the public. We also have a police monitor, and he’s been open to that process.

Q: How has Mr. Harrison supported the immigrant community of New Orleans?  
He has pushed for much more language access for the department.

Q: My understanding is he is proactive about reaching out to community associations is this true?  
Yes. That is how he operates.
Q: We have read conflicting reports on whether the NOPD will come into full compliance with the consent decree ahead of or behind schedule. What are your thoughts on the speed with which NOPD has made progress implementing reforms, and how has Mr. Harrison done in terms of leading the reform efforts mandated by the consent decree?

One thing is on Friday we had a public hearing where the federal judge and monitors spoke to the consent decree and where New Orleans is and how we’ve done under Chief Harrison. It highlighted areas of real progress. It laid out areas in four sections where we need to focus. I think with in regard to New Orleans and coming from the federal judge and is even better than you hearing it from me. All of that has been done for the most part under Harrison’s leadership. This past Friday there was a public hearing with Judge Morgan and the DOJ and NOPD and the city attorney where they went over specifically areas of concern but more importantly highlighted the areas where we’ve made improvement. We’re not there yet but we’re moving toward full compliance. We have four areas where we need to focus on. Now with this they don’t give you a timeline. You’re not going to get that. I can’t give that to you.

Q: There’s a wealth of information online related to NOPD’s compliance with the federally-mandated consent decree. Could you talk a little about what, in your experience, Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he prepares to tackle Baltimore’s consent decree?

Struggle with, one is, I would say in terms of a struggle… Getting the department - the men and women of the NOPD to understand what the consent decree is and what the requirements are that are associated with it and on board so that changes of the culture could be made. There’s a challenge that will happen with your police department because you’re bringing about change. You will get push back. The men and women of the force had to understand that protocols will change and policies will change. The biggest struggle came from within the organization as opposed to outside.

Q: In the first few years after NOPD entered into a consent decree, how did Superintendent Harrison handle that process? Were there areas where he needed improvement?

Chief Harrison wasn’t the chief of police when New Orleans got into the consent decree. He was able to jump into being superintendent after we’d been in a consent decree … someone who was able to jump in to the role and move the progress significantly under his leadership as chief. This is someone who has retired from the NOPD to come and be your commissioner. In my opinion you’ve had a hard time getting a chief and you have a man who’s proven his ability and you have a man who’s teaching other departments throughout the country. I think you need to hire him. He’s already retired from his job. If you sense a little frustration on my behalf I’m telling you that it’s warranted. You have somebody who is committed, who has a demonstrated track record. When he stepped up he was able to move us faster toward compliance. So what do you need from me because you have a guy who has a demonstrated track-record? I’m excited for you all. This is what you should know, and hopefully you’ll move forward with hiring him. What I’m committing to you is that the city of New Orleans stands ready to assist you in supporting him in his role as commissioner. I’ve told the (Baltimore) mayor and expressed it to her last week.
Q: How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to implement community-based policing practices?
Picking a chief who had a reputation of already working with residents and meeting them where they were. He came to being the chief with that track record and that helped tremendously with the consent decree. That helped build trust within the community and that’s an area where the city of New Orleans, according to the monitor and the judge, have made progress. I understand your due diligence. Which puts you in an unfortunate situation because it’s after the fact and after the man has retired. The further you are from placing a permanent chief the more it hurts you. He’s going to need all the support you can give him. I want him to have the tools he needs to be successful. That’s what the community needs to get behind. That’s the only way he’s going to be successful. I don’t want him to go and be set up to fail. Support our guy. Give him what he needs to be successful.

Q: Can you speak to NOPD’s seized asset forfeiture process and whether Mr. Harrison has made improvements to the practice?
The policies that the consent decree have called for have been fully embraced and alleviated that culture within NOPD. Those accountability measures have been put into place and we’ve been successful.

Q: Baltimore is tasked with policing gang and drug commerce related activity. Does New Orleans face similar issues? If so, how has Mr. Harrison addressed them?
He’s built partnership with multiple police agencies which is key to addressing gang violence. It’s been because of the partnership with the FBI, DEA, Probation, U.S. Attorney’s Office - across the board and we’ve been able to push and been able to convict violent offenders and prosecute them as gangs.

Q: In Baltimore, we’ve heard stories about officers who are afraid to engage in policing for fear that they’ll violate the consent decree. Did Mr. Harrison face a similar challenge in New Orleans? If so, how did he manage that process?
That was a part of some of the struggle initially. Everybody you have isn’t good. It’s just a fact. Some will use it as a crutch.

Q: How does Mr. Harrison approach police recruitment?
That’s a problem all across the country. We’ve seen now an uptick in recruitment. But you also need to look at the retention mark as well. We’re graduating more officers than we have in the past. When you have a police force that’s perceived as being corrupt it hurts you. When you move toward being less corrupt you’ll see an uptick in recruitment and we’re seeing that now.

Q: How does Mr. Harrison create an environment where his officers can get the support they need?
Having direct dialogue and having a listening ear. One example was folks dealing with trauma. Creating a crises intervention team where officers get the advice they need to deescalate situations on the street. It’s a great thing. It’s also embedded in the police academy now. You make the initial improvements in crises intervention training and then you have the issues of
current officers who’ll need the training. We made that training voluntary for current officers but we’re seeing more and more who seek that training. Now it’s a part of the culture.

**Q: Why do you think Mr. Harrison wants this job?**
I think he wants the job because of the challenge. He’s been able to do great in the city of New Orleans. He’s been able to change the culture of the NOPD faster than his predecessor did. He’s up for the challenge and I encouraged him to do it. He’s retired and you all need to hire him.

**Q: How are police officers evaluated in performance reviews?**
In the evaluation, yes. There’s annual community surveys that are completed as well by a local university.

**Q: How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers if necessary?**
He does what needs to be done when it’s called for. But he’s fair. He successfully changed the culture of the NOPD. Actions speak louder than words and he’s proven himself here in New Orleans.
Day 1 – January 31, 2019

1. Councilman Jason Rogers Williams
2. Councilwoman Kristin Gisleon Palmer
3. Margaret Montgomery-Richard and David St. Etienne
4. Community Discussion
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COUNCILMAN JASON ROGERS WILLIAMS

INTERVIEWS DAY 1 OF 2, 1/31/19

INTERVIEW OF COUNCILMAN JASON ROGERS WILLIAMS:

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. We have read conflicting reports on
whether NOPD will come into full compliance with the
consent decree ahead or behind schedule. What are
your thoughts on the speed in which NOPD has made
progress implementing reforms, and how has
Mr. Harrison done in terms of leading the reform
efforts mandated by the consent decree?

A. Okay. I think it's a little bit of a --
I'll try to catch it from the front end and work my
way through. I don't believe there was ever a clear
deadline or time span for completion of the consent
decree as agreed upon by all the parties. That
being said, when you look at all the areas that we
need to come into compliance on, and you look at
where we stand, the checkmarks as the monitors go
through it, whether you fall in blue or green, as
their category things, Chief Harrison has reached
goals that I think the City wasn't expecting and the
monitors weren't expecting and Judge Morgan, who is
the Federal judge overseeing it, all very pleased
with the speed of which we moved. A lot of the things, I think, there was some concern about us not being able to get to compliance. So I feel strongly that he has been a big part of us getting as far as we've gotten so far.

That being said, can we have him back?

Q. Since you brought that up, we came here to steal him. He's already stolen. You can't go back. Go in the 12th District and get your replacement up here.

There's a wealth of information online related to NOPD's compliance with federally-mandated consent decree. Could you talk a little bit more about what, in your experience, Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he prepares to tackle Baltimore's consent decree?

A. So I think if history -- if my recollection of history serves me well, when we entered into our consent decree, they didn't have as many categories as they have now. I think they found some new categories of dysfunction when they came here. That being said, Chief Harrison has been able to not only reach compliance, or almost
complete compliance, he also has been able to 

increase transparency, so that the community can 

watch those steps towards compliance. Because it's 

not a matter of, like, where we are today, but 

having the community feel like it was getting better 

as we were making our way there, because it's been a 

long trip. 

Other part about it is, it's really hard 

to get ranking file officers, new officers, even 

harder with the old officers to get them to believe 

in these reform measures. Because a lot of times, 

if somebody is an alcoholic or an addict, or they 
got a problem, they don't see it. Their whole 

family sees it, but they don't see it. So he was 

able to work internally and externally to get there. 

If I try to pinpoint what I think might be 
a struggle in Baltimore is, you know, he knows every 

street in the City of New Orleans. He knows the 

personalities in neighborhoods, tough spots, easy 

spots, knows how to communicate with different 

folks. And I think he's going to have to learn that 
in Baltimore. Whether he became the chief or not, 

whether you had consent decree or not, he would have
had that innate ability, because it's his hometown.

So I think it's going to take him some time to learn it, but I do think he will. I think that's going to be the struggle that he'll find; not in understanding how to implement things, but how to socialize with the different folks he's going to be socializing with.

Q. We have to make sure, as the Council, to introduce him to the community of people that don't go to community meetings and people that don't go to the churches. Because we get sidetracked with that community, church stuff, and we miss the people that don't participate.

A. Right. There's a lot of other folks in other sectors. And one of the things that when he came in as chief, he was focused on the community that was directly affected.

Q. Right.

A. But the business council was left out of that piece and the business leaders, and they feel like they should be talked to. So I was able to kind of make some introductions. He followed up on those introductions with folks he didn't have to
spend time with, as a captain, and make new relationships. It also helped everybody see where they fit into this thing.

Q. Real quick. That is the key, because in Baltimore, a lot of business people talk about the crime. So their businesses suffer, dropping. So that's real key to bring the business people onboard, too.

A. Right. He understands that. He understands that.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. You kind of touched on this a little bit, but just so we continue to ask the same questions in every meeting, so there's continuity: In the first few years of NOPD entering a consent decree, how did Superintendent Harrison handle that process, and what were some things that you think could have been improved in sort of the early phases?

A. So --

Q. I know it was in place before he became chief.

A. Yes. That's one of the interesting things. And so superintendent was Serpas, Ronal
Serpas, when we into the consent decree. And some folks might describe us as going into it kicking and screaming on the front end fighting it. And so you had police officers who were supportive of fighting the consent decree, because they were supporting the old chief. I think by Michael coming in when he did, it was clear that the only direction that the NOPD could go was going towards full compliance, whether it was going to be incremental, whether he was going to go right into it.

So I don't know that he gets credit for the timing of when he got in, but it certainly was an opportunity for a real pivot, and he seized it. And as opposed to moving as slow as things were going before or maintaining the same pace, he actually increased the pace, which caused some heartburn in a lot of different respects, but there was going to be heartburn anyway, because it was somebody new. So he seized that kind of flux period to make some real strides. Then there were some dividends that were paid back pretty quickly from that. I think that kind of bought him some credibility in some areas he might not have had.
otherwise.

Q. Okay. Again, you hit on this, but maybe extrapolating out a little bit: So in Baltimore, we have similar challenges with officers saying that -- well, like I said, it's a little bit different -- afraid to engage in open air drug markets or confronting drug dealers, for fear that they will violate the consent decree.

A. Right.

Q. Did you have similar challenges here, where it sort of felt like the stoppage of work, once we came in? I'm not saying it felt that way here, but in Baltimore.

A. We had a bit of that freeze, for lack of a better word, had a chilling effect on aggressive policing. A lot of times I think some officers confuse the semantics of aggressive policing with overaggressive policing or proactive policing. And they're all very different, right. Aggression is a thing, being an aggressive person. That's not what you're looking for. That's how you get into a consent decree.

Proactive policing, on the other hand, is
getting involved, looking for crime, looking at reasonable suspicion and probable cause and whatnot, but going through all those channels and steps before you actually put handcuffs on a person. You guys know that. But there’s a lot of officers who felt like, man, you know what, I don’t want the scrutiny, so I’m just going to -- I think something might be up, but I’m just going to stay in this car, right.

And as opposed to pretending like it wasn’t a thing, Chief Harrison had some in-service training pieces explaining, you know, look -- one example I remember him doing, talking about body cameras. And he’s, like, a lot of you guys looking at body cameras as if it is a got-you moment for you. It is also evidence and protection for you for when you’re doing good stuff, and somebody accuses you of something you didn’t do. So realize, for whatever negative thing you come up with a body camera, there’s a positive thing for good policing. So he was able to kind of start showing those things. And I think a lot of the officers started realizing, okay, it’s, like, having -- what do you
call it -- secret shopper, right. And that's fine when employees are doing their job well. And he was able to sort of ingrain that mentality to get beyond that freeze, because we had that freeze for a while. You saw cases dropping off, arrests going down. But being able to show that the body camera could be used in court to bolster what you are saying you saw in court. Now you got a video to back it up.

Since then, we've been able to move into some public safety cameras, as well. The police know they're being watched. Guys doing bad stuff know they're being watched. It has the same impact on everybody.

Q. I heard this a couple of times -- divert for a quick second -- about the camera program. Is that something that he pushed or expanded?

A. He ran to the benefits of it. So I would say you could say he pushed to expand it, because in terms of when he came before the council, talking about the cost it was going to be, when they were going to be used. Like, some departments turn them on and off when they want. So he worked with the monitors to make sure that they would be turned off
only if it was sexual assault victim or somebody who did not want their statement being recorded, to protect them. Other than that, it's got to stay on, but, you know, you have to record the piece showing why you're turning it off. So I would say he expanded on it on how we were using it in a way that was a little bit more helpful.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. That's funny, because when I met with him last Friday, I was talking about -- the police in Baltimore, who I talked to, they said their hands are tied, they don't know if they're going to get fired or sued. He said, well you can still engage people, but you got a job to do. So I get it, you know.

A. That's exactly right.

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based policing practices. Can you speak on specific examples?

Community-based policing: Full service personalized policing, where the same officer controls and works in the same area on a permanent basis, from a decentralized place, working in a
proactive partnership with citizens to identify and
solve problems.

A. So I met Michael in court. I'm a criminal defense attorney by trade. And he was on the other side of me on cases. So I got to see him be the police officer you're describing and make cases doing that. And there was times when he was, like, man, I don't know, just show what I saw there, right. So he knows that the idea of winning and losing, whether it be in court, whether it be a police officer, that is really not the measure in criminal justice; it's follow all the rules, make your cases.

And so as chief, I think he was better at articulating what you're describing when he was talking to the community who don't understand policing, who don't understand what's happening in court. And he didn't assume they knew it, nor did he talk to them like they were stupid. He was able to meet them where they were, whether he was talking to millionaires or some folks with no job at all.

Yes.

Q. Can you speak to a time Mr. Harrison
4 successfully negotiated a difficult item in the
5 police union's MOU such as pension reform, overtime
6 policy?
7 Because in Baltimore, we have a problem
8 with overtime, and because we have a shortage of
9 police. But now we have a new FOP police, they four
10 days off now, it's three days off. So now we're
11 hoping that the overtime won't be as high it is, but
12 we still have a shortage of officers.
13 A. Right. I know personally that's a tough
14 thing, because we have the same issue. There's a
15 lot of similarities between the two places. The old
16 chief struggled with -- one of the reform measures
17 we had was in the office of secondary employment.
18 Because we had not been paying officers a salary
19 commensurate with what they can make in the
20 surrounding parishes. They were making about
21 $5,000, or close to it, less than what they could
22 make in other parishes with less crime and less
23 incidents and calls for service. So there was a
24 morale issue.
25 One of the ways that police officers were
26 able to pay their mortgages, take care of their kids
was detail work; you know, showing up at a restaurant or bar or club and they sit there and they just watch it. And before, that was just a deal basically between them and the place and maybe one officer looking at it. After the consent decree, you know, they had to go through all these new checks, there was administrative fees and stuff like that. And Chief Harrison was able to articulate the officers' frustration, right, to the people who were doing the administrative stuff, but also work with --

We don't have -- our union situation is a little bit different. They don't have the teeth and the care or the stick that y'all have there. But they still have media goes to them for everything. So they still have some cachet. So he didn't ignore them like some other chiefs have in the past. He would converse with them, as well, about trying to find a balance with that piece. So he didn't run from the challenge. He was able to find some areas of things that could change to help the officers out so they would get more. It wasn't all the administrative stuff, towards just getting a detail. And also, the flip side of it was, he was
able to push us to increase pay to get them back to
where they should be, and then get them higher than
other departments, so the detail work wasn't as big.
So he worked both sides to get there.

Q. Well, about a year ago, I introduced a
resolution about police seized forfeiture, update on
how they spend the money. Actually, do one Monday.
A. Okay.

Q. So my question would be: Can you speak to
NOPD's seized asset forfeiture process and whether
Mr. Harrison has made improvements to the practice?
Because in Baltimore, we don't really see
how they spend their money. They have spent money
on some, I'll say, corrupt police, and they went on
a conference. The only way their bylaws -- because
I seen the bylaws out of the police seized
forfeiture money, there are bylaws for them to
spend, like, 25,000 in the community. But then they
got $2 million sitting over here, they go on trips,
they're buying furniture, and all that kind of
stuff. I didn't know if --
A. That wasn't one of our areas that the
consent decree was looking at, largely because how
the police department can deal with seized assets is very different from how the sheriffs do it. Now,

the sheriffs who are elected in other parishes who actually do the law enforcement role, it's exactly what you're describing. Because our guy is appointed by the mayor, and there's some -- by the district attorney's office, he doesn't have that same autonomy on seized assets to do what he wants. So that didn't grow to the problem y'all have, thank goodness.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Can you speak to Mr. Harrison's ability to conduct and implement top-to-bottom policy review changes?

Has he incorporated things like equity lens in data tracking? Can you talk a little bit about that?

You mentioned a little bit, like, implicit bias, community-based policing or just training protocols. Like, what are some of the real innovative things that he brought?

A. So one really exciting thing is, you've heard about the EPIC training. Have y'all heard
It's Ethical Policing is Courageous.

Q. (COUNCILMAN STOKES) Yes. When I talked to him, he was talking about that.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. What’s the name of it?

A. EPIC training. One of the interesting things is, it doesn’t just jump beyond policing when there’s an issue with a police officer. The first piece is: Keith and I are in the car together. Keith sees me go and do something that he feels is way outside of bounds. It trains an officer on, like, a multi-tier process on how to deal with an officer you think might be making some ethical, poor decisions. First being, you know: Why did you do that? You know, I don't think you need to be doing that. You know this can get you and me in trouble, and it's outside the bounds. Then, you know, it encourages the officer to, one, say, you're right, I'm sorry, let me get back on track, I had a bad day, whatever; or an officer responds and says, you need to stay in your lane, you've been on the force less than a year, I teach you the ropes. And he's like, well, then you got to go to a supervisor and
explain to the supervisor, so the supervisor can engage. Guy doesn't change then, go to PID or internal affairs. So it sets up these standards. A lot of times you had a guy who has post-traumatic stress disorder, a real thing. Whether you're in uniform or not in uniform, the guy is going through some really rough things. And by the person engaging with him on that level, they're able to catch some stuff before it grew into a real problem. And this ethical policing strategy, FBI, DEA, other police departments from around the country have been coming, seeing what he's been doing. This has been, you know, something that he was pushing, not just outside entities, but, like, ACLU and some other folks were involved, but he claimed that as his own and ran with it. Another thing is his leadership program, first of its kind with the Innocence Project. And it is basically NOPD Innocence Project Leadership Training. So what that's about is bringing in your top -- your commanders, your lieutenants, your supervisors, all the ones on your most serious cases, and explaining to them what has been
happening in courts, to make better cases. So that as opposed to saying, we want you-all, from this point forward, do this. One example would be double blind lineups, right. So that the person presenting the lineup doesn't know who should be picked. So you go get somebody else from somewhere else to do the lineup. That way, the guy who might encourage you to pick the guy he thinks it is isn't anywhere in the room. But as opposed to just saying this is the new policy, it's a training to explain as a leadership why you're doing it, how it makes a better case, how it's more efficient, so that they believe -- they buy it, and it's not just one more new rule from the consent decree. And then you got the Innocence Project in there. And the other flip side of it is, you're getting the right guys, you know. Innocent people aren't getting arrested. So there's all these other impacts. There's this guy, John Thompson was a defendant, and he was arrested in North Carolina for rape, convicted. The woman who was raped, Cotton -- his name was Cotton. The woman, who was raped, picked him out, identified him twice, two separate
trials, because it was retried once. Then low and

behold, he's in jail, he found, saw a guy who looked

a whole lot like him, same height, same build, and

he found out the guy was in there for sexual

assault. He calls his lawyer, he said, I want you
to test my DNA. The case was before DNA was a big

thing. He said, I also want you to check that guy's

DNA, because I think that might be the guy. His

lawyer is, like, man, we check your DNA, and it's

you, you're screwed. He's like, I know. I know I
didn't do this. He said, well, this is your last

shot. So they did it. Turned out it wasn't him.

He's released.

The victim wants to meet him, right. She

meets him, she apologizes. Like, look, we were both

victims of somebody else's wrongdoing. They wrote a

book together. So now they go and teach police

departments. They come down a couple times to

present. And it's a really heavy piece, because

you've got this victim, and all she did was try to

remember the guy's features. You got the guy who

was picked. Then you got the police detective who

became the police chief who handled the case. So
they all are showing nobody did anything wrong, but what other steps could they have taken to make sure they were getting the right person. And have NOPD in there listening to all of them sends all those detectives out with a whole new sort of -- this is one of the things the chief has been helping us put together.

Q. That's awesome.
A. So now we need police to see that, you know, no matter they're brand new or old. The chief, he gets that. He was able to put that in place. He'll probably try to bring that up to

Baltimore, I'm sure, if y'all want him to.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:
Q. Well, we done stole him already. We're just thanking you for letting us have him.
Can you speak to a time when Mr. Harrison's leadership failed the City of New Orleans?
A. There was that one time he took that job in Baltimore.
Q. You got to come up with a better example than that one.
A. Let me think, man. You know, I can't think of a time. There was a time when I was afraid it would, but his call was the absolute right call. He didn't fail. There was -- I can't think of a time that he failed us, no.

Q. Okay. I know when I talked to him, he said he did some things, he knew he did them wrong, and he went back and corrected them. That was his personal call.

A. That's, like, he knew. A lot of times, nobody ever knows. You catch it before it goes anywhere.

Q. Yes, you're right. Can you speak to a time that Mr. Harrison was able to identify a weakness in his leadership, seek out training, and successfully implement lessons learned?

A. Absolutely. So I remember before he was police chief, because we've known each other since he was a beat cop, and then he became internal affairs, which is hard. That's when all the other police hate you, right. Then he was coming out of that into being a regular detective. And there were courses throughout the country, Boston being one of
the ones, where they had some really good training programs early. I ran into him at the Shell Gas Station. I was, like, what's been happening with you? Man, I've been in Boston about every other week in this conference. I was, like, why? He's, like, well, you know, they pay for us to get education, and I want to get better. This was before he was even up for police chief. This was a mayor before the mayor who appointed him.

Q. Okay.

A. So when we were talking about who to pick, that was one of the things that made me want him to get the job, because he was interested in what he didn't know.

Q. How does Mr. Harrison create an environment where his officers can get the support they need to get reliable equipment/technology, to handle trauma, to back them up when they are correct?

A. Well, I say -- this might have been first year or second year on the job. Probably the first year on the job. We were concerned -- we had a couple of officers who had gotten DWIs, not on duty,
but off-duty DWIs. And so we had a conversation about how to -- what to do about it. And what I wanted to do was, I wanted to provide -- they already have insurance, but I wanted to push them to have to go see a therapist, whether -- and let them know, it's free of charge, it's confidential. The issue was, he's like, man, I know how my officers are. If we don't do this right, the officer is going to think, man, they're going to find out I went to go see a shrink, they're going to assume I'm not fit for service. So he was able to articulate with me and the therapist we were working with a way to do it, a way for an officer to go get this without creating a stigma, right. So the officer would realize this can be helpful to me, because they see the worst stuff. They see the worst stuff day in and day out. It's going to have an effect on them.

Then with regards to technology, he'd be in front of the council on a regular basis asking for expenditures to have force multiplies, whether it's license plate readers, better cameras. I mean, he pushed for technology, to the point that we had
to be, like, man, y'all just got some new stuff.

You need to use the new stuff you got. He never stopped doing that part of it. He realizes that not having enough officers, he's got to find these other ways to make the officers he have go a little bit further.

Q. Why do you think Mr. Harrison wants the job, even though we stole him?

A. You know, clearly, an officer who goes into PID, right, becomes a chief and doesn't do -- becomes the chief at a bad time, considering it was a bad time to be a chief, right, and then succeeds, and then has numbers go down, I think he sees it as a challenge, frankly. I think there's a number of things he fixed in New Orleans. And if he can get those things right in Baltimore, I think that's going to feel really good to him.

Q. Who were some of Mr. Harrison's best hires, and what made them assets to the department?

A. I would say there's some folks who he hired on the civil side of things who were not your traditional law enforcement folks. Most chiefs before Michael Harrison were only looking at people
who are somewhere in the department, right. And I think Chief Harrison went and got some people from the private sector, business sector, who were looking at different efficiencies, and that brought some -- brought a real -- not just a breath of fresh air, but it brought some cost-saving measures, and just doing things the way they have in the private sector, because you have a deadline you have to get things done. I think that was helpful. There were a number of those.

Then he had some key promotions that were sort of different promotions. He promoted more women than the other chief had. So there was diversity, from that perspective. More African-Americans were given the choice, but not to the detriment of qualified Caucasian Americans. I think about Nick Gernon, who is a homicide detective, one of the best homicide detectives I know, white homicide detective, moved to the commander of the French Quarter. That's a big leap. He made a lot of leaps like that, because he saw something in them leadership-wise. It wasn't that they had done the leadership track. They weren't
lieutenant and on and on. But he saw they could
handle that jump. He did it, and those guys have
gotten numbers down.

Q. How are police officers evaluated in
performance reviews?

Does one of the metrics include successful
community building experiences?

A. It does, but there’s been a lot of flux in
terms of -- for a while, we had a strong
commemorative community policing. Then there was a
redeployment effort because of some public safety
issues in certain parts of town. So we’ve used
metrics like that. I know he shifted to some new
strategies when new problems presented. And we
never shifted back to the community policing model
the way that it was before, before he was taken and
kidnapped to Baltimore.

Q. Okay. I did have a good conversation with
him, because I’ve been talking about this for a
while. When you have crime like in Baltimore, we
have to go and talk -- commissioner have to go talk
to our seniors, because they’re the ones that pick
up the phone. They’re the ones that say, boohoo,
doing their thing, or they say, now I can go sit on
the steps.

A. Right.

Q. So what I've been trying to do in my
district was to get the commanders to come outside
of their police station, because people don't --
when they get locked up, they don't want to go
there; and if they don't get locked up, they don't
want to go there.

A. They don't go there.

Q. So you got to go meet people where they
are, and you go and get your seniors at your senior
developments, because they have community room.
Once you have your seniors feel safe, that's like a
domino effect to me.

A. I agree.

Q. He said, that's what he do. So I was glad
to hear that.

A. Look, he doesn't just do it once a year.

I think the math on that is doing it on a regular
basis, so they get that comfort level again.

Q. Right. I believe we council people, we
go to see police commissioner when we want. The
seniors need to have a direct relationship with him.
Like, it could be the grandson or son they never had. That's the kind of relationship they should have.

Exactly.

If you're not doing that.

And that trickles down.

Right, it's going to trickle down.

How does Mr. Harrison approach police recruitment?

The reason why I ask that, because we just had something on the news talking about the recruitment in Baltimore and how that they said they hired 227 people. Well, 37 of them only was from Baltimore.

Right.

And that doesn't include that 37 was African-American. In Baltimore, they got to do better in recruiting. We don't have nothing in the high schools. You get somebody 9th grade, introduce that to them, so they'll know the steps to get to that point.

So how does Mr. Harrison approach police
recruitment?

A. So we struggle with recruitment. For a while they struggled because what we were paying, which is something that's out of control of the police chief. We were able to fix that part. And then it was just how police are perceived, right. And so I think the one thing I watched him do was try to rebuild credibility of the department, you know, one officer at a time, in the neighborhoods, block by block, so that people see that job as a desirable job, you know. You think about when I was a kid, play cops and robbers, everybody wanted to be the cops. Something changed along the way. Don't want to be the cops anymore.

Q. They want to be the robbers.

A. Exactly. And I see that Chief Harrison tells his story, number one, of being a kid from New Orleans, who wanted to become an officer, became an officer, now became the chief, goes back to those places he's from, the people that know him, and tries to encourage people to follow that same model, right, because it wasn't like he went to some private school. It wasn't like he got something
nobody else did.

Q. Right.

A. He is that example of what that looks like. I think part of it is, there's even some marketing plans that were put into place in terms of commercials, get behind the badge, and asking people to come serve your community. It's all in how you -- like, the language he used when he was talking to people, the language he used for those advertisements was, he was talking to specific neighborhoods. It wasn't as if he was trying to get people to come in, police them. He wanted people to police their own neighborhoods, where they were from. I think that's --

Q. You know, that's funny, when I talked to him, I was talking about having good retired officers do two pilot programs in the high schools --

A. That's a good idea.

Q. -- and let the officer be the recruiter in the high school to recruit young people to become police officers, because they're retired. They still have a pension. All they do -- they have a
pension, they just get a salary. Even when we have

the hotspot in Baltimore that deal with the trauma,

the people that -- opioid, all that kind of stuff --

A. Right.

Q. -- they got two police to do that. It's a

teacher. You can't force an officer to do that.

A. To go do that extra piece.

Q. So they have two in the whole city. So I

also said, why don't you go get the retired good

officers and let them be a part of the hot team.

A. And most of them would love to come back.

Q. Right. They already got a pension. You

just give them a salary. So they could be part of

the hot team.

A. Right. That's a great idea.

Q. I think it'll work.

Baltimore is tasked with policing gang and

drug commerce-related activity. Does New Orleans

face similar issues? If so, how has Mr. Harrison

addressed them?

A. Absolutely. I mean, he implemented a gang

task force. And we actually stole from him. We got

Jeff Asher, who was working with the mayor and the
police department on analyzing, you know, who might be prey to gang violence or participate in gang violence, just because of relationships, using some analytics. So we've actually hired Jeff as our public safety analyst for the council, so we can make sure the policies we write are going to have the impact we want.

But the gang task force, realizing that just because a young person might be affiliated didn't necessarily mean they were criminally affiliated, because in poor neighborhoods, sometimes affiliation is your brother, cousin, whatever, or just the block you live on. Chief Harrison knew that, right. And I think they were looking at it scientifically. And they were trying to make arrests that would not just create a vacuum for other folks to come in and feel, but actually sit back, do a thorough investigation and really arrest the essential figures. So there's a strong amount of analytics.

I think there's a lot of similarity between Baltimore and New Orleans. I think you guys might have a little bit more complicated structure.
Ours grew out of Hurricane Katrina. People living in one neighborhood getting displaced, now another neighborhood. So we’re a gang, we’re really just five kids who all came from the same neighborhood, live in the neighborhood, and we don’t know anybody. So they called us Third and Galvez. Well, Third and Galvez is where we used to live. It’s not really a gang. There’s no leader. There’s no this. So he was able to look at all of that and figure out what the catalysts were, try to dispel that, and figure out who they need to get off the streets.

Q. That’s funny. Sometimes you have community people calling and say, it’s about five African-American guys sitting on the steps on a corner. I was, like, well, what are they doing? Because you don’t want to get into just sending the police there because it’s five -- I mean, when I was young, we was hanging on the corner.

A. Same thing.

Q. So you just got to be careful with that sometimes.

A. What are you profiling?

Q. Right. So what are they doing? And
that's from our seniors. I know because they're upset. I'm not trying to be smart, but are they doing anything? Like you said, they grew up there.

The neighborhood might be a bunch of vacant houses, so he ran into his friends, and they just stopped and started talking.

A. Sitting on the stoop.

Q. Right. How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to explicitly address institutional racism/bias?

A. He doesn't run from that either. I'm going to try to think of --

Q. Let me use an example: Systems of power, like government institutions, places of employment.

It can be anything from unfair policies and practices.

A. So we looked at together and addressed together some implicit bias questioning and things on recruitment for the police department. Like, they had some people that put together questions for potential recruits. And the questions or some of the things that can get you disqualified were bad credit -- bad credit, unemployment, things that, by
nature, don't really affect who you are, but affect what you look like and where you're from, right.

Foreclosure, bankruptcy, stuff like that. So as soon as we talked to chief about it, he was, like, absolutely. There's implicit bias in these questions that is only going to address a certain demographic. He got it. He changed it, or he called the people to make those necessary changes.

Other thing is, we had an incident that got a little bit of national attention, where a veteran who was Hispanic was in a bar. And two new recruits were off duty got really, really drunk, and the guy had on some military regalia. And one guy was former military. He was yelling at the guy and asking him, were you in the military. The guy said, yes, but the guy had an accent. This guy, his understanding, how can you be an American that's in the military with an accent. They beat the guy up, right. And, you know, 5 years before that, 10 years before that, it would have took 3 weeks before the real story came out.

Chief Harrison went to the scene of the incident that night. He treated both officers like
they were regular citizens. They were arrested.

They were processed. And he treated them like you
would treat anybody who had done something like
that, and let the investigation fall as it was. And
that had the possibility to really turn into a real
nightmare, blackout for the department. Had he done
anything like what normally happens; we're going to
look into it and see if maybe the other guy did
something to cause it, it could have turned into a
national scene of people coming down here, talking
about police brutality. But because of the way he
handled it, it actually turned into a highlight of
how a police chief should deal with implicit bias
and hate crimes. And he didn't run from that
phrase. He said, this may be a hate crime. The
U.S. attorney and the DA's office will look at
everything that we have to figure out if hate crime
charges are warranted, you know.

Q. It's funny, because in Baltimore, part of
our bias recruitment is, the police department has
their own HR. So they get to determine who can get
into the cadet program and become a police. But
when the person, they tell them no, when they go to
an outside agency, the outside agency hires them.

They go into the police cadet program.

A. Are you serious?

Q. Yes.

A. Wow.

Q. That's real bias.

A. Yes, it is. Built into the system.

Q. Yes.

Do you consider Mr. Harrison a responsible steward of the police department's budget?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely. Try to think of -- there have been moments when he requested license plate readers, and the license plate readers had not gone into effect in the same -- the calendar year was running out from that city council expenditure. And he didn't wait for us to come and say, what happened here. He contacted us with the problems, what was causing them, because it gave us an opportunity to free up that money and spend it on something else for this calendar year if it wasn't going to be implemented. So I think he definitely showed good stewardship of public dollars.
implement data-driven policing practices?

A. That's probably his best asset. That's his best asset, because it's one thing to make your best efforts and give good speeches about the consent decree. It's another thing to convince police officers to collect the data while they're doing the work and condense the data into something that is digestible for a federal judge, for the city council, for the public, to see if you are having an impact that you had before.

One of the simple questions we have: Who is getting arrested, right. Who is getting arrested? And you can play with those numbers. You can say who is getting arrested, period, or you can say who's getting arrested for petty crimes, or where are those arrests happening. And if only blacks and Latinos are getting arrested for marijuana, then something is probably wrong, because everybody smoke -- black, white, whatever, you know. That should not have that much racial bias. Who's getting subpoenaed versus who's getting arrested for the exact same crime. And if you see people in rich neighborhoods, and they're getting subpoenas, and
people in poor neighborhoods are getting arrested, that would show. But he had all that data out and would use it himself to influence what or how they were directing officers on the street.

Q. That's funny, because our state's attorney just made an announcement that she was not arresting people for certain amount of marijuana.

A. I saw that. I saw that.

Q. That's been, like, all over the screen now.

A. I think I saw it in 5 minutes. That's a big deal.

Q. I guess she kind of caught everybody off guard with that.

A. Wasn't a lot of external conversation --

Q. Police --

A. Oh, really? Interesting.

Q. I don't know what she doing, but she doing something.

A. Interesting.

Q. In assessing Mr. Harrison's merits, much has been made of the historic drop in New Orleans' murder rate. But we also read in the Baltimore Sun that violent crime has increased 43 percent since he
was appointed. Can you help us obtain a more nuanced understanding of Mr. Harrison's impact on violence crime in New Orleans?

A. Sure. I'm of the opinion that there's some cyclical components of crime rates, especially as it relates to violent crime. I think the best analogy I can make would be when I played football at Tulane. We didn't win a lot of games. And one of the biggest determining factors of how well you'd do in any given football season is how well coaches were recruiting the years leading up until that season. So a lot of times you might have these building seasons where the effect of who you've recruited and trained doesn't manifest itself until 2, 3 years down the road.

So with regards to crime, violent crime increasing during his early tenure, I think that wholeheartedly cannot be attributed to his policies and efforts. I think when you look at the trajectory of crime while he was there and the fact that it has gone down, that does go to his benefit.

The one area you got to carve out of that is sex crimes, right. We found that our sex crimes
division was not properly investigating sex crimes.

We found out that, we know still, our district attorney was not properly evaluating sex crimes.

There was a scrutiny against victims and women suggestive as if they played some role, especially in the known assailant area.

And so the chief, and with the help of other agencies, had a real outreach program, a lot of community meetings, as well as revamping their sexual assault crime unit to encourage victims to come forward. So I think in that area, we were getting more complaints, because people felt more comfortable with the police department to say what happened as opposed to just not turning it over.

That's the outlier in the piece. But in terms of shootings, stabbings, murder rates, I think, you know, credit has got to go to the guy that was doing the recruiting and the policies during that time, and that goes to him.
Q. We have read conflicting reports on whether NOPD will come into full compliance with the consent decree ahead of or behind schedule. What are your thoughts on the speed in which the NOPD has made progress implementing reforms, and how has Mr. Harrison done it in terms of leading the reform efforts mandated by the consent decree?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) So I think the problem with the consent decree is that there was no incentive to end the consent decree in terms of the inspector side of things. So there's really -- for us, it's been like this hurry and wait. So I think the initial way the consent decree was established really just kind of put us at the whims of the feds in terms of how that was going to be. I'm not saying positive or negative. That's just the way it was set up. And so I really believe that we could have been out probably, at least, you know, last May.
A. (Mr. Sullivan) Even the 6 months they said, okay, we're fine, we'll wait another 6 months, but basically everything is there. One of the things the city attorney has brought to our attention is that the federal monitors have started to deviate from the consent decree and say, well, you did such a good job in this area we agreed on, now why don't you go fix that.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right. So there's nobody holding the federal monitors to accountability, right. I don't necessarily -- I'm not putting that on this administration. I'm not putting this on Chief Harrison. I just think it was the way it was structured initially from Mitch Landrieu.

So I was in office from 2010 to 2014, and then I left, and I came back. So I was there kind of like on the ground level when that happened. But Serpas was chief. And then I think the last year I was in office, when I was leaving office, I think that's when Harrison came onboard.

When did he become chief; was it in 2014, 2013?
A.  (Mr. Sullivan)  Yes.

A.  (Councilwoman Palmer)  And he was very well received at that point, too, because of somebody coming from the ranks, rank and file.

I'm sorry, did I answer all your questions on that?

Q.  Yes.  Second question is: There was a wealth of information online related to NOPD's compliance with the federally-mandated consent decree. Could you talk a little bit about what, in your own experience, Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he prepares to tackle Baltimore's consent decree?

1  consent decree?

2  A.  (Councilwoman Palmer)  First of all, let's remember the mandated consent decree.  I don't know if this is semantics, but the previous mayor, Mayor Landrieu, invited the feds to come in.  It wasn't them coming in from the outside and just saying you need to have a consent decree.  I think it was at the time the mayor requested that this action to occur.

So, I'm sorry, was the next part?

Q.  Could you talk a little bit about what, in
12 your experience, Superintendent Harrison may
13 struggle with as he prepares to tackle the consent
14 decree in Baltimore?
15 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I don't have the
16 knowledge base to answer that question, because I
17 don't know what the environment is in Baltimore. I
18 think from Harrison -- from my perspective on seeing
19 Harrison, I think -- when did your consent decree go
20 into effect? Has it gone into effect yet?
22 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) So I think he was
23 able to watch it at a different level the way it was
24 initially implemented with Serpas, which I think is
25 good, because I think from a secondary level of
26 management, it's probably better to see it than to
27 tackle it as leadership. I think he was, like, the
28 closer then, in terms of when he came onboard after
29 Serpas left. So I think he has the value of those
30 two different perspectives in terms of how a consent
31 decree is implemented and then actually doing it
32 after that. So he could probably see when perhaps
33 some of the mistakes were made. He had the
34 opportunity to rectify it.
I think what I find really interesting about Chief Harrison is his temperament. I think his temperament is very well suited for dealing with the consent decree in a manner that is approachable from the public and then also relatable to the rank and file.

Q. That makes sense.
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) If that makes sense. He was a cop, too; so I have a little bit of insider information, if I'm allowed to say that.
A. (Mr. Sullivan) I think one of the things we see a lot of cops talk about is they sometimes they get frustrated with some of the restrictions on the consent decree, as police officers will. But then when you say, how do you think Chief Harrison is handling it, they always respond positively.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right.
A. (Mr. Sullivan) They’re always, like, no, we really appreciate the work that he does, how he goes and speaks about us and supports us in this. Like, we might not like it, but at least our leadership understands that and is working with us.
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes. Like, he
never deviates from lifting up the rank and file and appreciate that they've had a hard time with it, because it is. I mean, you know, the consent decree, if you're rank and file, it can be a lot of bullshit in terms of what is going to add to your guys, men and women. It's is just multiple layers of paperwork, which can be so demoralizing, and then add 2, 3 hours to their shifts. If y'all have the type of crime we have in New Orleans, it's a very hard thing to manage, you know. So you're stuck at the end of the day doing 3, 4, 5 hours more of just paperwork than you had before. I'm not saying that this is not necessary. I'm just saying there's a certain reality that the rank and file have to deal with that's very challenging. And that's one of them.

What else did I hear complaints about? Interestingly, initially, there were complaints and concerns about the body cameras. But then over time, they realized that it was so beneficial for them, because y'all know what happens when people complain about them, make an accusation, if you're a patrol cop, you know. So that was able to actually
kind of help them. It was interesting watching that progression within the police department. They totally recognized that some things, you know, are difficult to implement, but they also saw the benefit. At the end of the day, these men and women are there for their service. I mean, they want to do the right thing, the vast majority of them. I'm sorry.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. We've heard that pretty consistently around the body cameras, sort of the transition.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right.

Q. So one of the things that we hear in Baltimore, obviously, on the front end of the consent decree still, is sort of officers feel like they are -- they feel reluctant to engage and to do their jobs for fear of violating the consent decree or being sued. Have you heard that?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes.

Q. Can you sort of expound on how he's tried to address that issue?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) That was initially on when I was first in, first tour of duty, right.
4 So I don't know -- but then we also -- I don't know
5 if y'all are fully staffed or not. So that was a
6 whole another issue that we had in New Orleans, was
7 that you had single cop cars. And if you don't have
8 a partner, I mean, you don't want to pull over folks
9 in a traffic stop violation if you don't have
10 backup. So there are very strong realities about
11 having that kind of limited size, not being able to
12 chase or engage. A lot of that probably came from
13 higher up, as well. But I don't know if that was
14 because of the consent decree, or if that was also
15 because of the fact that we just weren't fully
16 staffed.
17 Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's
18 ability to implement community-based policing
19 practices? And any specific examples that come to
20 mind on community strategies. Building that trust
21 is really what we're trying to get with the
22 question.
23 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I tell you what --
24 again, we were sworn in not even a year ago. So I
25 wasn't here for the bulk of the last -- the 4 years
will say that the caliber of the commanders in my districts have changed radically. They're much better from when I was in office the first time. And that's across the board. I was very, very surprised at that change. And I would have to -- I guess I have to attribute that to Harrison. So I thought that the caliber changed. I also felt like, again, with his personality, there's not a concern of lifting up other folks in leadership positions, which I also think speaks of a good leader. I'm trying to think of something specific.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) We have the non-PAC system.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) But that's kind of always been there.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about it? I don't think we covered that in the previous meeting.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) That's just, like, the monthly meetings that each district hosts that they bring in. Any citizen can come in. The commander will be there to give crime stats and sort of talk about initiatives that are going on. And citizens are allowed to sort of raise their concerns that
they have. Yes, we've been to a few. It seems like you always want more engagement, but it is a nice avenue. You do feel like people go in and get real face-to-face time. This isn't just, like, a desk sergeant taking notes. Literally, the commander is standing in front of that group answering questions directly.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I also think he's been very receptive to new things that I'm seeing this time out that I didn't last time; the LEAD program in the 8th. Obviously, Commander Geronn's been doing some really interesting diversions programs for the homeless. So the 8th District encompasses the French Quarter. So you can imagine -- I represent the French Quarter. So you can imagine how difficult that is. And that commander has done some really kind of innovative stuff.

Obviously, I think, again, he was allowed -- and I think some alternative policing, things that this commander has been open to in terms of, I know we’re trying to get the serving center opened, but then also the alternative housing right
24 outside of the VA.

25 What am I thinking of?

1 A. (Mr. Sullivan) The L'Auberge.

2 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Been a long day,

3 I'm sorry.

4 The L'Auberge. I do think that there's an

5 emphasis on understanding the interconnectivity of

6 good policy, and it's not just about policing. So I

7 think that's been refreshing. You can tell I really

8 would rather him not leave.

9 Q. That's been pretty consistent.

10 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes. He's also in

11 my district, the best district. So I would -- yes,

12 I think we're losing a really good guy, so y'all are

13 fortunate.

14 BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

15 Q. Can you speak to a time when Mr. Harrison

16 successfully negotiated a difficult item in the

17 police union's MOU, such as pension reform, overtime

18 policy?

19 A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I don't know if he

20 did that. I'm not aware of that.

21 A. (Mr. Sullivan) There were the raises a
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) No. I pushed for the raises the last year I was in office. I also pushed for an additional recruitment class, but Harrison wasn't the chief then. It was Serpas, and Serpas was doing whatever the mayor told him to.

Q. Can you speak to NOPD's seized asset forfeiture process and whether Mr. Harrison has made improvements to the practice?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I can't speak to that either. So I was not, even when I was in office, I was not on the criminal justice committee. So that wasn't an issue that I was really focusing on. I'm on the criminal justice this time out, but I'm focusing more on juvenile justice than I am with the police department.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Okay. You mentioned earlier -- sorry, we've also been to a lot of these --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right.

Q. -- sort of the issues around constitutional policing. Can you talk about some of
these strategies, policy review changes that you think that he's made under his leadership that have been particularly successful around this issue of constitutional policing or implicit bias?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I think he's been very clear about it. A lot of those issues came down from the consent decree, as y'all know. But I think it's just been a wholehearted embrace of them. And there's never been any substantive pushback that I've ever seen from Harrison.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) I think that's the most interesting thing about what he can do, is he can hear sort of the frustrations of the rank and file, but also stay consistent in the message of, the improvements we are making are right and are just, and we will continue making them.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) And he continued to have people believe in him as he's doing that. Even as they are frustrated, they still say, you're right, we will still follow you.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) And I do think it's important to note about New Orleans -- I mean, I
know we all have serious issues of crime and what
have you throughout our districts, and I'm sure
Baltimore, y'all have the same types of issues. I
don't know what the breakdown is, demographics of
Baltimore, but, you know, one of the interesting
things about New Orleans is, on top of the fact that
we have a smaller police force, but our population
size right now, we also have 17 million tourists a
year that come through this city. And I do think we
have probably one of the -- probably one of the best
police departments in the country, if not in the
world, when it comes to putting on special events
and dealing with issues that can also be
controversial.

The monument issue was the big issue, when
he was chief during that time. So I think that's a
whole another skill set that people, you know, often
don't really understand about this place down here.
And I think our police do an outstanding job when it
comes to that type of engagement. I think that's
really important when you look at constitutional
policing and how it's a multiplier effect with the
people that you serve.
Q. You mentioned monuments. That was a big issue in Baltimore, as well. Can you expound a little bit?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Again, I wasn't there. I was out of office at the time. I think it was -- I have different issues on it. I absolutely think that they should have been taken down, but I think it should have been started, you know, first time you're in office, then let's start doing it and saying this is our value system. And every opportunity that we have to take something down and put something back up and mark it, it should have all gone in tandem. Because that didn't happen, I think there's been a void left over from that. That has nothing to do with the police. I think that the police were put in a very difficult situation, because I think one of the issues that happened here was also that who was in office in DC. And I think, unfortunately, a lot of that has -- you know, we had a lot of folks coming in from out of town, right, not from New Orleans, these protesters espousing these ideas of hate. And so I think our police handled it very, very well, you know, very,
very well.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) You ever heard Gernon's story about the crane? Commander Gernon, it was his first day on this. There were threats against all operators of cranes in the surrounding areas. So --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes. And none of the contractors -- yes, there were threats against. I mean, it was horrible.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) So one guy brought -- was willing to do it, brought his crane in. Well, it was very old equipment that was actually leaking oil. So they had to use a blowtorch to solder it shut. So, like, fuel is pouring out, and Gernon is on the radio telling these guys, like, just take a couple steps back, because we don't know if this thing is going to explode or not.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Again, I think, like, our police are the best police to deal with that kind of situation. I really, really do. I have full faith in them when it comes to crowd control, when it comes to situations like this.

Q. Okay.
Q. Can you speak to a time when Mr. Harrison’s leadership failed the City of New Orleans?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Again, I just feel like I’m at a disadvantage, because I only had, like, 8, 9 months with him this time out and then probably almost the same when I was leaving out. But, I mean, I’ve been an engaged citizen. Nothing that comes to me.

I think it also speaks -- I could speak to the mayor. I thought it was good that chief kept him on through a transition and recognizing that. I think we all felt -- I know I felt very strongly that he should stay on, because I thought it was important to have consistency to get through the consent decree, because we really felt that it should have been over with by the end of May, June.

And a lot of -- again, I really hope y’all structured it with, like, very concrete timelines and incentives, because you’ll get to meet how they are, you know; come down for a couple of weeks at a time, vacations, stay at nice hotel, you know, and
there's just no sense of urgency on their part, none whatsoever.

Q. How does Mr. Harrison create an environment where his officers can get the support they need, to get reliable equipment/technology, handle trauma, or back them up when they are correct?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I can't answer that either. I mean, there's been some innovative things like we mentioned before, I think the Realtime Crime Center. I don't know if y'all had an opportunity to go look at it. I think that kind of happened all under the watch and partnership of Harrison. That might be a really good thing for y'all to go check out, the cameras. That's really allowed the officers to --

It's kind of scary technology-wise, but, like, literally with the cameras that are all interconnected around New Orleans, like, if there's a corner and intersection, say, on Canal Street, an officer can go in and pump in, I need to see every white car that went through this intersection between these hours. And it filters instantly. All
the other cars go away, and you only see white cars
going through that are time stamped. So you can
imagine with the officers, it cuts their time in
half in terms of doing any kind of, like,
investigatory thing. So there's been things like
that, that have assisted, I would assume. But I'm
not saying he was -- yes, I'm not saying he's the
instigator of that or the initiator of it, but I
know there has been a pretty good partnership with
it.

Q. Interesting.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes, it is

interesting. We've actually seen our clearance
rates, like, in the French Quarter go down --

A. (Mr. Sullivan) Go up.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I mean, clearance
rates go up. Sorry. I mean, like, triple, because
of this instantaneous information.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Why do you think he wants the job?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I don't know. I
don't know. That's -- I'm not even going to

surmise, you know.
Q. Fair enough. Can you speak to his approach to police recruitment at all or just recruitment, retention? Some of your colleagues have mentioned, I think you mentioned it as well, like, the pay raise issue. That sounds like that may have been beforehand, but...

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes. We started pushing that early on.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) But it actually happened during his --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) It happened during him. I think he understands that.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) I think there was also that issue of police classes. There were some waivers that were given to officers that probably weren't appropriate. And I think recognizing that the recruitment practices were wrong sort of even in the midst of sort of trying to get people in, also recognizing, like, if we don't get the right people in, it doesn't matter whether or not you get a lot of people. Like, sort of having the ability to say, we actually need to stop here for a second and make sure that this is --
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Well, I thought it was really good, too, that the two officers that were brand new recruits, just got out, they beat up that guy in the Quarter, and there was, like, no hesitation for him to go out in front of the media and say, there's no two ways around this, this is wrong, they're off, and we're going to do better. It was, like, immediate, which I thought was important, too.

Q. Swift response?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes, very swift.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) He was in front of the council the next day, I think, at one of the committees.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes.

Q. We've heard that a couple of times.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Look, he's accessible. As a council member, I would always say, I could pick up the phone, he'll brief me or whatever. So he totally understands that aspect of it.

Q. Okay. One of the big challenges that we have in Baltimore is policing gangs and drug
trafficking. Is it similar here? And if so, how

has he really addressed that?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) We have gangs, but

I don't think we have the same type of gang culture

that other cities have. I think we have wards,

different neighborhoods and areas. I don't know, I

can't speak to it. I know we have some. I don't

know if it's as big as other areas.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) It's much more fragmented

since Katrina. Katrina actually destabilized a lot

of sort of the major players. So when population

was returning, there were a lot of new people who

sort of were fighting for territory. So I don't

think --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) That also created a

lot of conflict a few years after Katrina, because

people coming back, and they couldn't go back to

their neighborhoods, so they were in other

neighborhoods. We're very provincial around here

and protective of our neighborhoods.

Q. Same in Baltimore, 255 of them. Okay.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. How has Mr. Harrison approached police

recruitment?
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Well, I think
there's been -- obviously, you know, we have the New Orleans Police Justice Foundation, other, like, kind of nonprofits out there that have really been kind of focused on recruitment and assisting that process. Don't you think?
A. (Mr. Sullivan) Yes.
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I'm not sure. I think this would be a really good question to find out from somebody who was here before and maybe saw, or within the academy to see, you know. I know when we were really hitting that low point, I guess it was a year ago, they started having smaller classes, just because they were waiting too long between classes.
A. (Mr. Sullivan) Yes.
A. (Councilwoman Palmer) You know, to kind of be more responsive and not wait for a class to fill up, and just start trying to do smaller classes just so you always had a couple going at any one time. I know the council waived off, at one point, the residency requirement, because we just couldn't, you know, get the officers that we needed to get as
quickly as we did. That was a big deal.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) I do think the pay raises helped.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) More than anything, the pay raises have helped.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) Transfers, or people who have originally been NOPD, might have transferred out and transferred back in, because they're realizing now it actually is financially viable for me to be a cop here. Based on that, they take them back.

Q. Do you consider Mr. Harrison a responsible steward of the police department's budget?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes, I think so. I think we were having, though, some pretty major budget -- it just came in, why was there overage?

Oh, we had a higher rate within the recruitment classes, right. So we went over, and we had higher overtime --

A. (Mr. Sullivan) Yes.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) -- this last budget season. So I think in the middle of the summer, we had to transfer, was it, $6 million.
sort of a screwy place right now, where you had the raises going into effect. Also, we are understaffed, right. So overtime costs are higher. But we are staffing up, but overtime is still sort of going along with that. So they are making the adjustment now to cut into those overtime hours. But it was just one of those situations where those two things sort of had crossed paths, and the adjustment hadn't been made yet. I don't think it was -- I think it was an inevitable thing. I don't think it was one of those things where you could have gamed it out; so we start dropping overtime hours as soon as we reach this number. That's just something where you have to wait until you see the pay, and then realize, hey, we got to restructure.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Right.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Okay. So this is more of, I guess, a
We have a big paper, Baltimore Sun, did an overview of his tenure here, and there was -- I'll just read sort of the line that is in here.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Okay.

Q. And just try to see if we can get some

context as to what may be going on. It says:
"While homicides in the Louisiana city of 393,000 fell to 146 last year, the fewest in nearly half a century, the number of killings has fluctuated over Harrison's tenure. Meanwhile, aggravated assaults have increased. Armed robberies were down last year, in part as a result of a targeted enforcement campaign that Mr. Harrison launched, but robberies are higher than they were the year before he became chief. From 2013, the year before he was appointed, to 2017, the most recent year for which crime data was available, overall violent crime increased 43 percent, according to the FBI. Property crime rose 10 percent."

So can you help give us a little nuance?

It seems like -- and even our driver on the way here mentioned that murders were down significantly, and
he was happy about that.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes, everyone has been so focused on the murder count as opposed to, like, the armed robbery counts. I don't know if that is reporting. I'm not sure why. I think that -- who's our guy they should talk to on the council?

A. (Mr. Sullivan) Jeff Asher.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Have y'all interviewed Jeff Asher yet? Is he on your list?

A. (Mr. Sullivan) He's, like, a contractor with the council who solely deals with criminal --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) So he's not from the administration side, which is why I think you should talk to him.

Q. Okay.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) So one of the things that we've been trying to do, a lot of criminal justice reform over the years and bring down our prison populations and have some better policy, but we wanted the policy kind of based in data. And so he was hired as our criminal justice coordinator -- not coordinator, but more like a data
guy. So, like, you can ask him for information from
my district, very specific; what are the trends,
what's happening. He's always giving us, you know,
daily prison numbers, intake numbers, you know.

Q. He works with the department or the
administration?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) No. He works for
us, for the city council. That's what I'm saying.

Q. Okay.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) With 538, he is, like, a
total data nut.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) So I think you
should talk to him about those numbers, because I
don't want to...

Q. We had another one around
data-driven practices, but it sounds like --

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) I think he would
be -- he's a data geek. So he would be very -- he's
just about the numbers. So I think it would be
helpful. He doesn't mince anything.

A. (Mr. Sullivan) He actually just did a
presentation a couple of months ago talking
specifically about how you measure crime rates and
why do we see sort of these fluctuations and that kind of stuff. He would be able to speak on that.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Where was he before we got him again; he was on the administration side, wasn't he?

A. (Mr. Sullivan) No -- well, yes.

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) Yes, he was.

Q. Anything else we need to know? Anything else we missed or should know about?

A. (Councilwoman Palmer) No. Just wish he wasn't leaving.
Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based policing practices? Can you speak to specific examples?

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) I would say that he has been successful in implementing community-based policing based on his implementation of a neighborhood type of patrol. He went to more of a hands-on approach in the neighborhood; meaning that -- those of you who may have come from a socially economic-challenged environment; meaning, poor black neighborhood, like myself, you did not know an officer's name. I mean, you only saw an officer when it was an issue in the area. So going back to community-based policing, in which he reinstituted, he wanted to get more personal between police and making a relationship with the youth, which I think is critical, you know. I didn't grow up knowing an Officer Robert or an Officer Harry or Officer Larry. I had no idea, you know. We didn't
see them as someone that you would have a
class conversation with, per se. So by doing that, I
think that is substantial, and much more of that is
needed in all of the environments.

In particular, what we have read about
Baltimore and, of course, some of the challenges
that you have because of urban environment, because
of the white flag, because of the lack of revenues
in urban area, which are needed more in there than
less, because, you know, they have deteriorated,
infrastructure, so forth and so on. So you got all
kind of financial challenges, as well as social
challenges. But his policing and his implementation
of that, I think, is critical.

And I think Mr. Harrison
is, in his work, he's a very personable guy. So he
established the kind of relationship that a
community policing -- he's approachable. He
interacts well with all levels, you know. There's a
thing that they say, walk with kings and keep a
common touch; keeping a common touch, still being
very stern and deliberate in the programs that he's
implemented, you know, getting the districts back,
looking internal at the talent, collaborating with
community, being in the presence.
And, you know, in our communities, they
want you to be present with the community
organizations. They want you, as a council person,
as they call you about an issue in the community.
He understands the importance of being responsive to
those calls, you know. It may not be a lot of the
shooting or killing or whatever at that moment. It
could be Ms. Jones who’s calling you saying I have
these people who keep a racket going on all the
time. As council people, you get all kinds of
calls. So I think he’s very engaging; yet, very
strategic in how he has gone about reinstituting
some of what he knew as a younger police officer.
He was on the force when Richard
Pennington was here, if y’all know that name. Y’all
don't know that name? Well, he came out of your
area to New Orleans under the Morial administration.
So I saw him do and try to reinstitute a lot of the
things that worked when crime started going on
decline in that area.
Q. Right.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) A little bit about

Prior to Pennington, the news every night 10 o'clock was, like, how many murders versus how many days of the year.

Q. That's where we're at right now.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) So, hey, we're 300 days in the year, and we're 323 murders. That was the report every night. Okay. So in your position, when you're trying to do positive things and build up stuff, and 10 o'clock news every night, you get this report. And it's something that you can't personally control, right. Otherwise, you would have wiped it out.

So brought Pennington in. Pennington started the community policing as well, along with just identifying the hotspots. So basic math, where the majority of crimes is, you got these hotspots, boom, boom, let's focus in.

A. (Dr. Richard) So he instituted the camera.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And it started coming down.

A. (Dr. Richard) And you notice -- y'all
18 probably got the last report on what happened last
19 year -- that was the lowest we've experienced since,
20 what, 80-something, in terms of murder.
21 Q. Homicides, yes.
22 A. (Dr. Richard) In homicides. And so the
23 instituting and installation of the crime cameras,
24 which was one of his big initiatives, has seemed
25 like it has a positive impact. And the results are

1 what we see right now.
2 So in terms of community, I think he
3 understands and knows how to assess a situation,
4 pull the right people in to -- because you can't do
5 community policing without community. So he has the
6 ability and the sensitivity and compassion; yet,
7 still stern as the one who's responsible to protect
8 and to serve. So that's what you're going to get,
9 and transparency. I've known him a long time. I
10 was very proud of him to get selected for that
11 position and thought it was a good decision.
12 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And me, I have no
13 history with him, besides being over the New Orleans
14 Regional Black Chamber, we're over 575 members, and
15 being raised in New Orleans in a challenging
environment, to see the importance of that. So we're different in relationships, because I have no past relationship, other than when he made chief and talking to him at that point.

A. (Dr. Richard) And part of why I know, I was actually provost of the community college. So my experience with the police department, the community college here, and probably in Baltimore, too, you are the one connected to some of the training and the academy and them getting associate degrees and things like that. So he was getting that mix, so was Eddie Compass, so was Warren Riley, and all those guys.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Riley was a prior police, as well.

A. (Dr. Richard) All those. So I have a different experience with police and watching them institute programs and recruit and even going into the community working with kids.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Margaret is being a little bit modest. She was over the technical college for all of Louisiana.

Q. (Councilman Burnett) Wow.
14 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) We have a large one here, close to where we are, that interfaces with the police academy and so forth.

17 A. (Dr. Richard) Which we mirror so much of what you guys have to deal with in Baltimore. I used to go to Morgan State. I was --

20 Q. (Councilman Burdett) Go Bears.

21 A. (Dr. Richard) -- part of the speaker's bureau and their community, higher ed., Ph.D.

23 program they have there. So I have some experience and know y'all challenges are pretty much like ours.

25 So y'all have limited time. We can talk, so you got to stop us, David and I.

1 Q. What ends up happening is, you'll cover multiple topics.

4 A. (Dr. Richard) And we've never been elected to anything, and we're not running.

6 Q. But y'all sound like politicians.

7 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) No. We actually get things done, but go ahead. I'm sorry.

9 Q. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers, if necessary?
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) All right. So you know across the nation, we’ve been having, obviously, this issue with young black people, men in particular, being isolated or profiled, in some cases killed, if not just reportedly as relates to an incident happened that he may or may not have participated in. He kind of neutralized that. Even when it has happened, he has done a full investigation. We have never seen an outcry or outbreak among the community. There have been no rallies or protests coming about, that I can think of, under his.

A. (Dr. Richard) The grand scale things.

You’re going to have -- because we’ve had just last week -- I mean, it's a two-edged sword, because you have the community piece and what is viewed as brutality. We've had several police officers killed in their role. Just last week, one officer that was killed, you know. That whole piece on police right now, he's handled it well. He's addressed it. He doesn't shy away from it, because every situation is going to be different. So does he sweep them under the carpet? No. He does the due diligence to get
10 to some sense of resolution. If not resolution, to
11 be able to understand what actually happened in the
12 process.
13
14 Last week, the officer that was killed,
15 Marcus, he was, you know, shot by a man who's now
16 been declared incompetent to stand trial. But then
17 you had another Marcus who was accused of child
18 molestation, and that Marcus was probably his
19 classmate in the academy. But he had to do what he
20 had to do. So he has been able to discern and then
21 make the best decision for not just for the
22 department, but for the community.
23
24 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Our poverty, if you
25 will, at areas where a lot of these crimes are is
26 not concentrated on an area. New Orleans is kind of
27 diverse. You can educate me on Baltimore, how
28 geographic is out there. Over our 300 years, the
29 French Quarter, Vieux Carre, if you will, initial
30 city, grew out from there. So you'll have a million
31 dollar house here, and around the corner you'll have
32 a hundred thousand dollar house, right. So we're
33 not concentrated with crime in one area. It's
34 really spread in different projects throughout the
city. So it's not like you put a rope around it, if
you will.
We've got those ignorant folks that say,
"oh, my baby didn't kill nobody," but, you know, the
camera saw him with the gun. "But he ain't kill all
of them." Okay. Something stupid, crazy, right.
So we have that, as well, you know. I'm sure you
come back and try to be as political as possible and
as compassionate as possible. "Why is he living in
your house selling drugs?" That kind of crazy
stuff, you know. So you got -- he's been able to
deal with all of that. That's just our environment.
I'm not saying it's right, not saying it's wrong.
It's a tough environment.
A. (Dr. Richard) But the measure of a true
leader actually is when you are promoted from
within, and you can make decisions around people who
have been your colleagues, you know. And that's the
hardest job to do. So he has had to, coming up
through the ranks, getting to be the top chief, top
cop, and make decisions around people you worked
with most of your career. So that's a very
difficult thing to do. And he's been able to do it.
6 And that’s a true measure of a good leader.

7 BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

8   Q. You guys are hitting a lot of topics that
9   we had written out. So we understand that you’ve
10   done very important reform work around sexual
11   misconduct policies here in New Orleans, human
12   trafficking as well, which I coach human trafficking
13   collaborative in Baltimore City. I started it and
14   have been running it for a year now. What type of
15   partner has he been in that effort and that work,
16   and how did he support reforms in handling those
17   type of issues around the assault and/or human
18   trafficking? I know those are very different
19   issues.
20   A. (Dr. Richard) I can speak a little bit.
21   We just had a symposium last Saturday, the Delta
22   links sponsored it. It was at my church, that's
23   why. And Chief Harrison and his wife have been very
24   engaged in it. Case in point, we actually had a
25   young lady who was participating in some programs

1   with one of our links who was a principal, who she’s
2   the lady who was thrown out the car and rolled over
3   in Metairie.
Q. Oh, my goodness.

A. (Dr. Richard) She was part of that. So he had to collaborate, just because it crossed counties -- parishes for us, and that whole process.

And, you know, we were able to get some resources actually in this community. I don't know if y'all got any grant money to actually begin to educate. That was what last weekend was about; educating on human trafficking. So he was instrumental in that.

I didn't see the grant, but I know usually police -- you have to get, from your criminal justice department, support letters and all. So it was a really big turnout last weekend. And he was engaged in that, as well as his wife was engaged in that.

Q. We've gotten -- I don't want to go too far off, but an issue I'm really passionate about. We definitely got some funding to create -- we have a coordinator that works in the mayor's office, the state's attorney's office and the police department to sort of coordinate the response. And then we have this collaborative that has over 55 members with something I got off the ground that has, like,
school system, every law enforcement agency. We do that, education piece where we’re going in the communities and training and awareness piece, and trying to dedicate more resources within the department.

But the real thing that the reason we started it was because it was a lack of coordination, specifically in the police department, and then sort of extrapolating out between other agencies. It just really wasn't happening. To see in here that that's something he's been supportive of is very important to me.

A. (Dr. Richard) And we’re a big festival, service industry. We didn't -- our antennas were not up on it as much as until we started hearing about the young women, really paying attention. But it had to be some of us in there to really understand what happens to some of these young women and when it gets started, how it gets out of control, and, for them, how they get attracted to it. And that's really how you're going to see -- and you probably know, all the sororities are getting involved in it, fraternities. All the professional, African-American organizations are
really tuning in.

Q. Yes, the Deltas have been doing training.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) We were kind of numb to it, because, let's face it, New Orleans, you come to party, and women are part of it, right. So we've been having story-ville, if you will, going back 300 years. We had the real life district, and that's what you did, and that's what you still do. So you get kind of numb to it when that's part of your culture. But then when you started seeing that people are forced into it, that's a whole different story. So we were acceptant of the profession, but now when you get this other element coming in that I think we really wasn't looking at years ago, and it's probably been sneaking in and going on all along. So now there's some focus on that.

Q. That's good. Why do you think he even wants the job? You have that personal relationship with him.

A. (Dr. Richard) Well, I didn't talk to him about this piece. Didn't know he was even in it.

But probably, when all of this got started, he came -- he was part of the carryover from the former
administration. In his mind, he probably started
thinking -- and we all understand how that operates,
you know -- that maybe I should be thinking, I'm not
ready to, like, stop this work, but I'd like to be
able to do it in another environment. So that
probably was part of the decision-making factor.
I just briefly chatted with his wife.
She's a Delta. I said, you're packing? I said,
it's a nice place. I mean, they got nice people
there. She said, yes, we're getting it together.
So I think it was a decision, you know, as a family,
to take this work to another environment. And
sometimes you have to recognize, as a leader, if
you've done as much as you could in this
environment, and maybe you can go somewhere else and
effect change, you know. Having been one who had to
make a decision like that, can you make a difference
in another place; have you come to the point where
you've done everything you could, and recognizing
you need to pass the baton to someone else who you
believe can take it to another level.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) The mayor has already
appointed someone?
A. (Dr. Richard) Yes, his name is -- is it

Sean? I can't remember his last name, because I don't know him. But the fact that you have somebody in place that you can move to the next level.

What happened to y'all's chief? It's transitioning to new mayor --

Q. Which one? We've had three in the last 4 years.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) That's terrible.

Q. (Mr. Huber) The last chief that the council confirmed lasted for less than a year. The feds brought him up on charges. He hadn't been filing his tax returns for a long, long time. So he resigned. And we've had an interim chief for -- how long has it been?

Q. May, April. But he didn't apply.

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Then the one before the one they got on taxes was fired by the mayor.

We had three.

A. (Dr. Richard) So that was, like, a transition.

Q. I think that was more of a transition.

A. (Dr. Richard) It's still part of our
transition, but she didn't get a lot of takers
probably on the first round out, you know.
Q. (Councilman Stokes) That's the fourth
one.
A. (Dr. Richard) Because somebody turned
down the job?

Q. (Mr. Huber) He withdrew. He's the chief
over in Fort Worth.
A. (Dr. Richard) Yes. You know, he had been
through probably a lot, too, with all that happened
in the Dallas/Fort Worth area with those killings.
So, you know, these are tough jobs. These are tough
jobs. And you got to be tough enough to be able to
do it.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And I'm glad that he's
coming from an environment that's very similar to
yours, you know, so he can associate.
Q. You covered a lot of ground. I would say
if we could jump to: What concrete steps has
Mr. Harrison taken to create points of contact
between police and community; like, athletic
leagues, internship programs, recognizing community
leaders? I mean, we've heard pretty consistently in
these conversations that he's done a really good job at building relationships.

A. (Dr. Richard) He's in the community. He shows up. He is not a guy that's going to send somebody. If he can show up, he's going to be there. And he probably will hit the ground running.

In this interim period, he'll be out there meeting with groups, meeting with your constituents. He's used to having --

Are y'all districts council districts?

Q. 14 districts.

A. (Dr. Richard) So he'll have 14 district meetings.

How many precincts?

Q. 9.

A. (Dr. Richard) 9 police precincts?

Q. Yes. And he's committed to all 9.

A. (Dr. Richard) So he's going to have 14 district meetings with you, your staff, as many people as you want. He's going to do his due diligence and getting a sense of what the needs of your particular constituents.

Who has Prince George's county?
Q. That's outside.

A. (Dr. Richard) That's outside, okay.

Q. (Mr. Davis) It's about 50 miles south of Baltimore.

A. (Dr. Richard) So, I mean, he's going to do his due diligence to get to know.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) You said you got 14 council districts. Is it 14 council people?

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Single member districts.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) You got 14 council people?

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Yes.

A. (Dr. Richard) And no at-large people?

Q. Well, one at large. 14 districts, and one at-large.

A. (Dr. Richard) So that's 15.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) That sounds like a circus.

Q. Used to be more.

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Each council had three council people.

Q. (Mr. Huber) It's a large council.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) It's a very large
council.

A. (Dr. Richard) He will make his point to
go to your district, meet with your people, hear
what y'all have to say, because that's what he's
done.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. Okay. How would you describe
Mr. Harrison's level of responsiveness to community
community concerns?

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) I think we covered
that.

A. (Dr. Richard) I think so.

Q. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's
ability to prioritize and connect with marginalized
community groups; race, gender, sexual orientation,
people with disabilities, the homeless?

Can you speak to specific examples;
putting liaisons on in the field?

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Well, I mean, we have
everything you mentioned. When you talk about the
homeless environment, that pretty much circles
around the central businesses, little tent city.
When you talk about marginalized communities -- I like that term. So we have a large LBGT, before the term even came out. So we have actually a gay parade and gay festival, if you will. So I'm just describing diverse communities, as well as when you said marginalized to the socially, economically-challenged people. So we have exactly what you described on these communities. They're all within -- you know, New Orleans is really geographically not that large, you know, in a tight space, if you will. And he has, in my opinion, worked with all those groups.

A. (Dr. Richard) I can give you an example.

All right. We have, part of our culture, is second lines, every Sunday, parades that happen, that pop up.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) This is a social club.

Okay. So I don't know if you use the term barroom or lounge. So your lounge, that's where you've been going all these years, y'all have a club inside your lounge.

Q. (Mr. Huber) The el --

Q. The DasBier, that kind of thing.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Well, y'all getting a little too fancy.

Q. I was just throwing out stuff.

A. The Blue Suit Social and Pleasure Club is disbarred, and y'all give a second line every year. And so that's where you coordinate your band, your police. Y'all dress up, and y'all have a route that y'all walk and do music and blah, blah, blah. Well, lounge over here has got one, lounge uptown got one. There's multiples all around all the time. And that's really the grass roots of that particular little community.

A. (Dr. Richard) When you talk about marginalized people, that is part of the culture that, every Sunday, one organization or another will have a second line. And so that's very important.

That at one point -- it's been a -- you, as the council, had to help make a decision about if they could get permits and what would that look like to parade, because we're Mardi Gras. So every Mardi Gras club has to get a permit.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) These are neighborhood clubs.
A. (Dr. Richard) And you have to have street closures and just all kinds of things.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) So they can dance on the street. So there's going to be open drinking, there's going to be stuff, all right.

A. (Dr. Richard) So you need the police.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) This is every Sunday.

A. (Dr. Richard) It's in your district, you are trying to understand --

Q. I've seen it, but I didn't know it was a regular thing.

A. (Dr. Richard) Every Sunday.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Those are the local ones we're talking about. The ones you've seen are the bigger ones.

Q. No. I came here right after Katrina, on, like, an alternative spring break. We were definitely not downtown. I didn't see downtown until many years later. I was surprised.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Those lounges in your district, that is huge to them. That is their annual highlight. So they're looking to you for support.
A. (Dr. Richard) Protection.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Yes, no doubt. Okay.

And this is happening in every council district, except for the affluent areas. These are all the non-affluent areas, if you will. A. (Dr. Richard) But they started having parades -- you got the --

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) The Irish Channel Parade.

A. (Dr. Richard) And the Florence -- what is the girl who played on Star Wars; what's her name?

Q. Princess Leia.

A. (Dr. Richard) Princess Leia had a parade.

Q. Oh, wow.

A. (Dr. Richard) Yes, she does.

Q. So we're going to miss all these parades.

We don't have this at all.

A. (Dr. Richard) If y'all decided to stay here long enough, and you wanted a Baltimore parade of the council, we could give y'all. Okay, we get a band, and we'll give you a parade. They have to support that.

Q. A parade.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) That's all the fun stuff. You got drinking, you got barbecue pits out on the neutral ground, blah, blah, blah, fun. But every now and then, something break out, there's a shooting at a second line, all right. So it comes to you whether you want to cancel that for the next year, what you're going to do, blah, blah, blah, how did you investigate that, da, da, da, because that interrupt their flow. And how you going to handle that, Mr. Councilman?

A. (Dr. Richard) And chief.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And chief. It happens. It's not every one that it happens. It's only once or twice a year, someone pops off at one of them, but it's some youngster, and messes up the --

A. (Dr. Richard) We had one in July, about five people were shot, about three people were killed.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) That was a bad one.

A. (Dr. Richard) That was a bad one on the corner of Claiborne --

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Years ago, they had one on Mother's Day, second lines, too.
A. (Dr. Richard) So you ask how do he deal with the marginalized folks --

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And those are tough.

A. (Dr. Richard) That's a tough thing, but he knows it's part of the culture. You have to be sensitive to -- in this community, you have to be sensitive to the culture. They will go before you, as the council, and complain if they can't get a permit.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) But, yet, it was a shooting. So as a council person, well, I don't want that in my area. But if you don't --

A. (Dr. Richard) And I don't think he was chief, but when the chief of the Mardi Gras Indians, Tootie Montana, stood before the council and had a heart attack arguing the point.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Big chief.

Q. (Dr. Richard) Big chief. But he was before you guys.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) There's different chiefs.

Q. (Mr. Huber) In front of the council, he died?

A. (Dr. Richard) He had a heart attack.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) And he was a major chief.

A. (Dr. Richard) He was the chief, Tootie Montana.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Chief come from all different neighborhoods.

A. (Dr. Richard) So that's part of our culture. He is not shy on dealing with community stuff.

And I don't know his work with gang violence.

Q. That was going to be a follow-up.

A. (Dr. Richard) I don't know. We have them. He's dealt with them, but to say specifically some of what has happened...

But who's going to tell you? Your next group of people will give you some additional information. Your 5:30 group, they're meeting with.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Who that?

A. (Dr. Richard) Ted Quant and --

Q. Yes. This is the list, our next meeting.

A. (Dr. Richard) They will give you greater insight on how responsive he's actually been. But
what I know about his responsiveness to the second line organizations, that's what he's done. I mean, he put police out there on the street, you know. They're out there. And we also have second lines for funerals.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Yes. They don't break off, though.

A. (Dr. Richard) Well, if you're on Claiborne by Louis and them, they break off.

Q. The last one I'll ask --

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) It depends on how the funeral came about.

Q. (Mr. Davis) Same thing happens in Baltimore, where you'll have somebody at a funeral -- we had a couple, not a lot, but a couple of incidents of people at funerals come in.

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Actually, I had the intern commissioner at a senior -- shooting up on Broadway. As we were leaving out, they had a visual across the street. Somebody came out the alley and was shooting in front of the commissioner.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) This is pictures of the Indians. This is super Sunday. This is another
That's the stuff will break out, all handsewn (INDICATING).

Q. (Mr. Huber) They do it themselves, right?

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) You have to do it yourself. But Tootie was the chief of chiefs. These Indians will come from different neighborhoods.

Q. (Mr. Huber) How do you get to be the chief of chiefs?

A. (Dr. Richard) Oh, it's a long process.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) He was the chief of chiefs.

Q. (Councilman Stokes) You got to go back to your family roots.

A. (Dr. Richard) Yes, it's a process. Definitely a process.

Q. Okay. You have anything else?

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. Has Mr. Harrison implemented a standardized method to file complaints against police and track progress of the case?

A. (Dr. Richard) I'm sure he has a process, because we've been under consent decrees.
A. (Mr. St. Etienne) We used to have that CompStat system.

A. (Dr. Richard) Yes. Since I haven't filed a complaint against him, I'm not sure.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) But I think the group that you're meeting after us is going to give you a lot of grassroots type of activism type of input, from the list that I read.

Talking about Ursula Price and them. Actually, Ursula has got an interesting perspective. The group that she is with now is different than when I interfaced with her. She was part of Susan, with the independent police monitoring. She was Susan's right hand. So she was independent police monitor. So she's going to be able to give you very good specifics on that. That would be Ursula Price. She's on your list, but she's with a different organization now.

A. (Dr. Richard) Who's she with now?

Q. (Mr. Huber) It says Congreso.

Q. (Mr. Davis) I think she was formerly with Congreso.

A. (Mr. St. Etienne) She was formerly with
18 independent police monitor.

19 Q. (Mr. Davis) There we go. Ursula, it says

20 Congreso now.

21 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) That's a new organization to us. We're not as familiar.

22 A. (Dr. Richard) Who's been out there the longest, I saw Ted Quant was on the list and Mary

23 Howell.

1 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) I'm not familiar with them.

2 A. (Dr. Richard) You know Mary Howell. She was the one when the young man in LaPlace, the little boy got killed, years and years ago. What was his name? She's been activist a long time.

3 She's been out there a long time. And she has followed this and been part of it a very long time.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. (Dr. Richard) And Ted. You know, Ted is with race --

6 Q. Mary Howell is on here.

7 A. (Mr. St. Etienne) Race, race equality, something like that. They do racial --

8 A. (Dr. Richard) Yes.
Q. Okay.
COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Attendees
  • Ted Quant, Director of the Twomey Center for Peace Through Justice
  • Norris Henderson, Founder and Executive Director of VOTE
  • Wes Ware, Founder of BreakOUT!
  • Tamara Jackson, Director of Social and Pleasure Club Task Force
  • Emily Maw, Senior Counsel with Innocence Project New Orleans
  • Mary Howell, Civil Rights Attorney
  • Zack Orjuela, Supervising Attorney at the New Orleans Public Defender
  • Bertrand Butler, Director of Recreating the Environmental Ability to Live
Q. My first question would be: How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based police practices, and can you speak to specific examples?

A. Do you need people to introduce yourselves, or do you have it already?

Q. We know who all of you are, but if you want to do a quick runaround real quick.

A. I mean, if you want to, but we've been -- go for it.

A. Good evening, everybody. My name is Bertrand Butler. I'm the director of a
community organization by the name of REAL,
Recreating the Environmental Ability to Live; also,
the New Orleans Mardi Gras Indian Council.
My experience with top dog, Officer
Harrison, with the community, we've been doing super
Sunday in the community for 37 consecutive years.
And before, maybe 30 years, have been rough. Why
it's been rough? Because of the New Orleans Police
Department. 2005, we had a horrible experience, the
children, the female and the senior citizen. They

actually ran over the community out there on the
LaSalle and Washington Avenue. It hit the paper
nationwide. But nevertheless, that did happen.
But I'm here today to discuss what I know
about Officer Harrison. When he came aboard --
Chief Harrison, when he came aboard, he changed the
attitude with the police and the community. We have
a lot of trust in his ability to work with the
community. Super Sunday, we had thousands of people
out there on LaSalle and Washington, and also in and
around the perimeters of the A.L. Davis Park. This
guy will get out his car -- I don't have no reason
to lie, because I'm not a cop lover. He would get
out his car, and he would walk the perimeter inside
the park, around, shook everybody hand. Whether he
knew you or not, he'll make you know him.
We have a lot of tourists in the city
doing during this festival. He get out and shake
tourists' hand. He get out, shake the New Orleans
Mardi Gras Indian Council, the New Orleans Mardi
Gras Indian hand, and the second line club, pleasure
club, to let them know how he appreciated. That's
big time, how he appreciate what's going on out
here, because that culture been going on for over
165 years.

So, hey, by him showing us that he want to
work with the community, he show nothing but love.
His office was open on a daily basis if we had any
problems; come on, talk to me, I'm here. And he was
there. If he was in his office, either the New
Orleans Mardi Gras Indian can go in there and speak
on their behalf, social and pleasure club can go
over there and speak to him. Of course, every time
I seen him at any kind of function, I had something
to say to him because of my involvement with the
community.
So I say he top notch. He a cop, cop, you know. And all the superintendents of police that we had in the city -- I don't know him that well, I just know him from the street, and I'm saying, he was number one. I'm talking about the community, now. I'm not talking about the administrator, how he dealt with the police, how he dealt with city hall, how he dealt with scum. I'm talking about how he dealt with the community at a large event that we have in the city. I think it's second to Mardi Gras. How he not only worked with us, showed us his appreciation; instead of us showing, hey, man, we appreciate. Oh, no, we appreciate you-all. So I don't want to take up all of the time, but thank you-all for inviting me to listen at my side. And I speak for the New Orleans Mardi Gras Indian Council and also REAL in the community. So thank you for hearing it out, if that show, that casts a light to what you guys wanted to hear. Thanks again.

A. (Ms. Jackson) I'm Tamara Jackson. I have several roles in the City: One, I'm the director of the Social and Pleasure Club Task Force; two, I work
with victims of violent crimes. So I'm really
engaging with law enforcement on a different level.
And I'm also the executive director of a nonprofit.
I work with the coroner's office. So I'm on the
ground and in the community.
Unfortunately, I don't share the same
sentiment as Mr. Bertrand. Especially as it relates
to victims of violent crime, there's a disconnect
with law enforcement. There's a disconnect with the
leadership. And what Chief Harrison was
spearheading in the community is not necessarily
connected with law enforcement.
There are a lot of allegations in regards
to homicide investigations, sexual assault and
domestic violence that really resonates with the
community, especially with victims. And also, when
it's misclassification of crimes, where victims are
also labeled as perpetrators and not having that
commitment from law enforcement in terms of the
investigative processes, being transparent and being
able to share your concerns with leadership within
that infrastructure without retribution.
Culturally, yes, the police department did
change, and I think that was on the brink of the lawsuits that both the Mardi Gras Indians had as well as the Social and Pleasure Club community that kind of forced relationships with law enforcement and such that they were working to resolve some of our issues we had culturally, to increase communications where we can work and coordinate with each other and have a peaceful resolve without having that disruption at the second line or disruption with the assembly of the cultural groups that happen with different festivities. The Social and Pleasure Club community houses parades, like, weekly 9 months out the calendar year. And what we seen and still see is a slight disconnect. The fee structure continually to increase on a second line community, the Social and Pleasure Club community, and still not the appreciation of our cultural practices and such that we can move forward without having absorbed fees of police escorts being applied to an African-American tradition. I can really go piece by piece, but I don't want to, like, send you down a terrain. But
6 if you have some specific questions.

7 BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

8 Q. Some of the stuff you hit on around sexual

9 assault, we do have, like, very specific questions

10 about that.

11 A. (Ms. Jackson) Just let me know when

12 you're ready.

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. (Mr. Ware) This is Wes Ware. I have less

15 direct experience with Chief Harrison, in

16 particular, I think primarily because he appointed

17 an LGBT liaison in the department. So we're doing a

18 lot of work around LGBT policing, bias-free policing

19 practices. And I will say that I don't know in

20 terms of his attitude toward kind of choosing that

21 liaison. It was in the paper that LGBT officer

22 approached him and said that he was interested in

23 having some kind of liaison. And Chief Harrison

24 said, well, I know just the guy, and appointed that

25 person to be the LGBT liaison, which was actually a

1 huge mistake in the community, because that officer

2 had a really terrible reputation with the LGBT

3 community, and especially black trans. women
specifically, and a lot of just LGBT communities, youth and color in particular. So, you know, we sort of hit a brick wall there. So that's just kind of a cautionary thing. We're actually working to revise all of that and appoint new folks.

He then later appointed another person, so there are multiple LGBT liaisons, and actually was able to find someone who had even a worse reputation in the LGBT community. So just kind of a note around that. So we're trying to work to reform what that position looks like now.

A. (Mr. Quant) My name is Ted Quant. I've been around for a little while. My gray hair probably speaks to that. Usually, it was protesting police brutality. But one time, I was offered an opportunity at Loyola University to bring community police together to talk about how they could do better together. The program was called Community Oriented Police Education. It was in Philadelphia before it came here. It was a semester-long kind of program. And the people who went to it, police and community, have relationships that exist today. That was 30 years ago.
What are the lessons learned? I learned

that you could have real good programs and things

that change police departments, but if there's not a

commitment to that at the top, it's a waste of time.

The police officers that we trained, two of them saw

police officers beating up somebody. Normally, they

would have driven past. Instead, they looked at

each other and were out passing the word. They went

back and stopped that act of police brutality. They

were punished when they got back to the

headquarters.

Now, Chief Harrison inherited an

organization that the DOJ described as the worst

police department in the nation. He may have

resisted even himself -- well, we don't need

somebody else to tell us how to do that -- but he

embraced it.

One thing good about having a consent

decree: For police officers to have each other's

back, many times it takes the form of a blue shield,

which is against the community's interest. And many

times, if you've been around a long time, there's

been a time, hey, bro, come on, you know; they back

each other for something wrong. Well, how do you
break that? Well, one thing, by having a consent decree, even someone who is messed up themselves, can say, look, bro, I know you had my back before, and I had your back before, but we can’t do that no more. It gives you a little bit of protection.

Well, Chief Harrison, to me, embraced it, and then really led the organization in a way that when you compare the report of the consent decree, when you look at the numbers, the transformation is dramatic. It is a dramatic transformation.

I know that the chief of police at the top can check a box, so he could tell the public I did good, and never be committed to it, because that’s what happened with the coke program. We have a program called EPIC, Ethical Policing is Courageous, which was developed by community people and police departments, and to help a Holocaust survivor, who actually put many principles together on how do you resist the temptation to unite with evil, even when you feel it’s in your interest sometimes. That program has now been instituted. And there are many stories, anecdotal, but also factual based on the evidence of the changes that have been made under
24 his leadership.

25 I think that Baltimore would gain tremendously to have this leader there, especially since he already said he wants to bring the EPIC program. And I have such confidence in that program.

1 I'm a little embarrassed. My wife is in the hospital, and she's getting off this evening, and I'm going to have to go pick her up. So if you see me leave, it's not because I'm not trying to be here.

10 But I think the main thing I think about Chief Harrison is, he's accessible, he's a leader who is pushing an agenda to change that department.

13 A ship going down the river, and you change the wheel like this, the ship keeps going forward. Even though you turned the wheel, the ship keeps going forward. It takes a while for the ship to turn. So many of the grievances that still exist are going to continue to exist while change is taking place. But I think that's a part of motion in history. Nobody can change a ship to move at a certain speed and turn like a car turns. It takes a minute.
A. (Mrs. Howell) My name is Mary Howell. I'm a civil rights attorney here in New Orleans. I've been dealing with the New Orleans Police for about 40-something years, 45 years. It's been a long, hard time, because at the same time that we have led the nation in the terms of having one of the most dysfunctional police departments in the country, we also led the nation in crime, in violence in our community. And I've always felt that there was a correlation there, that you can't fight crime when you have a police department that is corrupt or brutal or which is perceived by large percentage of the population as being corrupt and brutal. I understand you all are facing very serious problems like that in your community now. We have been through periods of reform here. We had a major period of reform in the 1990s, with Chief Pennington, who came in as an outsider. Major reforms happened. Marc Morial was our mayor then, now head of the Urban League. Marc later said that the biggest mistake he ever made was not having a consent decree. They fought the consent decree,
because the City wanted to do it on their own. What happened is, within weeks of that reform administration leaving, the rollback started, and many of the gains that we had made were undone.

So I think one of the advantages that you-all have, is my understanding, you do have a consent decree that's in place. And that has been a really important exoskeleton for us. And as both Wes and Tamara said, there are still problems here. I mean, we still have challenges in the department. There are still people in the department who don't agree with the consent decree; they oppose it. There's been opposition to it. It's not like this has been all smooth sailing. In fact, the beginning of this, the City itself fought it. We spent a year and a half in litigation. The City tried to undo it. So there was a lot of back and forth about it.

I will tell you, when Chief Harrison came into the position of being chief, and he came up, as you all know, from being a lieutenant -- he was not necessarily in the command structure -- there was a difference in attitude. And that, we had not seen before. In terms of, as we saw it with Chief
Pennington, but there was not the support around it that needed to be done. And with Chief Harrison, what we saw was an embrace. Instead of fighting or resisting the reforms that were there, he was -- it was, like, not just like check the box. It was, like, embracing it. And I've worked most closely with him on the EPIC program. That has been a really -- has the opportunity, I think, to be transforming, because we can sue, we can have criminal prosecutions, we can have consent decrees. We can have all this external apparatus. We can have oversight, we can have auditing, monitoring. But if there's not a change from inside in terms of the culture, all of this stuff is fragile and is susceptible of being undone and eroded. And he embraced the EPIC program. The EPIC program is part of the consent decree. It's prevention by police to prevent misconduct as part of the consent decree. But what Chief Harrison has done has gone far beyond that. One of the critical things that they've done in the training here, is that the training here is cross-rank. That was
something that NOPD came up with. That it's essential that inside that training, you have PO1s, and you have captains and sergeants and lieutenants. And at the end of that training, the officers tell each other, I promise you if I see you about to do something wrong, I will stop you from doing it. And then the promise back is the permission. I give you permission -- I give you permission to intervene and stop me from doing something wrong. It's hard to quantify the gains we've had from that, because we're measuring things that didn't happen. All the reporting requirements are still there. If something wrong does happen, it still has to be reported. There's still consequences, still accountability. But the point is to try to stop the stuff before it happens, try to prevent it. To our knowledge, this is the first application of these teaching ideas through a police department. It's not just a few of them taking the training, the entire department has taken the training. And one of the things that I am encouraged about is what's in the recent interview with the Washington Post that we saw, is the idea of transmitting that and
doing that program in Baltimore.

I think you-all offer a wonderful opportunity for testing of what's been developed here by NOPD, and to see if this thing can be explored and if it can work. Now, that doesn't mean that everything is perfect here, that all of the problems have been solved. There are still many challenges and problems we face. But I think the general sense for a lot of people, is when the criticisms are in place, is you can go and say, there's criticism, here's a complaint. You have access. It doesn't mean that you're going to always get the results that you want, but you at least feel like there's somebody there who is listening. Some of these changes are going to continue to be worked on and fought for long after Chief Harrison is gone. But I think that he, in general, I think when you talk to a lot of people here, you will see he's had a positive role and played a positive role in the community.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. Can you make sure we can get a copy of that?
A. (Mrs. Howell) Of EPIC?

Q. Yes.

A. (Mrs. Howell) Here's the other thing --

Q. On the website?

A. (Mrs. Howell) -- it's on the website. The training guide is there.

They have now been training -- NOPD has been training officers from all over the country.

The FBI came to this last training session. We had a conference here last spring at Loyola University, co-sponsored by a number of groups, but the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Fraternal Order of Police co-sponsored this.

Everybody who looks at this material realizes it's preventing these issues. If we can stop them before they get going, that's really a key thing. And it's fascinating, the psychology and part of the application of science to law enforcement. This is all based on social science.

It's based on this psychological inhibitors to intervention. These are all basic human elements that we all have to face with and deal with. And it's taking that and applying it to development of
The spinoff of that has been the project with the Innocence Project, which is a direct spinoff of the same idea about applying really progressive, enlightened thinking and trying to be creative in terms of trying to solve this big problem that always exists of how you transform the culture.

Q. Thank you.

A. (Mrs. Maw) Hi, I'm Emily Maw. I am -- I guess I'm senior counsel at Innocence Project New Orleans. I was the director there for 13 and a half years. I'm now very happily just a lawyer.

My office developed a program with NOPD, kind of pursuant to all with the, I guess, the protection of the consent decree in some ways. It sort of gave them license to partner with us to develop a detective's training program. That's how it began. Mary came to me and said, we need to do wrongful conviction training for the police. And so we kind of started off thinking about who most needed that. And obviously, detectives, the investigators of the NOPD, where it makes sense for people to understand how serious, major
investigations can go wrong.

We have, in New Orleans, the highest per capita rate of wrongful conviction of any major metropolitan jurisdiction in the country and of the world. So it's the place to start. Our office does cases all over the state, but we have largely focused -- well, that's not true. We do cases all over the state, but many of our cases come out of New Orleans. So we are in sort of a weird position of seeing cases, you know, starting with police-reported major incidents, largely murders, rapes, robberies, that kind of thing, from 60s through to 2 or 3 years ago. So we definitely have some historic perspective on how practices have changed.

But what we had going into this was a sense that for 4 or 5 decades, the way that NOPD had investigated violent crimes, crimes against people was, you know, go to the scene, identify somebody you believe to be a witness, usually one person, no matter how many people are there, sit around, wait for a tip, get a name, put that person in a six pack, and get identification and be done, right.
There was no kind of thorough, creative investigation going on. There was no understanding that you can do more than that, that actually many times you don't need to do an eyewitness identification. It is the least reliable evidence, blah, blah, you know. I could go on for hours. I'm not going to.

So we started doing this work with the detectives, obviously, with Chief Harrison's endorsement. And we have trained about 300 and something detectives in 2 hours for in-service -- no, they're 3-hour classes now, either in-service or new detectives training. And we started off thinking, like, we would teach some of the best practices, with feedback from the police department. It very quickly became clear that, actually, no one really teaches detectives how to be detectives, period. It's not just, like, here's how you do an ID, or here's how you do an interrogation. No one, when you get elevated to position of detective, talks to you about how to think about investigation. They bring the FBI in, teach them not to beat a suspect, for 3 days, but that's kind of it, right.
So it was this very cool thing, I think, we have done with NOPD. We've now taught over 300 detectives. But it's a collaborative process. It's not us standing there talking. We do a lot of exercises, talk about investigations; how should you think about a crime scene or major incident when you get there. Who is teaching that? Turns out, no one, except now us, which is odd.

Anyway, from that, this is where I think Chief Harrison really sort of shined in this particular realm for me. From that what we heard, from a lot of detective work, it is fine for you to be teaching us this, but if my sergeant tells me, "why are you still looking at this, you've got an ID, move on," it is unhelpful for me. Like, I don't know what to do with that. So repeatedly, we got this sense that, you know, new detectives, some of the really good detectives on serious crimes, they want to do a good job. We're an under-resourced department, so there are challenges there. They want to do their best work. They don't want to either get the wrong person or get no one, right. That's not a success. But there is pressure from
above. And some of it is CompStat numbers, clear
the case. And some of it is just old school; come
on, why are still working on that, we can move on to
the next one, right.

So from that, we said, well, then we need
to do the supervisors. If we have -- because it has
to be a culture shift. It can't just be, now you
know these methods, use them. So we went to Chief
Harrison, said we want to do a command staff
training, basically an in-depth version of what
we've been doing for detectives. He said, yes,
let's do it. So he got all his command staff to
take 2 days, and he mandated that they all attend
this. I don't think anywhere else has done it in
the country, a 2-day training where we have experts
from all over the country, not just on best
practices, but also on how criminal investigations
go wrong and an overall sort of psychological sense
and confirmation by it. And so we had all of the
command staff there doing more than the detectives
who got taught on how you can get it right, which is
win/win everywhere, right; for victims of crime, for
communities, for people who get wrongfully accused.
I mean, there's no lose when police do accurate,
thorough investigations on violent crimes.

So that was really incredible. We started off with -- I don't know if any of you have heard of Jennifer Thompson, Robert Cotton. She was a rape victim who wrongfully identified Robert Cotton, who then spent 11 years in prison before DNA exonerated him. But also they haven't presented all three together for a long time, the detective who identified Robert Cotton as the suspect and did the lineup. And the three of them co-presented as the sort of opening to the 2 days of the commanders symposium we did on best practices and major incident investigation. So it was great.

I would definitely recommend our program throughout. I think everybody has -- some of the folks have said, it is a big ship to turn. And he inherited a pretty disastrous department. But I think the thing that sticks out to me about the way Chief Harrison was so responsive to that -- so I'm British, and there's this very strange thing called American exceptionalism. And I think that when it filters down to law enforcement, it is really dangerous, right. And I think there was this
culture in law enforcement, if I admit there’s any problem whatsoever, I am weak, and I’m, like, anti-patriotic in some way. And I think that he is a little different from that. And I really appreciated his ability to say we are not perfect. And he had this mantra that he would always say, and I think it was reflected in what he did, which is: We were never as bad as they said we were. We’re not as great as we think we are. I just think that that, for a police chief, to say that over and over again, it just reflects a realistic introspection, that is sort of anti-exceptionalism. I think that was the only healthy way for law enforcement to be a community. So that was my overall assessment of him.

And if you have specific questions about the training we did, I would be thrilled to talk to you guys about it. Hope you can influence it in Baltimore. It was really great. We learned a lot from working with the detectives as well.

A. (Mr. Orjuela) My name is Zack Orjuela. I’m a supervising attorney at the Orleans Public Defenders. I’m here on behalf of Derwyn Bunton, who
wasn't able to make it tonight.

I think I'll just say, kind of keep my comments on this question brief, because I see you have stuff that's sort of more specific. My job involves, sort of half of it is supervising attorneys who represent people in criminal court here, and the other half is actually representing people, too. I think what we sort of wanted to convey, and I think you've heard it from people here, is that Chief Harrison has been open to reform. He's available on the phone. He's in the room with advocates. And we have been seeing sort of fewer of these, sort of like, throw-down drug cases where the cops just say something, but it's not being recorded, and there's no way to really rebut it. It's just their word against your client, who really can't testify.

I think from an anecdotal standpoint from the people I represent, it does feel like we're still a long way from the community policing model that we would like to be at. My clients, almost without exception, are poor, very poor. And they do not have a lot of confidence in the police. Many of
them are victims in other cases, right. There's a
lot of crossover between people who are prosecuted
for things and people who have been on the wrong
dead, right, of something. And almost uniform they
tell you that people don't want to talk to the
police because they don't trust them. They feel
like there might be retribution. They feel like
nothing will be done, or they'll be disrespected.
That's sort of anecdotal view from where we come
from. And that's not just because they're being
prosecuted at the time, right. A lot of times, a
client's life history, they've had these experiences
before they actually were arrested or became a
defendant themselves.
I think one thing that we're always
concerned with in court is, you know -- Emily kind
touching on this, too -- we want things that
confirm or debunk things that people just say,
right. So she just told you how eyewitness
identification is about the least reliable piece of
evidence, just from a scientific standpoint. What
we still see a lot of times in cases, is even though
they're wearing body cameras, right -- you hear a
lot about body camera -- detectives are exempted from that. There is, you know, hundreds of people who are designated as detectives, right. I used to think of a detective as someone who wears a suit and goes out to talk to witnesses. They're kind of the follow-up people. Detectives here, the standard detective is someone who wears a tactical uniform and jumps out of a car doing drug arrests, right.

It's a very different view. I can see maybe justification for some people to not be wearing a body camera, but then for those sorts of arrests, it doesn't seem like there's very much justification. There's not other witnesses. They're not civilian identities that you're trying to protect. And just sort of keeping with that, we see a lot of spoilage of evidence. So they might make an arrest, and then they -- I'm hearing the other side of this. But in my experience, once an arrest is made, that's it. There's no more investigation being done. Maybe the DA's office will. A. (Ms. Jackson) That's correct. A. (Mr. Orjuela) I can't tell you how many times I've had cases where it had sort of a domestic
violence component, and then I am talking to the person way more. They don't even know who the investigator is on their case in the police department. We don't see them follow up to see, maybe go pull surveillance video that would have caught it, if it's true. Sometimes you read in reports things that just sound really wild. You're like, man, I don't know about that. Good thing there's a surveillance camera right there, you know, that could disprove or prove it. But those only last about 24 hours. If a detective doesn't want to go get it, that's gone.

I just sort of point out the body camera surveillance video, things like that, to sort of point, you know, the over designation of police officers as detectives to exempt them from body camera. That's a policy choice, right. From our view, it just creates an ambiguity that benefits the police. And I think if -- I guess if we were giving y'all advice, we would hope that Chief Harrison would turn more of an eye towards that. Because that's not him on the stand or him directly doing investigations, but that is a cultural choice that
we have a lot of issues there.

I'll just stop there, save more specific things in your future questions.

A. (Mr. Henderson) My name is Norris Henderson. And I have been working specifically around trying to reform the police department in this post-Katrina world under the Chief Compass, or Chief Riley, to Serpas and with Chief Harrison. And if I had to compare the four for anything, I would say he was the most successful of all.

And my first real encounter with him was kind of ironic, because we was doing solidarity rally around Freddie Gray. And so at this meeting, bunch of community folks, we're meeting in a book store, and he walks in. I'm kind of, like, you look at somebody, like, his face look familiar, I just can't put my finger on who it is right now. Then it registered, this is the chief of police. I mean, he was in civilian clothes when he walked in. He didn't walk in with this attitude about y'all not going to hold this rally, because it's during Jazz Fest where they have 100,000 or more people attending. And we was going to do the protest right
out in front of Jazz Fest. So he came in, and he
was, like, hey, can I sit and talk? Sure. He said,
can I change y’all mind? We said, no. He said,
well, can I listen? Yes. So he sit and listened.
Then he figured it out. He said, can I offer a
suggestion? We said, we’re listening. He said,
well, let us escort y’all to and from, because
there’s going to be a lot of people getting out
there drunk, going to see y’all protesting about
police brutality. Some people may take a different
opinion about what y’all are trying to do. They’re
already drunk, and it may cause a problem, not just
for them, but for y’all also.
And so that went off without a hitch. He

had some patrolmen on bicycles escort us from where
we departed from to the Jazz Fest. We stood out
there for 45 minutes to an hour, engaging people,
and he escorted us back. So that was my first
encounter.

But just like Bertrand said, that out of
the all the events that happened in this city, and
this is a city full of events, is that wherever you
see him at, he’s the same person. The thing that
impress me about him more than anything, seems like

he's a God-fearing person. And I kind of, like,
give valued added to that, because it's somebody who
I believe that will let his faith guide him in
decision-making more than anything else.

Like I said, again, in comparison to the
other three folks who literally fought us tooth and
nail, where Compass first started, try to create
police monitors office here, they were totally
opposed to it. When we finally got it in place,
they did everything to create all kind of
impediments. We was at a crime scene, a
cop-involved crime scene, and the police monitor was
standing behind the tape with me, on the same side
of the yellow tape with me. We was, like, something
wrong with this picture.

So that became a challenge. But that was
about, like we said again, about leadership, that
they felt -- that leadership felt threatened about
community folks being engaged in different stuff
that's going on in the community. So to the extent
that we were, myself and Wes, Tamara would kind of,
like, lead people in this campaign to get this
consent decree, and as Mary said, the City fought us
tooth and nail.

Now, not the current administration just
got in place, but the previous administration fought
us tooth and nail about that consent decree. Did
not want it. Tried to handpick the folks who was
going to monitor it. Matter of fact, the people
that they wanted was the same folks that were
involved in the Chicago cover-up, who they wanted to
be the monitors for the police department. So it's
been a challenge.

But like Ted said, it's like that ship, it
takes a lot to turn. And I would say because I've
been involved in not only the police consent decree,
but the jail consent decree, that I would have
thought that we had made more intervals with the
jail consent decree than we did with the police
consent decree, but it's, like, leaps and bounds.

We're so far advanced in the police consent decree
as opposed to the jail consent decree, who is under
the authority of one person, the sheriff. And so I
credit that to him.

Then last week I read the newspaper, and I
was, like, astound that we hadn't had a
law-enforcement shooting in a whole year. That was
kind of, like, I had to read it twice, you know.
That's not New Orleans, that the police ain't shot
somebody. So that's a testament to where we are
starting to go. But it comes from not just -- I
mean, it starts with leadership, being able to say,
hey, guys, this is what we're going to do. But it's
all these things the guy was willing to implement,
like EPIC; cops don't tell on cops.
One day I happen -- because a lot of my
work takes me to criminal court. I'm at court, and
a cop is testifying, but he's testifying about what
another cop done. And that he pulled up, saw a cop
kick somebody, and told the cop, hey, we don't do
that no more. And I was, like, oh, shit, we done
turned a corner, you know. So that's about
leadership to me, more than anything else. That
don't happen in the police department regularly.
I was blessed a couple of years ago in
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'16, to be in Baltimore and had to do a presentation
about the tale of two cities; New Orleans and
Baltimore, the things that -- kind of like the
things that connect us and the things that divide us. And the thing that connected us is the people, you know. We’re kind of like the same people, same demographics. And the thing that divides us was the police department, the behavior of the police department that we had here and the behavior of the police department that we saw from a distance that was happening in Baltimore. So I think it's an opportunity.

I'm, like, I tell people all the time, I'm real practical. I didn't realize that the chief didn't have the job in Baltimore until I started reading that. Well, he's got to be approved by y'all to actually get the job. And I was, like, I don't know. That's kind of putting the cart before the horse. I don't think I would have gave up a job before I had another one, you know. This is the checks and balance that y'all actually have that we don't; that once the mayor makes an appointment, that's it, that's who the chief is until something happens or something goes wrong, tired of them.

But I think y'all would have an opportunity to get somebody that if he implement
half the things that we have been trying to do through this consent decree, that I think y'all department would turn around, because I still -- you know, this thing with Freddie Gray was real to a lot of us on the street about how that turned out. We had our own Danziger situation, where folks got arrested, you know, they got out. And so it's, like, in the history of people's involvement with police, there's never a just end, you know. And in communities of color, where I look at the news, and I see a white guy go in the bank and kill five people, and he walks out to tell somebody about it. A white kid kills his parents and three other people, and he lives to tell about it, even after he points a gun at a cop. That's about those departments, you know. Because I believe if that was somebody that looked like me, they would have been saying the suspect was killed, you know. I think this thing about us moving from that space where folks' encounters with police always ended bad to the fact that we haven't had an officer-involved shooting last year, it's miraculous, you know. That didn't happen because, like Ted say, people were checking the box. It
happened because people used their political will to actually say, this is how we’re going to do this thing moving forward.

Be honest with you, I was on the mayor’s transition team. And me and Mary fought hard to try to keep him. So, you know, our loss is practically y’all gain if y’all take him, you know.

Q. We’ll take him.

My next question: How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers, if necessary?

A. (Mr. Henderson) I think probably the closest person to that conversation would be Ted or Mary, and probably Tamara, because she deal with them every day, dealing with crime survivors, you know, about how folks don’t show up. Now, Ursula was supposed to have been here. But y’all spoke with Susan Hudson already from the police monitors?

Q. Tomorrow.

A. (Mr. Henderson) Yes, Ursula couldn’t make it, because something else came up. But y’all get some backdrop on that. I haven’t had that kind of interaction with them, so I couldn’t speak towards
A. (Mrs. Howell) His background was in public integrity. He was there for a number of years. I think he might even have been promoted to chief out of public integrity, unless I'm mistaken.

A. (Ms. Jackson) He was commander of the 7th District, and he came from the 6th District tactical unit.

A. (Mrs. Howell) And how long was he -- like, 6 years or something?

A. (Ms. Jackson) It wasn't very long. He transitioned from there to the 7th District as commander.

A. (Mrs. Howell) So that would be one thing to look at. He has had some background in terms of investigation, police misconduct. We have had a drop in lawsuits, and we've had a drop in incidents, and we've had a drop in citizen-initiated complaints. They're still correlating that in terms of the consent decree.

That's the other thing: All of this is not one person to solve this stuff. There's been a whole community involved in the transforming of this
22 police department here. There's been a very active
23 judge. There's been a very active monitoring team.
24 It's been a real collective effort. So he is one
25 person in all of that. And I think that you should

1 be able to get the documents or records about
2 discipline from what's happened under his
3 leadership.
4 There was one incident, that I'm aware of,
5 involving, early on -- the question came up about
6 the bystander intervention. The law is clear that
7 police officers have a duty to intervene if they can
8 prevent a violation of someone's civil rights. So
9 the law has been clear. Police officers have been
10 prosecuted criminally for failure to intervene, also
11 civil lawsuits, but very rarely was there ever
12 internal discipline. There was an incident that
13 happened in the 8th District where some officers, in
14 fact, very early on were, in fact, fired for not
15 intervening and preventing, I think it was a person
16 who was actually handcuffed at that time.
17 Again, the cameras have made a big
18 difference, because there's now a lot of evidence
19 that's there for this stuff. To my knowledge -- I
wasn't directly involved in it -- he was very firm about the importance of sending that message that that kind of stuff would not be tolerated. That was an important part of the success of EPIC, because it's, like, it's not an option, really, whether you're going to do this or not. You have to intervene. The point is, you want to stop people from something before there's a duty to intervene kicks in. So I think you'd have to look at the record in terms of actual discipline. And I don't know if there's criticisms. There used to be a lot of criticisms from police officers about discipline in the department, differences in terms of with other police superintendents and chiefs. There were a lot of complaints about cliques and different favoritism and stuff like that. I have not heard that sound as much -- I'm sure there are some complaints there, but I have not heard that as a constant refrain. They used to be pretty constant in the police department. There was a lot of cliques, and there was a lot of beliefs by, particularly the union, that there was disparate
punishment depending on who you knew. I have not heard that sound as loudly or -- I'm trying to think. I just haven't heard it with regard to Chief Harrison.

A. (Mr. Quant) The only thing I would add is probably objective analysis that you can look at in terms of discipline through the PID or the other departments. I know I heard Orjuela speak about different cases, but I want to approach it slightly different. This EPIC program is about integrity and standing against brutality and holding everyone accountable. And the accountability is not just with the boss telling the employee what to do, but everybody holding each other accountable.

What I value in terms of your questions about Chief, he attended those classes of EPIC. When the top leader of an organization presents themselves to say this is important to me, people who understand what direction a company is going in, whether it's police or any other kind of company, they see the message in the messenger. If he was not there, then this too shall pass. The people who do wrong, they're still there. They're still there.
They might have to duck, and they might try to play a little bit, but the structure is changing. So his presence -- the other thing is, the pin, they have an EPIC pin. Basically, it's the promise that you're going to do what this EPIC pin represents. I am the chief, but I'm human, too. I can do wrong, and a private can pull my coat and say, Chief, I got this. He models that. And I think a leader that models what they want you to do is very important. And I think those who -- see, now, people know where their bread is buttered. When we did coke, we tried to change behavior of police. But the behavior of the police let each of them know where the bread is buttered. If I do what Ted Quant and coke said, all my police friends are going to be against me as a rat, as someone not supportive. And the top leadership is supporting the old way. So I trained in a class, and I asked the police officers, what would you do if your partner -- if you found your partner was dealing drugs? The room was silent. I learned as facilitator sometimes just keep your mouth shut and
1 see what happens. And finally someone said, do you
2 want the truth or the right answer? I said, I'm
3 going home. You have to live here. And the cop
4 said, the truth is, I wouldn't report it. And I
5 said, why? He said, because I have a wife and a
6 family, and I don't know how high it goes. So this
7 was the level of things then.
8 And I will -- I'm going to end this, then
9 I got to go for true. But there was a woman cop in
10 the room. And she said, I'm here to tell all of
11 y'all, you do wrong around me, I'm busting you, I
12 don't care what. You're going down if you do it
13 around me, point blank, that's it, end of subject.
14 I think the rest of the folks felt kind of shamed
15 because the woman was the one that spoke for what
16 you're supposed to do.
17 I really want to stay, but I need to go
18 get my wife from the hospital.
19 Q. Thanks a lot.
20 A. (Mr. Butler) I just got off from work at
21 5. I needed to pick up my grandson at 5:30, but I
22 thought this meeting was important enough to attend.
23 And if you guys can excuse me, I really would
appreciate it, unless you want to take another stab
at me. Nice meeting you all, too.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Thank you.

So we understand that there's been really important work done around sexual misconduct policies. I'm looking at you, because I know this is your work in New Orleans.

And I'll also add a little context, or more to the question: So I have been doing a lot of work around the issue of human trafficking in Baltimore City. And I know it's a big issue here in New Orleans. I would also like to talk afterwards, because there's a delegation coming down on the 14th from the collaborative that I started in Baltimore City to learn more about the work being done here. So before I go, let's exchange information, so I can make sure they meet with you.

A. (Ms. Jackson) Okay.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about what type of partner Mr. Harrison has been in this effort, how did he support reforms, and the way that NOPD handles those cases of sexual assault or human
trafficking? You mentioned domestic violence. I would say just kind of speak to the realm of abuse and the work that he's done around that.
A. (Ms. Jackson) I will try and do my best.
One of the problems that existed with sexual assault, that we had over 300 untested rape kits that sat in a corner in an office within NOPD's specialized unit. And when Chief Harrison came, we continued to share our concerns about those untested kits. And he made that a priority in getting those kits tested. He also merged the sexual assault detectives and DV detectives with the Family Justice Center. And most people know, nationally, the Family Justice Centers works specifically with sexual assault and DV victims. He put those detectives inside the Family Justice Center and out of headquarters to give the victim a little bit more comfort with sharing information and coordination. We're working with law enforcement because of the disdain that exists and people not trusting the police. Now, that was positive; however, it's been a slow, downward spiral in coordinating with victim services on classification of crimes when victims
are complaining, especially in the LGBTQ community,
when it's gender specific, and the officer is not
classifying it. Then we go into a ton of other
issues with that. It's just a ton.
But initially, he had a vision. And I
think the biggest problem what I see -- I'm on the
ground. So I'm working with victims and their
families and survivors, and I have -- I can say I
have a connection with those detectives and
relationships with them. And what I see is, Chief
Harrison never really had the autonomy to lead the
police department in a direction that he can,
because you have so many moving pieces here in New
Orleans and other people that make decisions and
expect him to facilitate. Still, the hierarchy of
leadership that's been here since the benediction,
and they're stuck in the old way of doing business,
and irregardless of him being chief, they never
changed their model. That resonated down to the
detectives, down to the officers, and it became
problematic.
One thing I can share, recently, we had a
victim that was a member of the police department.
And she was taken that the department did not help her, and she's been working for them for 12 years. And she couldn't understand how something -- she wears a uniform, she worked for this agency, and she's being treated like the people I represent. She felt like she should be privy because she is law enforcement. One thing I shared with her: Welcome to my world. This is what families and victims complain about. She thought she would get special treatment because she was an officer, but she didn't, which means we have a systemic issue. And human trafficking is not led by NOPD. That's led through Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office. So the New Orleans Police Department is not pointers in that. And that's a whole another case of issues, because JP is the point of -- the law enforcement point, even if the crime is happening in Orleans. And I don't know the bureaucracy with that. It makes more sense that NOPD would be the point of contact. They have more training than JP in terms of the events that we have here in the City, just coordination, because we have a ton of problems that JP has not been privy to publicly, and
the scrutiny that NOPD has been under. So the human trafficking realm is a little bit different, because you’re coordinating with Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office as the law enforcement authority.

Q. Good to know.

A. (Ms. Jackson) And the DV victims, the trouble is classification, where oftentimes victims are seeking support of services. And the whole arrests, the labeling, if you’re a victim, being labeled as a perpetrator as opposing to being the victim, and even if you have sustained physical injuries, we’re finding that DV victims are still labeled as perpetrators and are arrested and are victimized again. We’ve been trying to coordinate to modify that with Chief Harrison. Again, I think that the people who he appointed to lead that piece have failed miserably. I don’t know why we couldn’t re -- could change it, because DV is a strong problem in New Orleans, and it’s really problematic.

A. (Mr. Henderson) On that note, one of my staff -- that’s her desk right there, you see the thing up there, “survivors speak” -- her partner, they had altercation where she got harmed, and the
2 police took her to jail. They didn't take him to
3 jail. Took her to jail. And we went round and
4 round with even just trying to get her out of jail.
5 So that's some of the challenges.
6 I can say, again, that's kind of, like,
7 from the street up here is kind of far removed. But
8 kind of like what Tamara is saying, some of these
9 policies that are actually in place, not being
10 enforced at --
11 Q. The top.
12 A. (Mr. Henderson) -- different levels. You
13 know, the thing too, is, like, the mayor -- I mean,
14 the chief is kind of, like, his take between two
15 different mayors, because we just got a new mayor,
16 and she's been in office since May of last year.
17 And she kept him on kind of like in a probationary
18 period or what have you. But his prior -- the prior
19 mayor was kind of just like -- like she said again,
20 didn't give him the autonomy to do a lot of things
21 that needed to be done or he wanted to do.
22 The new mayor comes in, and he's under
23 this dark cloud of, I don't know if I'm going to
24 keep you or not. So he hasn't had free reign, in a
25 sense of autonomy, that Tamara is talking about, to
do a lot of things or implement a lot of things, you
know. We are not inside that staff room where stuff
is going on. But, outwardly, I believe that the guy
wanted to try to do what he could. But knowing as
being a part of, you know, the transition team for
this last mayor, knowing that going in the door,
it's, like, I don't know how long he's going to be
here, because you got somebody else in mind, you
know. It may have altered what he wanted to do.
It's, like, my days are numbered, let me just go sit
in the corner until they check the box and tell me
pack your stuff and go, you know. So that may have
contributed.

But like I said again, that is a real
problem that Tamara is talking about with that.
Because, like I say again, the young lady who sits
at that desk, that's the proof in the pudding for us
that this stuff actually happens, just like Tamara
said.

A. (Mr. Orjuela) I can't tell you how many
times I've represented people who were, it seemed
obvious to me from what they encountered when the
police walk in, that either the other person should
have been arrested or maybe both should have been
arrested, right. It's possible for both to commit a
crime. I had an officer, maybe 3 or 4 years ago,
tell on the stand that they had a policy to, when
they respond to domestic violence call, to arrest
exactly one person, not zero people, because they're
worried about what kind of blowback there might be
if the situation spins off after they leave. Fine.
But not to arrest both people, because it hurts
their prosecution. They want to pick one and go
after it and just stick to it, regardless of
whatever, if it looks like it's kind of a cross
issue.
As to the sex assault investigations, you
know, I understand they've made a concerted effort
at working through those rape kits. That's a good
thing from our perspective, too. We want things
that can sort this stuff out, right. The fewer
cases that we have that are only based on, say, one
person's word, whether it's police officer or
whoever, like, written large, better outcomes as a
city.
It seems like the rape kit testing has
been going -- I'll tell you, there's a big checklist

of things a detective is supposed to do in those
cases, partly because they talk to the complainant,
but then also the rape kit. They do these special

interviews. They take them to the hospital.
There's a ton of stuff that gets done. The things
that rely on medical professionals frequently do
happen. Number of times, I can tell you, that the
reports we get are less than a report about someone
selling weed on the corner.

A. (Ms. Jackson) Vague.
A. (Mr. Orjuela) Yes, vague, a one-page
report. They never go back and do the longer
narrative that they're supposed to do. And what
that results in is people sitting in jail longer,
people on the other side not having their cases sort
of prosecuted in a timely way, people not being in
touch with them.

If a detective leaves, it's very difficult
for anyone to recreate that investigation, because
it's a year later. That detective has investigated
however many, a dozen more crimes. So it does seem
like it got some attention. You know, I know Police
Chief Harrison wasn't in charge of doing every single thing. But there does seem to be some issue, after that was such a hotspot, it didn't get resolved. It has not been resolved, I don't think, from either perspective.

A. (Ms. Jackson) It hasn't.

One exception to that arresting one person was if you're LGBT identified, right, in which case, I don't know that it was in writing, but kind of a blanket practice of arresting both parties, which is also, in part, because the DA refused to prosecute any -- didn't recognize, and we had some ordinances that didn't recognize LGBT or same gender violence as being domestic or interpersonal violence.

Q. (Mr. Davis) Just want to make a note of time, because we want to be respectful of our host's time. Most of the questions have probably been answered during the course of the night, but Councilman Burnett, Stokes, if there are one or two.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Yes, we were just talking about that.

How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's
ability to prioritize and connect with marginalized community groups; race, gender, sexual orientation, people with disabilities, the homeless?

And can you speak to specific examples; putting liaisons in the field?

A. (Mr. Ware) I know on the liaisons, I think that, like I said, we're reworking that now with the LGBT task force under the mayor and the human relations commission, but just kind of a note to ensure that the liaisons are not used as essentially blocking you from accessing leadership. Hearing people talk about how they had such an ease of contacting leadership, I'm like, oh, wow, that really did have an impact, because we were sometimes kind of diverted, right. That was not always the case when he first came into office. We organized a group of young people across, like, three or four different organizations, middle school to early 20s, and just asked him if he would come to a form within the first 2 weeks of him being appointed. And he did and brought two officers. We specifically were, like, we do not want media there. We do not want
council members there. This is not about having kind of an event that you can show that you're doing this. And they were fine by that and showed up and participated for, like, 2 or 3 hours.

I think, you know, some of the -- because we had the Department of Justice, court monitors, and then compliance officers within the NOPD, right, like, there was a lot of -- when we're trying to get an LGBT policy through, we didn't even necessarily have to go to Harrison himself. Obviously, of course, he's behind the scenes, kind of checking off, you know, approving whether or not these things can go forward or not. I will say that we ended up with one of the most extensive police policies in the country as regards to LGBT community. And we kept -- so in our policy, is that it has to be reviewed annually. So that's part of what we're trying to make sure is actually implemented now.

But when community groups have said, actually, we need to include people living with HIV in this particular section, or we need to include gender nonconforming people, we never got any -- I know that those things eventually were going up to
Harrison, and he was saying yes or no. We always got a yes on those. If anything, it was the DA that would fight.

And one of the most impressive ones actually was that we were working to get language in that policy around the use of condoms as evidence in some best practice policy about not using condoms as evidence of prostitution or any kind of sex. And the DA fought it and fought it and fought it, and then just one day decided no longer to fight it. We were able to actually get that in, which was really exciting for us.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. I want to kind of roll on that real quick.

In my district, they called them sex workers. So there was two community persons wanted me and the mayor to put in some legislation called no cruising.

I wouldn't do it, because that's, like, discriminating. So there was a former mayor that did no cruising for the clubs. They wanted me to do it. So they got a little upset with me.

What I did, I brought the state's attorney's office, the police department, the LGBT,
12 a number of groups and brought together, and what we
did now, doing wraparound services, because you
can't brush your way out of the same thing. They
were satisfied. So I'm just kind of laying that
out, something that y'all might want to look at.
Because if you arrest somebody for that, they'd be
right back out. If you put some wraparound services
in that space, it really help them take back all the
arrests.

A. (Mr. Ware) Atlanta has a great pre-arrest
diversion program that's been --

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. The last question, because we've
covered -- we have a lot of questions, but you've
covered a lot of ground, and I'm thankful for that.

Last one I wanted to throw out is: How

has Mr. Harrison supported the immigrant community

here in New Orleans?

A. (Mr. Henderson) That's what Ursula was

supposed to speak on, because she's the ED of that
organization now. I tell you this: We've come a
long ways from how that community is treated. In
the aftermath of Katrina -- and I wish Ted was still
here, because Ted is on their board -- that those folks were treated worse than we were treated. And that kind of, like, has changed, because a lot of us in the community support them with stuff.

And a lot of it would be, initially, the police were taking their money, was robbing them, literally robbing them, because they were the people helping rebuild this City. And they did, what they call, these integrity checks and caught some cops actually robbing these guys. And things started to change then.

So, you know, the biggest challenge for this community -- that community, really, is ICE more so than NOPD, because NOPD has literally stood down during ICE’s work.

Q. So they're not asking people for their status or anything?

1 A. (Mr. Jackson) If a crime has happened, yes.

2 A. (Mr. Henderson) Yes, but if no crime --

3 A. (Mr. Jackson) If they're a victim, they leverage their status to get them to talk. And I've been fighting that, because --
8 Q. If they’re a victim of a crime?
9 A. (Mr. Henderson) Victim of a crime.
10 Q. Just wanted to be clear.
11 A. (Ms. Jackson) We’ve seen an increase in
12 immigrant homicides. The families, oftentimes,
13 those folks are trapped. They’re from all over. So
14 they’re not going to have the documents that they
15 want them to have. Their survivors that are here
16 may not be legal. So what’s happening is, she may
17 be a witness to her companion’s homicide, she’s not
18 legal, she don’t want to talk because, what; she
19 wants to stay here. So the pressure is applied to
20 her to get her to share information. If she don’t,
21 we’ll be sending you away. So that’s what I’m
22 seeing on the victim’s side of things, but that’s if
23 they’re a victim of crime. And are they a victim of
24 crime most of the times? Yes. They’re vulnerable.
25 And a lot of times they don’t want to report because

1 of that very reason. And I’m able to work and
2 coordinate with the sheriff’s office with doing the
3 visas, but then that has been a challenge with the
4 DA’s office and them actually giving them the
5 temporary visas if they’re crime victims, to get
them coordinated with the criminal justice system.

A. (Mr. Ware) It used to be that the NOPD would, if you spoke -- if you were a Spanish speaker, they just called ICE to do the interpretation for you.

Q. Oh, my goodness.

A. (Mr. Ware) Because they didn't have any Spanish-speaking officers. There was one, Officer Valencia, who was horrendous, and used to do the training for the department under Harrison. He is still with the department, and I think still doing some of the community outreach. He's no longer doing the training, thankfully. I sat through some of that training, which was just outright offensive. So he's no longer doing that. And they're no longer calling ICE to interpret. They have actual, like, officers that speak Spanish they can call.

A. (Mr. Henderson) We've been kind of quasi-identified as a sanctuary city; although, legally, we're not. That's primarily because the police department has kind of, like, stood down.

Q. We have a similar situation, where we don't control the courts and the prisons, so we
can't do that, but we are welcoming --

A. (Mr. Henderson) Right.

A. (Mrs. Maw) Can I make a general point, that I think a couple of you briefly touched on, I think is sort of an overall point. We have had, I guess for the last 5 years or so, a pretty progressive, in many ways, police chief and a really repressive DA. So I think that a lot of the things that we are talking about are really tricky, because he's sort of stuck between a rock and a hard rock. Again, I don't forgive him or the flaws -- there's a lot of stuff he needs to work on. We definitely see those things every day. But in terms of which side of history you want to be on, I would be on Chief Harrison's and not Leon Cannizzaro. I think it's a really hard thing he's had with some of the sort of things the DA wants, but he wants his officers to be doing, that there are some real conflicts there. And I think that has been a challenge for him.

A. (Mrs. Howell) We also had a completely failed criminal justice system, which was exposed with Katrina; I mean, complete collapse. And we've had victims that don't report. We had witnesses who
don't come forward.

A. (Ms. Jackson) We have witnesses that get killed.

A. (Mrs. Howell) We have had horrendous experiences here. And we were at this hearing Friday, and I would urge you-all to look at that, of the reporting of the status of this police department now as a result of the community, as a result of Chief Harrison, as a result of the monitors in federal court. If we were having this discussion 5 years ago, 10 years ago, oh, my goodness, it would be really awful.

So there's been a lot of positive things that have happened. And Emily is exactly right, the points other people are making, we still have a lot of failures in our system. The way we treat victims of crime and the violence in our community is a terrible, ongoing problem. And we have not solved that. We'll continue to work on that.

And let me say one other thing: His role as a liaison, I think about the consent decree.

I've been in court several times, I've watched the sort of interaction between the monitoring teams and the federal judge, et cetera, that's been a very
1 important relationship, because that has changed.
2 There was a lot of friction, a lot of hostility.
3 There was litigation. We were not moving forward.
4 And that has changed within -- I think he's been an
5 important part of that transformation, that
6 relationship. I know you-all -- I don't know your
7 judge or your monitoring team. I know that that
8 question of being able to maneuver through a consent
9 decree and all that's involved is a real important
10 part of what you-all are dealing with. And that's
11 been an important part -- I think he's been
12 successful in navigating a lot of stuff at that
13 level, is my sense on it.
14 A. (Mrs. Maw) I think he's just a nice guy.
15 He's a very likeable person. He's sincere. And,
16 you know, definitely the department is flawed, but
17 he as an individual is a decent person. And I think
18 people respond to that.
19 BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:
20 Q. I had a meeting with him last Friday in
21 Baltimore. So, I mean, you're absolutely right.
22 But he already made some commitments; leaving his
23 job, he's in Baltimore looking for a house. I mean,
he's been in one place for a long time. So all that is a commitment. That's what people in Baltimore --

I don't remember any of the people in Baltimore ever meet him, but I'm getting community people come back and say they like this guy. They look at his résumé, they look at his commitments he already have done in Baltimore.

A. (Mr. Henderson) Just a heads up to y'all:

I know a lot of community people in Baltimore reaching out to us trying to get 411 on this guy.

Likewise, just like when Chief Serpas was leaving from Tennessee, folks were calling us kind of, like, with an SOS, really. So our networks are the same. So people are reaching out trying to find out what's in store; is somebody going to be coming in to be repressive or somebody coming in, we can say happy days are here again. Not in the sense that he don't do his job, but there's a way to do your job, you know. And all the interactions that y'all community has been having over the last several years with law enforcement parallels what has been going on here. And I tell people all the time, you know, people closer to the problem are that much closer to the
solution. And this guy has been close to the problem.

Q. That's why I'm on the record saying, we'll take him. Thank you.
Day 2 – February 1, 2019

1. Fraternal Order of the Police
2. Council Vice President Helena Moreno
3. Tenisha Stevens, Criminal Justice Commissioner – Office of Mayor Cantrell
4. Melanie Talia, CEO of the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation
INTERVIEWS DAY 2 OF 2, 2/1/19

INTERVIEW OF FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, SERGEANT WALTER POWERS, JR.; SERGEANT WILLIE JENKINS; DONOVAN LIVACCARI:

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. We have read conflicting reports on whether NOPD will come into full compliance with the consent decree ahead of or behind schedule. What are your thoughts on the speed in which the NOPD has made progress implementing reforms, and how has Mr. Harrison done in terms of leading the reform efforts mandated by the consent decree?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) So I think time-wise that the department has done somewhat better than expected. I think that everybody kind of had this idea that it was going to take 10, 15 years, you know, something similar to what happened out in Los Angeles. Consent decree has been in effect since 2013. So here we are beginning of 2019, and they've made significant progress.

I think that they may be a little overly optimistic about when they could be done with their agreement with the court, but only insofar as I
think that there are a couple of little things left to do, and there's requirement to demonstrate full compliance for 2 years. So once you've got everything in line, I mean, doesn't seem like you can be completely done with it for 2 years after that, right. So I think we still probably got a couple of years left to go. But I do think that they've made pretty good progress.

And I will say that I was a member of the police department until 2008. And in my time with the police department, I spent several years in the research and planning division. And we were working on the CALEA accreditation process. My experience with that was that the police department spent a whole lot more time trying to figure out how to get around complying with the standards for CALEA than actually complying with the standards of CALEA. And I think that was a tremendous problem for them. So I saw that trend continue, I think, for years after that.

I think that finally Harrison decided that that wasn't worth the effort, to try to figure out how to get around the rules. Then it was much
better for everybody to figure out how to comply

with the rules. I think that he's really -- he

exceeded my expectations for him as a

superintendent. And I think that he did well

implementing the reforms and consent decree and
doing his best to make it part of the culture of the
police department as opposed to compliance for
compliance sake.

You want to add to that?

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Sure. As a midline
supervisor with the police department who actually
has to help get these changes into place, I think,
like Donovan said, it's going to be a little bit --
the timeline is going to be a little bit longer than
we think, based on the fact that we have to be in
complete compliance for 2 years, which I don't think
will be an issue. I just think that continuing what
happens over the timeframe of self-accountability is
going to make sure that -- making sure that that
happens is difficult, because it's -- you
continuously deal with the manpower issues, and you
continuously deal with other things that you have to
take into account, so that, you know, it's called a
close and effective supervision. And when you have
the short manpower issue, sometimes it’s difficult
to make sure that you’re able to see every little
thing. So it’s going to be incumbent upon every
officer himself to continue what we’ve been doing.
And again, like Donovan said, I think

Chief Harrison made it a point to make people feel
their own responsibility towards the department and
the community itself, to make sure that they
understood that these things have to happen, because
we have to continue growing as a community with the
police department and all the citizens to know that
we’re doing the right things at the right times all the
time. So I think that, to his testament, that
that was a decent challenge that he took on. I
think he overcame it. So I wouldn’t have anything
other than that to say about the gentleman.

Q. Okay. There’s a wealth of information
online related to NOPD’s compliance with
federally-mandated consent decree. Could you talk a
little bit about what, in your experience,
Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he
prepares to tackle Baltimore’s consent decree?
18        A. (Sergeant Jenkins) That he may struggle with?
19        Q. Yes, about what he did here. From experience, what would be his struggle as he prepares to tackle Baltimore's consent decree?
20        A. (Mr. Livaccari) I'm sorry, is that the question?
21        Q. Yes, about what he did here. From experience, what would be his struggle as he prepares to tackle Baltimore's consent decree?
22        A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think that my answer to that question is that we don't have collective bargaining here in New Orleans. I understand that you guys have collective bargaining in Baltimore.
23        Q. Can you use an example, the difference?
24        A. (Mr. Livaccari) Well, I mean, we don't have to -- we don't have issues that are -- there's nothing that's an item of mandatory bargaining, you know. I mean, he wants to implement that they want to do body-worn cameras, then they put in body-worn cameras. We don't have to go to the contract and renegotiate contracts to implement body-worn camera program, something just as an example. So I think that if there's anything, I would imagine that his
lack of experience dealing with labor in a true
collective bargaining sense would probably be
somewhat of a challenge.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I probably will say
just getting to know the language of the agreement
itself, because ours is one way. So it took time to
go down those list of items to see what they were
asking for and how we could implement it. I think
just to see what the language in the contract that
their consent decree has, to just getting
comfortable and familiar with that. I don't think
it should be much of an issue or getting to the
compliance level as long as -- like Donovan said, I
don't have much information about collective
bargaining either. But as long as he can stay
within the realms of both of those situations, I
think he'll be fine.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think there's also a
question -- I mean, there's always politics involved
in any police department, right. You got to learn
who you can trust and who you can't trust and who's
going to get you there and who's not going to get
you there. I'm sure he can work all that out.
BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. So in Baltimore, we heard stories of officers who are afraid to engage in policing. And just to give context, we have parts of the city that have open air drug markets. And with changes in the consent decree on how to approach folks, officers have said, you really don't feel comfortable doing so, for fear of violation of the decree or being sued. Have you had similar challenges here under Mr. Harrison's leadership? And if so, how did he manage that process?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think that we did to a certain degree. I think it was more talk than action. And Willie probably may be able to speak to that a little bit better than me, since he's actually -- I've been involved with the consent decree since the consent decree was being negotiated, but not as a policeman, as an attorney, right. So Willie has been on the other side, on the department. So from my perspective, I know that I had numerous conversations with officers to try to explain to them that the consent decree was not
about them. The consent decree didn't govern their behavior. The consent decree was not a referendum on you as a police officer. The consent decree is about the leadership of the police department and about the administration of the police department, and it shouldn't have that kind of impact on you. I don't think that I actually saw -- I deal a lot with the disciplinary aspects of the police department. So I didn't see a lot of people written up for not taking the action that they should have taken. I think that, you know, policemen are prone to complain a little bit. I think that they did that, and it was more talk than it was action. I don't know that the superintendent ever had to address that directly. And if he did, maybe Willie can speak to that as far as how he dealt with the supervisors and leadership. A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I think the most important thing that he did was get out there, there were going to be clearcut guidelines on what had to be done. And it just made it part of our policy that you're going to do A, B, C. And once everybody start to conform to that, it wasn't an issue
Because, like you said, misconception of what it was and what you can and can't do, people thinking on their own, it just made them have, like, crazy thought patterns of you can't do this, you can't do that.

But we have a thing that's called procedural justice. And it goes into the realms of identifying yourself and letting a person know why you're stopping them, then giving you the thought process that I should have a reason to stop a person. So all of these things have been put into place. And there's accountability for that.

So we have to view several different body-worn cameras or in-car camera videos daily as part of our job. And if we are seeing that officers aren't doing that, then we take whatever corrective measures we need to take to make sure they start to comply with that.

So I think those steps that he took to make sure that stuff happened made officers more comfortable, because you know if you didn't do what was required of you, then the disciplinary action came to you directly, not to every officer on the
street. I think it took a couple of months for

 everybody to just say, okay, this is the way we're
going to do it. Once that started, everything flows
well, because you know that any given day, your
.supervisor is going to do a random review of your
body-worn camera. I'm not going to tell you I'm
-going to do yours tomorrow, do yours the next day.

 It's just a random review. So your thought process
starts to be, let me do this every time. I think
once officers get that in their head, it won't take
long for them to understand that we can do what we
need to do to police the city, but we have to do it
this way. And if we do it this way, then we'll be
fine.

 I mean, I don't know if any of you ever
been a police officer, but you know that things
don't go the same way every time. But if you can,
like, comfortably do what you're supposed to do
every time, then that time that it doesn't happen,

 the pattern is there that he's consistently doing
the right thing, and this time the situation didn't
allow for that. Sometimes it doesn't allow for you
to walk up and introduce yourself to somebody and
say, I'm stopping you because of this. Sometimes
you just have to get there and be in full police
mode at that point. But your record shows that
you're consistently doing it this way, and if you
say this time it didn't happen that way because,
there won't be a question about it.
A. (Mr. Livaccari) If I could add to that,
too. I don't know if it's necessarily a comment on
Chief Harrison, I guess it's probably more of a
comment on Chief Serpas, because he was there at the
beginning. The message, I think, got to the troops
fairly quickly that you're not going to get in
trouble for doing the right thing. The consent
decree, I think, one of the -- I haven't had
opportunity to study Baltimore's consent decree.
But in the New Orleans consent decree, you know, I'm
sure it's probably the same thing.
You got to take every complaint, no matter
how ridiculous, you know, and investigate
everything. So we've seen -- I've seen a rise in
the total number of complaints; although, lately,
it's kind of come down a little bit. But as the
consent decree was implemented, the number of
complaints went up. But the number of complaints
for serious infractions, I think, went down. And
the number of complaints for either nonsense or
frivolous things or very minor things, that's what
went up. And the serious infractions went pretty
far down. So when the troops see that you're not
going suspended for doing the right thing, then I
think that sends a message to them that, you know,
we've got your back, you know, we expect you to do
your job and do it right, and that's all we want
from you, is to do the right thing.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. But the difference is, y'all commissioner
is permanent. We have an interim commissioner. So
we have consent decree, you really can't
implement -- somebody at the top, just make sure it
get done.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Understood.

Everybody, this is Sergeant Walter Powers.

He's president of our lodge.

A. (Sergeant Powers) I'm Walter Powers, Jr.,
current president of Crescent Lodge 2. I'm a
40-year member of the New Orleans Police Department.
Currently, I am the commander of criminal records, expungements and latent prints. And criminal records also consists of subpoenas and public records requests.

You were talking about body-worn cameras when I walked in. That is the highest number of requests that we receive. Crash attorneys are going from, oh, well, we got the report, we need body-worn camera. We want to see what the people said. And we also have realtime cameras that they’re requesting as well. The good and bad of that is, if it's not in the police report, they don't get it. It's got to be subpoenaed. And if it's not subpoenaed within a 30-day time limit, then it expires.

Donovan was talking about the complaints. Body-worn cameras was number one, because in order to activate the body-worn camera, you got to tap it twice. If you jump out the car running behind the bad guy, you might forget to tap it until, you know, you start slowing down a little bit, then you remember, oh, activate this body-worn camera. And they will suspend you for not putting your body-worn camera on.
As time went along, and the judge looked at it, said, you know, this is frivolous, because when you go out there doing real work, sometimes you just forget to do stuff. You're human, you know. It's not like I'm just going for a call for service. I know that, so I just turn it on, and go.

Body-worn cameras do take a lot of storage, you know. A lot of departments don't go to it because of the amount of storage that it takes and what it costs to run. And attorneys like to archive body-worn cameras. Greatest thing about that is evidence.com. Evidence.com is a company that archives -- well, runs the body-worn camera system. If at any time they fold up, then body-worn cameras are gone. But as long as they're in existence, once it's recorded, it's archived.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How has Chief Harrison embraced the rollout of the cameras?

A. (Sergeant Powers) Actually, they were already in existence. Serpas rolled them out. A lot of the officers were against them at first. We initially started off with in-car cameras, called
The first MVU that I ever viewed was a police officer who was 6'9", and it just so happens that the female was 5'3", and she said that he called her everything but a child of God and threw her around and everything else. I said, well, let's go back and review the camera, because it was her mother. And as soon as I pulled the footage up, she said, y'all got cameras? That was the end of that point.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Y'all have BWC program over there?

Q. (Mr. Davis) Yes, we do.

Q. I didn't know the acronym.

How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based policing practices, and can you speak to specific examples of policy changes?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think Harrison had -- I think that was one of his best qualities, was his ability to interact with the communities, sectors of the community and different aspects of the community. I think that he really excelled at that,
and I think that that dribbles down, you know. I think that, you know, that kind of attitude is the kind of attitude that falls down to the troops. And I think that they kind of adopted the same kind of attitude. You can probably comment on that.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I think his biggest quality is, he has a very marketable personality. I don't think there's been a room that I've been in with him that the overall consensus was a happy pleased one, but everybody walked away from the situation thinking that they've gotten something that they needed to get from it.

And I don't know if he's ordained minister, but I've seen him at church locations. And the message that he put out, so many people just, like, paid attention the entire time. And it was amazing to me to see the police chief have this many people engaged in what he's talking about, and it's not a police issue. I just always appreciated that aspect of it.

And along with that, the members of the police department, he always made himself available. So it wasn't, if you saw him walking in a hall, that
you’d stop and wouldn’t say anything. It was always a conversation to be had at that point. His thing was, are you okay, you know.

Also, under his leadership, we adopted the Officer Assistance Program, which it also is a thing where officers have the ability to go see a mental health professional, and you don’t have to say I’m going to see a mental health professional. You just tell your supervisor, I need to go and see whoever. And then that’s just the thing, you go and do that. He was a big proponent of making sure that the officers are healthy, physically and mentally, so that they can be the best person they can be for the community itself. I just think he was -- that part of it was great. I couldn’t say anything else.

Actually, Cecile Tebo is over the mental health program -- well, it's officer --

So what happens now is, supervisors, when somebody may have a complaint against them, the
first thing they say, go see Tebo. There's no if,
go see Tebo.

And when I came on, if you went to see Tebo, that means you went to rubber gun squad. You weren't carrying a gun, because you had a mental problem. There was no such thing as, oh, I'm stressed. If you're stressed, you can't handle this job. But now he understands that stress, PTSD, all that run into together. Harrison, I think he's a deacon, because I know he preached at the church the last time. He's a deacon at the Baptist church.

But Harrison knew from -- we had urban squad in the early 70s. They came on in '79. So in the early 70s, we had urban squad. Urban squad was community based, where you went in, and you became part of the community, housing projects. So as it went on, we went from the urban squad was disbanded to officer friendly program. Built on the officer friendly program, and the community-based police officers, one unit, and that's where you got deputy dog and everything else. That went, because of lack of manpower, that went to the wayside. But then it was encouraged that you get out there and interact
with the people. And the more that you interacted, the better it helped.

I have this thing when I was in the district called "no windows up." That means that doesn't matter how cold or hot it is, windows are down. Warm the car up, put the windows down. Cool the car down, put the windows down. You keep the windows down, you can talk to the community.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Can you think of any specific policies that Harrison implemented about community engagement or -- I can't, not being on the department right now.

A. (Sergeant Powers) It wasn't a policy that he implemented, but he had the thing about we have to be a friendlier, more approachable police officer.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) He pushed for each officer having to have so many hours of community engagements per month. And that really opened a lot of the officers' eyes, because when you go to these homeless shelters or you go to the church groups or you go to the mental health facilities, you get a better view of the people you're dealing with.
Sometimes you just get a call of a person standing in front of a store yelling. And it's not just going to the store just hauling them away. You try to actually sit there and figure out, you know, why are you here at this point and what can we do to help you. So it's been a bigger thing with the -- also, the CIT program, right.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Yes, I was going to say what about in-service training.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Well, there's an actual 40-hour course of officers going to get CIT certified, which is crisis intervention. That part has allowed officers to be on scene. The policy states that how much time the officers needs to be there. We had a big issue a couple of years ago about response time, and that was a big thing for the community. That was the biggest problem they had with the police department, the response time was too long. When the CIT policy came out, the thought process was, I don't care how much time it takes for us to safely assist this person who's in this mental health crisis, let's do that, and everything else, I mean, we'll get to it. That's
12 not the answer you want to hear when you’re sitting
13 at your house waiting because somebody broke your
14 window and came into your house. But, I mean, in
15 the overall grand scheme of things, if we can safely
16 get this guy to some kind of mental health
17 treatment, we can still come and write your report,
18 because that’s effectively what we’re doing. So his
19 thought process on that was, let’s do the important
20 things, and let’s taper it down to the things that
21 are not so important. Let’s make it to where we all
22 are happy at the end of the day. I think that is
23 the gist of that.
24 A. (Sergeant Powers) He wrote the CIT policy
25 from -- initially, it was a volunteer thing that you
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1 had to volunteer to go to the class. He changed it
2 from volunteer to everybody should be CIT certified,
3 because the volunteer thing was, you had to mandate
4 to have so many people working that was CIT
5 certified on each shift. And that wasn’t going to
6 go well. So with everybody just going to the class
7 and getting certified made it easier.
8 Q. Thank you. So I think you kind of hit on
9 this a little earlier, the next question, so if it
doesn't apply: Can you speak to a time Mr. Harrison successfully negotiated a difficult item in the police union's MOU, such as pension reform, overtime, that kind of thing? I think you said you guys don't do that.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Yes, we don't have that.

We did meet -- we met with the superintendent and various members of his major staff on a regular basis, usually once a month. And we discussed whatever items were important to us at the time. And he was responsive, I mean, to a certain degree, as much as we would expect, I guess.

A. (Sergeant Powers) He actually -- we got the pay raises, three or two? I think it was two pay raises.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Two and a half.

But we don't negotiate MOUs, contracts.

A. (Sergeant Powers) Yes, but he went to the mayor and said, you know, we need to put more money in these guys' pockets. So he went to the mayor, they agreed. They also gave incentive pay raises for the investigators. So he had an extra
10 percent added. Sex crimes, homicide, anybody who was in close investigative roles got an extra 10 percent, because you got to wear a suit all the time.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think Mayor Landrieu saw the benefit of involving the FOP in the discussions and the decisions and how that appeared to the public. So I think that the -- I think it may have been a joint decision. They embraced that whole process to try to make things work as well as they could. He did well with it.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. Can you speak to NOPD's seized asset forfeiture process and whether Mr. Harrison has made improvements to the practice?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I'm not thoroughly familiar with the asset seizure. I know that it was -- I think they shut the whole program down for a while, and it's not a big focus of anything. So I don't really --

A. (Sergeant Powers) As far as I know, there's only one person who actually does the documents.
A. (Mr. Livaccari) It’s not a tremendous part.

Q. Can you speak to Mr. Harrison’s ability to conduct and implement top-to-bottom policy review changes?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think that they did a good job with that. I think that the policy revisions and implementations that were required by the consent decree would have gone a whole lot faster if not for the DOJ. I think if anybody was slowing -- it was the DOJ. I think that Chief Harrison embraced the idea of that whole consent decree team that worked on all these policies and hiring the necessary folks to get these policies revised and up to snuff with consent decree. And I think that he did a good job with that, with maybe the sole exception that when Serpas was there, he made a point of making sure that he asked for our input with regard to policy revisions. And it was kind of hit and miss sometimes as far as we were concerned with Harrison on soliciting our input on policy revisions. So I guess that could have been a little bit better, from my perspective. But on an
overall perspective, I think that he did a good job with the way the policies were implemented.

A. (Sergeant Powers) There were a couple of policies that he sent out, and we got to read them after they came out. We went to a meeting. We were able to amend those policies to make them realistic.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Right. I think there were a couple of times if we would have had the opportunity to say that before as opposed to after, that it would have been more efficient.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How was Mr. Harrison able to implement training programs for officers around constitutional policing, implicit bias and community-based policing? I think you touched on some of this.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Surprisingly well. I think the consent decree training requirements are unbelievably optimistic, you know. I don't know -- I assume your consent decree is the same as ours was. The training requirements are just incredible. But there were plenty of times we looked at this and said, there's no possible way; there's not enough time in the day or people in the department to make
this training happen. But he managed to pull it off pretty well. You guys probably can speak more to that than me.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) The in-service training side of it, since the consent decree came, and then Chief Harrison took over, it changed drastically. It used to be just 40 hours of things that you do every year. Now it's always something else being built upon. Like you said, it's phenomenal that we're able to get the training in that we've gotten. It's also, along with the regular 40 hour in-service, there are several online trainings that you deal with. And then the training bulletins that we are required to do every month always have something to do with a policy or something that we're dealing with. So it's being implemented in ways -- it was very creative the way they came up with it to get it, make sure that we're in compliance and to make sure that the officers are being trained as best they can without reducing the amount of manpower on the street, which would limit their response times and limit the way that we respond to the citizen needs.

A. (Sergeant Powers) When they first came up
with consent decree training, police officers -- not sergeant -- had to go to 8 weeks of in-service training. Sergeant added 2 more weeks on top of that. So it's 10 weeks. And if you went to all this training consecutively, that's 2 and a half months that you're completely out of the loop. Then they moved it back to 4 weeks. It's, like, it's still 4 weeks that I have somebody who's out of the loop. So now they moved it back to 40 hours, which is one week. And sergeants were still going 2 weeks of training. I had the argument, why is a sergeant going, supervisor going to one training, and then they have to go to the same training with the police officers, when all this stuff could intermingle? So they moved it to where supervisors go one week, and officers go to another.

As I said, the DTB, daily training bulletin, we have those that come out, that you read at roll call every day. So that's another training that's coming that you get credit for that you don't have to go and sit in a classroom. Then you have your monthly training that comes out. And also, the state has websites you can go to state website and
get credit for training online.

So by the time Harrison finish putting all this stuff together, you were getting 120 weeks of training condensed into a small time. So literally take 2 weeks and get everything that you needed and satisfy POST and federal government at the same time.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I don't know what the State of Baltimore's police academy or whoever does y'all's training, but the New Orleans Police Department's training academy was not exactly a professional learning environment. I mean, that's not to say anything about the people who are assigned there or work there, but they never really invested in the academy to the point where it would be a real learning environment. I think that Harrison embraced, finally embraced, that notion that we could make this more school-like and more -- you know, used all these great educational models that are out there to make this a place where we can really get stuff done. So I think he did well with that.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:
How does Mr. Harrison create an environment where his officers can get the support they need; example, to get reliable equipment/technology, to handle trauma, and to back them up when they are correct?

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Like I said, the Officer Assistance Program, with the mental health side of it. There's also, he solicits different organizations to assist with; we've gotten donations from people for NewFest at times, and just different avenues that officer -- like I said, they can come up and speak to him sometimes whether something they feel wasn't correctly handled, and he'd address it with them; or if he couldn't address it with them, point them in the right direction of somebody that could. He's also open to meetings with police organizations. All the officers have the full understanding that if you need to address something, it'll be addressed. And they don't have a fear of, if I do this, then I won't be able to be promoted, or I won't be able to have the things or move to a different division. It's never been, since he's been the superintendent, that that type of climate
has been around the department. Everybody just feels as though you can say what you need to say and just move on from there.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think he successfully implemented the Narcan program. Everybody carries Narcan now, right?

A. (Sergeant Powers) And tourniquets, yes.

Started going to that, tourniquets.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Is that answering your question?

Q. Yes. What about the trauma piece? I know a lot of officers, they still have trauma, the hours. Can you explain how he dealt with trauma?

A. (Sergeant Powers) That's where Cecile Tebo comes in. It's one of those situations, if an officer is experiencing a traumatic event, a shooting, for instance, you're not going right back on the street. So you -- because it is a shooting, with the way the investigation is going, you might be 4 weeks out. But they recommend that you talk to Cecile or you seek some type of assistance, but Cecile is there for you, and it's no cost to you.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) As attorney for the
lodge, I respond to officer-involved shootings on a regular basis. So I can tell you that the last one that I went on was July 4th of this year. And when I got there, there were chaplains already on the scene, there were -- I'm trying to think -- the peer support people were there. And I think they've done a much better job, as far as that's concerned, offering support to the officers.

A. (Sergeant Powers) You forgot the last one you were on.
A. (Mr. Livaccari) July 4th.
A. (Sergeant Powers) No.
A. (Mr. Livaccari) January 4th.
A. (Sergeant Powers) Yes.
A. (Sergeant Jenkins) He made it clear that the investigation was going to be transparent and was going to be taken seriously. And it was. And the officers were put on reassignment, as they should be. They went through the process, for at least the body-worn camera footage.
A. (Mr. Livaccari) They were cleared in 2 weeks. That was a record for the police department.
Before that, I think the record was, like, 3 months.
A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I don't think we had any citizen, like, kickback on anything, as far as the way the investigation was handled. And I don't think there was anybody saying anything went wrong with the investigation, or it wasn't good enough or it wasn't transparent enough. The officers are back at work, so...

A. (Sergeant Powers) That one, the body-worn camera, the police officer who was hit in the vest, his camera was the one facing the guy who was doing the shooting. So as soon as they saw that, it was, well, it was nothing. Community was extremely quiet about it. If anything, they were supportive to the police officer who got shot.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I spoke to Chief Harrison on the scene of that incident. He was -- I mean, he knew that I was there to support the officers.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How are police officers evaluated in performance reviews? We'll stop there. There's a part 2, but I think that's a lot, based on your reaction.

Well, I guess the follow-up was: Does one
of the metrics include successful community building experiences? I think you sort of hit on that earlier.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) The performance evaluation system is implemented by the Civil Service Department here in New Orleans. So I think the civil service performance evaluation is like a generic deal that goes across different departments, you know. So I think that they implemented some different evaluations just for the police department. And then I'll let y'all address that.

A. (Sergeant Powers) Three of them.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) It's, like, quarterly, I think now.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) There's a quarterly one, there's a biannual one, then there's a civil service one, which is yearly. We all, like, get aggravated when that time of the year comes up, because it's so much. But honestly, I think it allows you to make sure that you're getting the best performance out of each officer, because it requires you to give specific examples on certain things that they've done well or haven't done well, so that
you're holding yourself accountable for making sure that the officers are doing things the best they can. That way, with all of this, it's like, if you're doing your job, you won't have a problem with doing your evaluations, because there's so many avenues put in place to keep track of all of these things. There's a program that was put into place called supervisor's feedback log. So if you see an officer who did something extremely well, you put it in there so that he can be recognized. If you see an officer who did something very poorly, you put it in there, so he can be -- what's the word I'm looking for -- the disciplinary action that's needed can be taken. There's also mechanisms within the evaluations that you don't necessarily have to discipline an officer. You can start a tracking method to help the officer get to the plateau that he needs to be at. So that part of it, like I said, when you're doing it, it's, like, oh, my God. But when you look at the end-all results, it's needed.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:
Q. Let me ask you a question: In Baltimore, talking to some of our command staff, if there was an interaction between a resident and an officer, and Councilman Burnett says, well, go file a complaint, well, even if it wasn't true, it would go into the officer's file. So when he go to get promoted, whether it was true or not, it's still sitting there.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) We still have that. But what's supposed to happen is, if it's found to be not sustained, that it's not supposed to be viewed as a negative aspect. Because what happens is, the investigators who's doing the investigation on that officer can see, look through the body-worn camera, through the police report, and whatever other reporting mechanisms or documentation. We have different ways of addressing it with the adjudication process. So if an officer was found to not have done anything, it will be found unfounded, which means that the allegations that the person brought forth just didn't happen. And if something occurred, but it wasn't to what the citizen said, then it would be not sustained. If
something did happen, and it was possible that the
officer did violate a policy, but it can't be proven, then it's call exonerated. So you have those different levels of disposition that you would look at.

And when they're doing the promotional process, first off, you have to be on the promotional list to even have that. Before you can be on the promotional list, you have to be clear of any allegations against you. So you can't even get on the list having that. But when you go through that process, when they're reviewing your -- we call it a short form, they're reviewing that, if all of those things say not sustained or unfounded, then they won't be held against you. That's the way it's supposed to happen.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Specifically on this topic, I guess one thing I can actually give to Harrison, is that the system, for the longest time in New Orleans, was that if you had a pending -- any pending complaint, you couldn't get promoted. So you could be on the list, but you weren't going to actually be promoted until that was resolved. No
matter what the resolution was, it just had to be resolved. But the consent decree kind of made that seem like maybe it should be a different standard, right. So what Harrison implemented was that it wasn't that it was just any old pending complaint, it had to be a serious pending complaint. So that was a fairly significant change that I could give Harrison credit for.

The stuff still stays in their file, though. We used to have a system where you could get the stuff --

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Expunged.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Right. And there was a state law that said that police officers can get stuff expunged after so many years out of their record. And back when Pennington was here trying to avoid a consent decree, they lobbied the legislature to appeal that law. So now we still -- they still have it.

A. (Sergeant Powers) Also, if the City fell under 300,000 or something like that, then you could have your record cleared. But when they reenacted that law, passed that law, that new law, everyone in
the State of Louisiana could do it except the New Orleans Police Department.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. So why do you think Chief Harrison wants the job in Baltimore?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think that that's an interesting question. I think that he would -- I don't know how secure his position was here in New Orleans with the new mayor. I think that, eventually, the new mayor was going to decide that she wanted her own person in there, and that that ax was going to fall, to no fault of Superintendent Harrison, eventually. And so I think that my gut tells me that he saw an opportunity to do something that he did well, and I think that it would be a new challenge for him, that I think he'll be successful, and he avoids getting lopped off by the mayor for political reasons.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How does he approach police recruitment?

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) Aggressively.

Aggressively. The numbers dropped last drastically right at -- what year was that?
A. (Sergeant Powers) After Katrina. 2006, we started losing.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) It was, like, for lack of a better term, hemorrhaging of blood from the amount of people that was just leaving. It was, like, morale was way down. And that was one of his big points that he wanted to make sure he got, was that we aggressively recruit police officers and recruit police officers that wanted to stay here. Because a lot of times, you get police accreditation from one agency, and you go to another agency with that. His thing was, if you can recruit the officer, then recruit them to the City itself. That will make them stay. I think in the last couple of years, we've been holding steady with people, not losing as we're gaining. So I think last year was first time we had --

A. (Sergeant Powers) Lowest number.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. When he recruit them, how did he keep them? In Baltimore, we get them, when they get through the training, they gone.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) We still have that to
certain extent. I mean, I don't think there's any avoiding that entirely.

Q. I think they did a bonus for a little while in Baltimore. Like, they give them a bonus after.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I think the pay increase, then there's the take-home car policy. It's little things. Some places have it where they don't have academies, and some people's hometowns they don't have academy. So they'll go somewhere else and get the training. They just want to be home. So you're never going to stop that angle of it. But I think the main focus is now getting people to feel like this is a career again and not just a job.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I think there was a bunch of little things. For example, when you graduated from the police academy, you went out into the field as a field recruit, and then you were a field recruit through the field training program, and then you would eventually become promoted to police officer 1, then you were a police officer, and then you would start your probationary period as a police officer.
officer. So we went and told them, look, why not eliminate that? Why not promote them to police officer when they graduate the academy? They're police officers, right. They're putting on the same uniform, doing the same job. They're police officers. Then that way, you engage officers, they get the bump up from recruit to police officer earlier. They have 6 months less probationary period, and they get to be police officers instead of recruits. And I think that those things matter to those. And he was very receptive to that. And ultimately, we implemented that quickly. I think the next academy class that graduated was exactly that way, where they went from being a recruit in the academy to being a police officer instead of being a field recruit. I think that was successful. So, I mean, little things like that lend themselves to holding on to people.

A. (Sergeant Powers) Also, one time, the state police had raised trooper's, basic trooper's salary to almost double that of police officer salary, you know, incoming. So when they instituted the pay raises and brought it up to where we were
the highest paid police officers in the region, that helped, because now we were higher paid than Jefferson Parish. We were almost level with a regular trooper in the state. So that helped there.

He started bringing in the new SUVs. They said, okay, you are a training officer, this SUV is your take-home. And your senior police officer on the platoon, you've been here the longest, this SUV is your take-home. Take-home policy removes, you had to live in Orleans Parish to take home a car. Of course, they amended it, that if you got one of them brand new SUVs, you had to stay in Orleans Parish. But we're arguing. They're supposed to be taking that out, as well. And then removed the -- we had people who were living in Orleans Parish who lived in The Rigolets, which is pretty far out there, and they worked at police headquarters. They stayed more than 20 miles from their place of assignment. So they had to pay a higher fee. We argued with the department, and Mike backed us up, going to the CEO and said, you know what, this doesn't make any sense. They live in Orleans Parish, period. Doesn't matter how far they
live from their work assignment. If they live in Orleans Parish, it's one amount. If you live outside of Orleans Parish, but less than 60 miles away, it's another amount. If you live more than 60 miles away, you can't take that vehicle home unless you get your permission from your chief.

That was it.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) At the same time, I think that's somewhat unavoidable, you know. I was talking to a group of -- a class of police recruits in the academy a couple of months ago. There was one guy that stood up and said, well, should I join the FOP, I mean, I'm only here so that I can get a job with the feds, you know. What can you do about that, right?

A. (Sergeant Powers) Of course, they say that, and then I get an e-mail from the state trooper who says, I'd like to become a member of the FOP.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. One of the biggest challenges we have in Baltimore is drug and gang violence. Can you speak to -- well, one, is that an issue here? And if so,
can you speak to Mr. Harrison's approach to it?

A. (Mr. Livaccari) I mean, we have drug problems, yes. I think our gang problems may be a little different from other -- I don't know about Baltimore specifically. But we have more smaller, loosely-organized groups that they call gangs, you know. They did, I think, a fairly good job of interacting with, like, U.S. attorney's office and

DA's office and trying to come up with new and invent ways to deal with these folks. And I think the most recent thing was that they were charging them as RICO violations, right. So they worked with the DA's office and the feds to do that. I think they did a pretty good job. They made some pretty big cases with those. It's not like the Bloods and the Crips, though, typical big gangs.

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) He started that gang unit, he had that started, where he took some officers from district general assignment units and formulated an actual gang unit, which would focus on that. Then there's also the Tiger Team, which they did specialized investigations to address those type of issues only. So they weren't doing regular calls
for service. That was their focus and their mission was to address that.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Was Tiger Harrison’s thing?

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I think the gang unit was on Serpas going out and Harrison coming in. But the Tiger was his, yes.

A. (Mr. Livaccari) Tiger was a nice unit.

They were specifically -- the unit was implemented to address nonfatal shootings, so that they could focus on nonfatal shootings. I think it was fairly successful. Eventually, I think they expanded it to include armed robberies, but it was successful.

Q. Anything else we need to know about Mr. Harrison?

A. (Sergeant Jenkins) I think you’re getting somebody who’s going to dedicate himself to the department and what every citizen of that city wants it to be. And he’s one that wants the community and the police department to be a partnership. He really strongly believes in that.

And if you paid attention, we haven’t had many attacks on police officers like you see across
the country. And I think that's more of a testament of how he have officers thinking that you are part of this community. And that is why you need to be the best police officer you can be.

I think if he is confirmed, I think you guys are going to get that. It may take a little while, and it may take some grumbling from the officers, but when they understand that his approach to it is not to dissatisfy them, but to have everybody meet in the middle, I think it's going to be a good situation.

A. (Sergeant Powers) Yes. I walked Bourbon Street with him in his early years, you know, and he's always been compassionate about, we got to take care of each other, take care of each other and take care of the community, but you got to take care of each other first. So we had programs where we was looking out for the guys who were out there beating the street, because, you know, a lot of guys who sit down and make policy don't know what it is to walk on the street. And until you get that in your head, that, hey, I've been there, done that, have the scars to prove it, yes, I can make this policy,
because it's going to be better for all of us and not just for one of us.

Q. Thank you for your time.
INTERVIEW OF COUNCILWOMAN HELENA MORENO:

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based policing practices?

A. Very well. Very well. He has been really an amazing reformer to the department, and also built up a leadership team to also be part of these reforms. As you know, we're under a consent decree. And we recently had an update on the consent decree where now we are on the point we have no negative findings, which is really great. For so long, in fact when the consent decree first started, everything was in the red. I mean, there really were no positives. And now to the point where we are, you know, in the green, and we have no more negative findings, and everything is moving in the right direction, I have to tell you that so much of that is because of Chief Harrison.

Q. Are there other things -- I guess the consent decree process started before he got here, I guess navigating the challenges on the street,
right. So one of the things that we hear in our
department, we’re also on the consent decree, which
was signed January 2017, was that officers felt like
ey couldn’t do their jobs or were fearful of doing
their jobs, with the threats of lawsuits or
violating the consent decree. Is that something
that you’ve heard?

A. I think that’s probably always the first
reaction to change, that there’s a different way of
doing things, but it’s a better way of doing things.
And I think that Chief Harrison was able to move
that message all the way down through his
department. And, you know, the officers who he
moved up through different channels to be leaders
also kept passing on that message to wherever --
whatever districts that they were commanding. So,
yes, that change had to happen. And change is
difficult. And I’m sure you would hear those
things, but we were able to get past that and
through it, to become a very different police
department, and actually now one that is a model
police department, that you have different cities
all across the country trying to model.
Q. We've heard that a lot around the training. Can you talk a little bit about some of the training practices that he's implemented?

A. I mean, I don't know as far as specifics on training. I can tell you what has happened with the training academy. So the training academy for when the consent decree first started and the monitors went in, there were really, like, zero type of specific teaching plans. I mean, it was just kind of all over the place. So there were a lot of reforms to the academy. So the academy has been completely transformed.

I can tell you that recruitment is at a different level than it used to be. The amount of progress that we've made there is significant, according to our monitors. But as far as, like, very specific things, you know, I haven't been in the academy, so I don't know, or the specific conversations about the academy.

Q. That's fair. We hit recruitment. Do you consider Mr. Harrison to be a responsible steward of the police budget?

A. Oh, yes, I do. I do. And, you know, when
there were issues, he would come to the council and explain why there were issues with the budget. What I really liked about Chief Harrison is, he was always very -- I served in the Louisiana legislature before I got on the council. So if we were dealing with legislative issues, and he needed to tell us something, he was always very up front with legislators. And when I became part of the city council, when there were any issues that we needed to know about, he was the one to come and tell us, you know. He was very open about his dialogue and very honest about what the situation is, so that we could have a better understanding as to how to address it. So when there were some budget issues, he would come to us and say, this is why, you know, there are some budget issues. Maybe we had a specific event that happened that was unforeseen, and our overtime went too high, this is what's happened, this is how I'm now working to bring that back, to scale that back. So I've always found him to be very frank and honest and, yes, a very good steward of the public's money.

Q. Looking into your background, looks like
you've done a lot of work around domestic violence.

A. Yes.

Also, before you go, I did want to tell you, I chair and created the human trafficking task force in Baltimore City.

A. Oh, wow. Yes.

We have a delegation coming here from the mayor's office, police department, district attorney's office in a few weeks. If I could get your card --

A. You got it. Absolutely.

-- that would be great if you'd speak to them.

A. That would be fantastic.

Thank you.

Sure.

Yes, I was told you were the person to talk to. I won't be coming back down. I can't make two trips, try to stay out of trouble.

But can you talk a little bit about the department's work in supporting victims and that work?

A. Sure. So a few years back, it was
determined that we had significant issues with how
victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
victims, as well, and how their cases were being
investigated and how the department was falling
short. Instead of ignoring the problem or running
away from the situation or making excuses, instead,
the chief jumped right in and started making serious
changes to that specific division. And he got with
the mayor's office, created a task force to come up
with -- got with many experts from Tulane
University, got with myself as well. And we came up
with a comprehensive plan as to how we could serve
victims better and how investigations could be
improved. Brought in even the state police crime
lab folks as to how they could help, as well.
So that has totally been revamped to now,
once again, a model system. I would say that we are
the best in the state as to how victims of sexual
assault and domestic violence are treated. I wish
we were best in the country, but I'll take best in
the state for right now. I'd like anybody to
challenge me on that, because it's because of
reforms that Chief Harrison has made that we're in
Now, are we perfect? No, we’re not. Can we still make advancements? Absolutely. Can investigations be better? They always can be. But we’re in a much better place than where we used to be. And I will say this: That is what I’ve always liked about Chief Harrison, that when a problem arises, he runs to it and focuses on how to fix it. He is not the type to just say, whatever, let me blame somebody else. He owns it, and he fixes it.

Q. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison’s ability to prioritize and connect with marginalized community groups; race, gender, sexual orientation --

A. Yes.

Q. -- disabilities, homeless, LGBT --

A. Yes.

Q. -- immigrants?

A. There’s been a lot of outreach during his tenure towards all of those groups, particularly the LGBTQ community. Our transgender community in particular, you know, felt at one point that they were not getting the attention that they needed.
And there were several community meetings that the chief held, several outreach types of task forces that were created to specifically reach out to those communities. And once again, you know, can it be better? Yes, it can. It can always be better. But, yes, he was always about, you know, making sure that the NOPD was for every citizen in New Orleans.

Q. Anything else that we need to know or you think we should know about?

A. Look, I'm just sad we're losing him. I'm happy for you-all. You are getting a really tremendous man. I had the opportunity to know the chief for quite some time from before he became chief. He's always been a very honorable officer and someone who's been a great leader for the department and always been a man about the community, about the people of the city and really cared about the people of this city.

I don't know how much people told you about him personally, but he's also very active in his church here. And his church has had a bunch of different ceremonies for him recently, because he's going to be leaving, and I went to one of them.
24 He's just -- in everything that he does, he just
25 puts, whether it's his family first or whether the
26 people of New Orleans first or whether it's the
27 other parishioners in his church, he always just
28 puts just the community first. That's what I've
29 always liked about him. Like I said, we're just
30 really sad to lose him.
31 Q. Are there any things that you think he can
32 improve on, or in making that transition to
33 Baltimore that he may struggle with?
34 A. I think, you know, I think what's going to
35 be hard for him is, he's going into a brand new
36 city. He's known New Orleans. And I told him this,
37 you know. I mean, it's like you've got to start
38 from scratch. And, obviously, he's got the
39 experience of how to reform a department, how to
40 build a department, how to build leaders. But, you
41 know, these are all new people that he's meeting.
42 And he's starting again from the beginning, you
43 could almost say, and a new city. So those are
44 going to be challenges, but not challenges that I
45 don't think he can overcome.
46 BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:
Q. I just want to say something real quick.

We've been moving around talking to people. This is almost scary, I mean, in a good way. We haven't heard absolutely nothing -- his outreach, his demeanor, the kind of person he is, it's almost like he's perfect. I say that because in the last, what, year and a half, we done had, like, four police commissioners. And other one before Mr. Harrison kind of fell through the cracks.

A. Right.

Q. Because I chair, he's the vice chair, and it's going to be so much easier when we get back to Baltimore to confirm him, because it's unbelievable.

A. Correct.

Q. I met him last Friday, and I pick up exactly what you're saying. It's immediate the kind of person he is. He's really genuine. You can tell honest people.

A. Just know what you see is what you get.

He's never going to, you know, try to spin you a certain way. He's just going to give you the truth.

By giving you the truth, you're going to be able to make better decisions, because you know what you're
really dealing with it.

Q. That's funny. When I met him I said, you're a pastor?

A. Yes. He's a good one, too.

Q. He said, well, let me explain to you, I didn't come here to pastor.

A. Right.

Q. But I like him. I told him from the beginning, this is going to make it so much easier on our colleagues and city council, because some of the stuff we went through with commissioners. We drill this down, this is first time that council in Baltimore really went out and vetted whoever the nominee the mayor had. Usually the mayor nominates, you just get a résumé, and you just vote it in.

This is the first time it happened in Baltimore City. So we've been hearing a lot here. We heard some other places about people like that. So this might be something that we're setting a whole new vetting process throughout the city about how they pick their police commissioner and go vet them.

I use the example of the guy before him. They sent stuff, Fitzgerald talking about he got a
no-confidence vote. Well, when you come there, you

19 don’t see it. But when we got down there, the

20 previous two commissioners had got a no confidence

21 vote. But when it came to us, it just said him. So

22 when you vet, you learn other little stuff that you

23 don’t get the whole picture of.

24 A. Right.

25 Q. We’re looking forward. We appreciate

y’all letting us steal him.

2 A. Sure. Thanks so much.
Q. We have read conflicting reporting on whether the NOPD will come into full compliance with the consent decree ahead of or behind schedule. What are your thoughts on the speed of which NOPD has made progress implementing reforms, and how has Mr. Harrison done in terms of leading the reform efforts mandated by the consent decree?

A. So I guess let me give you a little bit about my background. I think Mike and I are about 2 years apart. Kind of went to rivalry high schools together, but had the same circle of friends. I spent 8 years at the police department after graduating from college. Left there in 2003, went to the district attorney's office, and spent the last 15 years there. Part of that was coming out of 2011, 2012, is when this consent decree sort of occurred. And Mike was actually a lieutenant, I believe, at the time that it was being implemented. And then after Serpas left, he came in, like, right at the 2 year or year and a half, like, right when
it was actually put into place moving forward.

The consent decree is something that actually by far should have happened. I think NOPD made very great strides. I am convinced that we are, like, 100 percent compliant. We still have some work to do. But considering how I view the police department from 1996 to 2003, it has totally changed.

Mike was very instrumental in making sure that all of these reforms that were presented by the federal judge, the federal monitors, everything that was presented to him as a police chief, he made sure that it got implemented. It's very hard to teach an old dog new tricks. So with that being said, you have a lot of older veteran police officers that pretty much kind of fought the consent decree, period. But you had a lot of good people that knew that this is something that we, as a city, as a police department, needed to invest in, so that we can be in the 21st policing in the 21st century.

I have actually disagreed with some of the police monitors and federal judge. I think -- and this is just my opinion, but I think any time you take a police department, and you take personnel from a police department to bring to other cities,
so that other cities can see what you're doing as a police department and all the strides that you've made, why are we not 100 percent compliant. We had to have been doing something right when people from New York has come here. We've gone to New York. We've been to Philly. So we got to be doing something right for these other police departments to actually want to model behind what we're doing and to adopt the things that we're doing.

I do commend Mike. He did a fantastic job of getting all the recommendations that was put forward moving. I think we're, like, right at, I want to say, 93 percent. Other people say we're, like, 80-something percent, but that's a whole another story. But he's very passionate. He worked very hard at making sure he had the right people in place to get things done very effectively, efficiently, and making sure that they were knowledgeable about what needed to be done. And I think he is to be commended for a job well done as far as the consent decree and getting all the demands that was made by an unreasonable judge, to say the least, to get us where we are.
Q. Okay. There's a wealth of information online related to NOPD's compliance with the federally-mandated consent decree. Can you talk a little bit about what, in your experience, Superintendent Harrison may struggle with as he prepares to tackle Baltimore's consent decree?

A. I don't think he's really going to have -- I don't think he's going to struggle, in the sense that the only struggles I foresee that he may have is going to be in the very initial stages. Because, once again, he came in when Serpas was actually the superintendent at the time. Serpas was the one who was actually given the consent decree, like, formulating it, making sure, putting in posture. Then I think a year, maybe 18 months after, they actually signed the agreement saying that the city will enter into the consent decree. Then Serpas soon after left. So I'm thinking just in the beginning stages, but I'm sure he can be brought up to speed on that piece, because we enter year 4, 5 years, or whatever it is, and he's done a remarkable job.

So I don't think that little hindrance of
not having him at the beginning, discussion points, formulating, is going to hinder him from actually carrying out the consent decree. He's handled the bulk of it, and he's handled the most important pieces, I think, in my opinion. I think anybody can sit at the table formally and just agree, agree to MOUs, and whatever it is in the beginning stages, but actually implementing and carrying that plan out is the most important. And I think he's done a fair job with doing that.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. In Baltimore, we've heard stories of officers being afraid to engage after the consent decree was signed in January 2017. And we saw sort of a slow-down, at least perceived one. Did Mr. Harrison face similar challenges here with trying to motivate officers to continue to do work constitutionally? You hit on a little bit about the old dog, new tricks. Can you expound?

A. Yes. I think for the most part, when you have an old regime, and you have people, older guys are accustomed to doing things one way. And, you know, that's just like you have kids. You've been
something wrong for so long, you think it's right, right. So that's sort of the mindset. And when the consent decree did come into play, you had sort of a mass exodus of people now wanting to retire, but you're talking about people that have been on the job for 30-plus years, 40-plus years, who, in my opinion and from what I've researched and kind of kept track of, like, bye, no love loss, sort of kind of that perception, if you will, because y'all would have had a problem with the consent decree, because y'all don't want to do things decent and in order. So you want to keep doing things that actually cause us to become part of a consent decree. So it was just, like, good, out with the old, in with the new trained people, fresh trained people to do 21st policing in a very constitutional way. So I think he struggled a little bit, but I don't think it was much of a struggle for him. It was, like, the older guys, look, I'm not hanging around to be a part of this. But at some point, from the officers that I've actually had interactions with, it's just been that the consent decree caused a lot more paperwork
for them to do. So it’s just trying to figure out how do I incorporate actually not being able to interact with the community versus if I’m going call to call to call, I don’t have that extra time. Even if I had that extra time, where I would get out the car and walk up and engage people in the community that are sitting on the stoop, I can’t do that anymore, because now I have to fill out this paperwork. So that’s the piece of the only real struggles I think they had as it relates to that and just trying to wrap their minds around, like, I have more paperwork to do. Everything is more paperwork. So it takes away from community policing, in the eyes of the guys who are actually out there on the ground.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison’s ability to implement community-based policing practices, and can you speak to specific examples; policing where the same officers that work in the same area on a permanent basis, working in a proactive partnership with citizens to identify and solve problems?
A. Yes. Michael is very good at engaging the community. He was part of the community. He was a -- before he became a chief, he actually did some undercover work. He did stints in PID. He was in the 7th District, the district where I live. He was very engaging in that particular district, you know, attended all the community events, organized community events for the district.

He is a very spiritual man. So he's always led efforts where we can pull the communities together. And he's always been one to try and get the youth together, if it wasn't anything else, getting the youth and the poor people, just giving them a sense. Because in New Orleans, we have a culture that, you know, police can't be trusted. That's just -- that's how it is in an urban city.

Like, nobody trusts the police. Mike has always been that police officer, like, he can get people to talk to him. He's always had that comfort level with people. People felt comfortable with him. He's done a lot. So I don't really know -- and I've done a lot, too. So I know he's been all over the place. But he's always been
part of the community. Like, he could go nowhere, and people will embrace him, say, hey, Chief, what about this idea. He's, like, all right, call my secretary. And he actually does respond. That was the most important thing for people, because we did have a couple of people in past administration that was not hands-on, sort of thing. But Mike has always been involved in the community and made sure that the police department participated in some form of community engagement.

Q. Can you speak of a time that Mr. Harrison successfully negotiated a difficult item in the police union’s MOU, such as pension reform, overtime policy?

Q. (Mr. Davis) So that may be one, considering what we heard from the FOP, because you guys don't have that here.

A. I don't deal, and I'm not -- I have never been to an FOP panel, any of those.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Can you just speak broadly about his ability to conduct top-to-bottom policy review changes; has he incorporated an equity lens in
policy implementation and tracking? And I guess

sort of speaking about the training programs that
he's implemented or continued or expanded in NOPD.

A. I'm not really sure about -- I know they
did an overhaul of the education and training. And
the policy and procedure piece was sort of kind of
handled by his deputy chief, Eric Melancon, which
actually Eric did a very -- is very bright, did a
very good job with implementing new strategies as it
relates to trying to recruit and retain new
recruits. So they did a whole lot of work. And he
was instrumental with getting Eric.

Eric is very, very bright. I'm, like, are
you leaving? He's, like, I don't know. I'm, like,
that would be a great loss for us too, as well. But
when Eric came on, he took it to a whole another
level. Mike was actually instrumental in getting
Eric -- they worked together to do some reforms at
the academy. Of course, that was during the time I
was still at the DA's office. I really don't know a
whole lot, but only from what I read and things that
was presented to the DA's office, when they were
going back with the new policy changes and
implementation on things that they wanted to see happen.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers if necessary?

A. Mike's been very fair. Some officers may not think so, but when you look at the case as a whole, and you go back, like, no, he's done everything the proper way. It wasn't no cutting the corners because, oh, that's my academy buddy or we rode together 10 years ago. It was the same discipline whether it was my partner or not. He had a very fair process in place here. And I think for the most part that it works. Of course, you're always going to have disgruntled officers, because it doesn't work in your favor, they did me wrong, right. That's always the same. But for the most part, Mike has always been fair. And that's why we have a PID department. He made sure that the staff was -- deputy chief there who was fair and impartial and can actually render the discipline that's set forth in the policy.
8 and procedure manual.

9 Q. How has Mr. Harrison created an
10 environment where his officers can get the support
11 they need; for equipment/technology, handle trauma,
12 to back them up when they are correct?
13 A. He has partnership with the New Orleans
14 Police and Justice foundation, which is one of the
15 hugest, biggest partners within the police
16 department. They have been very supportive of Mike,
17 whatever his ask is, whatever the implementations
18 are, if they feel like -- go to officer-involved
19 shooting, want to make sure to get the officer
20 counseling, whether they need it or not, just
21 pushing and driving that force.
22 We just had one, the first one this year.
23 That went very well. Luckily, the officer was
24 saved, returned back to work a few days later. It
25 was Mike on the ground at the hospital; like, hey,

1 this is what we got planned for you, this is what we
2 got set up. Unfortunately, the officer is like, no,
3 I’m good, I’m ready to go back to work. He has put
4 mechanisms in place, people in place, foundations in
5 place that can actually assist. It’s a little
different here, because everything here the police
department is through civil service. So we have to
have a partnership with a foundation or nonprofit in
order to get the police what they need outside of
the general fund budget.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. How would you characterize his ability to
prioritize and connect with marginalized groups;
around race, gender, sexual orientation, people with
disability, the homeless, LGBTQ community, immigrant
communities? Sort of speaking broadly there.
A. I've never seen him have a problem. For
most of us, the LGBT is rather new, racial
disparities, all of that is coming more to fruition
now. So all of us are working towards trying to
include that in all of our -- including me, as
criminal justice commissioner, we are working on
ways how to include that. But Mike has always been
inclusive of all groups.

Rallies, we've had very peaceful rallies.

He's actually spoken at rallies, you know. Gay,
lesbian rights, the gay pride parade, he's always a
part of that. Had police officers who are in that
gay and lesbian parade. Actually, they participated in the gay pride parade, is what we call it here in New Orleans. And that was, like, the first of many, because you don't see that sort of comradery and them taking part of something that could actually put you out there more of a threat to, you know, people that do not like that sort of lifestyle. So that was a good thing.

Last year was the first year that that actually took place. We had about 25 police officers that took part in the parade, and they were in uniform and were there. So he has that connection. It's just that with the LGBT and the racial ethnic disparity, we are all working together as a city trying to figure out how do we incorporate them more, even with the hiring processes.

Q. Okay. I guess I'll jump to the last thing you said. How does he approach police recruitment and retention?

A. They have struggled. And we're struggling to keep -- to get the recruiting piece. That is, like, the number one thing, I think, in the last consent decree report. We are not where we need to
be with the recruiting piece. But when I was asked about this a couple of weeks ago, I said, if you keep putting the tests that you have for people to recruit, you ain't going to ever get nobody. And it's just honest.

I mean, you can't have a test where you have college math on it, and you having somebody that graduated from high school take a test, and they fail the math part, because it's calculus, precalculus, all this other stuff that they ain't never had. So I'm like, so something ain't right. Something ain't clicking. Somebody ain't talking to each other. They need to go back and really look at what test they're preparing to give to these people. Because if you're saying that you just need a high school diploma to apply to the police, why do you have college math, college history, college physics on any police test, if you don't need any of that to be a police officer? You just need a high school diploma. So that's part of the issues.

And the other issue is, we don't recruit enough of our young people here or people in general in the city. Most of our recruits -- we just had a graduation on Wednesday. It was 20 recruits that
1 graduated that became new police officers. They had
2 one female, one African-American female out of 20.
3 You have four African-American males out the entire
4 class. You had 15 people that were from away, as
5 far as Argentina. Right.
6 So we're not doing enough, in my opinion,
7 to recruit the people that you have in your city,
8 because it's more important to have a police
9 department populated to what your city population
10 is. You need to be geographically in line with
11 that. You can tell the difference a little bit,
12 because if I'm not from here, and you know how us
13 New Orleanians talk; huh, y'all, it's hard for the
14 people, the guys coming from Argentina -- it's going
15 to take a little time to build relationships with
16 people in the community, so that they can better
17 relate to people, because it's totally different.
18 So that's one of the things that we do struggle
19 with. We're trying to find ways to address that.
20 And that's part of the consent decree.
21 Like, we have the best training. Other
22 places pay the police officers to come and train,
23 and we actually -- they have to pay the police
department. We actually pay them to come and get trained. So what we find is that the people that are not from here, they come here, they get the best training. We have the best show on earth, the free show every year, Mardi Gras. You can't get no better than that, right. They come, and they leave after 2 years, and they go somewhere else, and they don't have to go through anybody else's academy, because they're POST certified. So it's good in a sense, but we have to find ways to retain those people. And if we're not having a retention plan in place, then we're going to struggle from here on out.

Q. Okay. So one of the challenges that we have in Baltimore are gang violence and drug trafficking. Through a lot of conversations we've had already, some of the feedback we've got is that they don't really have gangs as much as sort of neighborhood-based groups. Can you talk about his approach; one, is that true?

A. So we don't have -- yes, I can talk about that piece.

Q. And how he's addressed it.
A. I was at the district attorney, I was a deputy chief investigator there. So under my watch, we worked very closely with the police department, right next door, of course. But we have -- we don't have organized gangs. We have unorganized gangs. So we have a slew of unorganized gangs.

So back in 2015, '16, the DA decided to create a gang unit within our office. So it was in conjunction with, actually, we could have the unit, but the thought process is, why have a unit, when we need the police to be a part of what we're trying to do. So went to Mike. He came, we had a meeting. He created the gang unit. It's called the MAG unit; the multiagency gang unit. It was about four guys that actually had worked in plainclothes. They had done some kind of undercover surveillance work before, and then a couple of guys came from narcotics. So he formed that unit. It worked very well. We were able to get quite a few drug -- I mean, heavy drug traffickers off the street. It got to the point where we started getting them, they started rolling over on the other guys that was out here. So it was, like, that worked very well.
After we got that set off the street -- it was Washington, the 110, 3&G gang, it was about 15 or 18 of them. They were all arrested, and they all pled guilty. We were able to build a case with the guys that Mike actually formed with the MAG unit, build the case where we was actually to work with the feds. So we used the RICO statute. So they not only got charged in state court, we were able to present that case by the work that was done with MAG unit that Mike created to actually get them longer sentence. That worked very well.

After that, it slowed down a little bit, because everybody -- you know how it works, big wash, and all of them are gone, so everybody started just kind of laying low. Then it started resurfacing maybe about last year. We did real well. We didn't have a whole lot of gang arrests in that magnitude, but there are still -- we have a lot of unorganized gangs. But they are so young, some of them are juveniles, which is whole another animal in itself, but, like, the 21-year-olds, the 20-year-olds.

So Mike has been very instrumental. That
is one of his stronger points, because, one, he's done surveillance, and he's worked in gang unit before. He was in narcotics for a while. So he knew what needed to be done. But he was in agreeance when the DA said, hey, this is my thought process, we got to do something with this drug trafficking, because it's killing us. It was from the murders, the guns, the drugs. So we got together, the DA, okay, this is what we want to do. We can only get it done if we had backing from the superintendent.

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to address institutional bias and racism within the department?

A. I mean, for the most part, just like any other supervisor, he handled to the best of his ability. Now, can he do things better, or can he have policy changes within the police department? I'm sure it's room for improvement in that area. But once again, that comes from your policy and procedure, the people that's making the policies for the police department. So I just think having -- if he has more buy in wanting to see, you know, state
this is what I want to see, I think it will, you
know, work. But for the most part, I think he's
handled it as best as any management.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. Do you consider Mr. Harrison a responsible
steward of the police department's budget?

A. I think for the most part he has done very
well, considering. We have the strangest budget
processes here. Please don't ask me that. I came
here, I'm like, what the heck is this? Because this
was my first time dealing with budgets. I came in
with Cantrell. I'm, like, this is foreign to me.

Like, what is this? Somebody is, like, welcome to
my world. Yes, welcome to your world. We need to
sit down and talk about -- but he handled it to the
best -- the city is always changing.

I know we had an issue with the -- they
kind of touched on the overtime the police was
making. But the fact was that a lot of things,
people don't think about all of the special events
that we have. When you have a shortage of police,
you have to be able to -- you have all these bowls
coming, you're hosting this party. That takes
14 manpower. I think once people understood, that it
15 was better. We got to get our minds around
16 monitoring your overtime a little bit better.
17 Then that goes back to maybe if you start
18 charging people the proper way for permits and all
19 that, you can recoup some of that money. So it
20 wasn't always on the police. But that was what it
21 appeared to be, because we had to staff these
22 events; Bayou Classic, New Year's Eve, all that
23 extra French Quarter stuff. All that takes
24 manpower. You have to be able to budget that money.
25 So for the most part, he's done well with the

1  budget. He did get some slack from the city council
2  on police overtime.
3  Q. Can you speak to Mr. Harrison's ability to
4  implement data-driven policing practices?
5  A. Yes. That's all he likes to do. I'm,
6  like, do not -- I have one of the guys that works in
7  my office, Nathaniel Weaver, he actually -- I
8  actually stole him when I came in May. He worked
9  for the Police and Justice Foundation. He actually
10 formulated all of the NOPD's databases. He's
11 created all of their databases. So I told Mike, do
not ask Nathaniel, now that I have him, to create another database for you-all to use. He's, like,
yes, I got one that I'm thinking about.
But on a serious note, Mike is very data driven. And he has required his deputy chiefs to be following that same pattern, because he knows how important it is for us to be able to get that data, capture the data, and make sure we're interpreting the data the right way before we kind of put things out there; like, oh, we're 40 percent down murder rate, I need to see data. So he's very conscientious about data and very data driven.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:
Q. So to expound on that: So it looks like, from what we read in our local paper, that murders are down to 146 last year, which is fewest in half a century, but looks like overall violent crime has gone up. Can you give us some context as to what may be going on there or what the data may be showing to that last point?
A. So I'd say, I'm just going to put it out there. They were not very happy with me. I'm like, why are y'all so happy about 146, 7 murders? That
was just 6 less than what we had last year. I was being, like, we had 248 shootings, 404 victims. Nobody said nothing about that. So it got people to thinking, well, that's not good. We had a great homicide rate. That is a blessing in itself, because I was at the department when Pennington came. I think we were 398 for the year. That was heartbreaking. But I say that to say that's the overall, if you go back and look at the entire country, that was the trend for last year. Homicides was down everywhere.

Q. (Councilman Stokes) Except in Baltimore, unfortunately.

A. Except in Baltimore. Right. But it's just that you go back to thinking about all the issues that the city has working, too, to attribute to where we are. We just got the reentry program. The governor is releasing his criminal justice reforms. So everybody is changing the way that we actually, you know, handle the criminal justice. So you may have more opportunities for people that's coming from that lifestyle, who's actually changing and getting away from the violence.
Now, we still have a problem with pulling the door handles and the armed robberies, but that's being committed more by juveniles. That's what we're finding. That's what our data is showing. It's not people from 29 to 40. It's really the younger kids, 12 and 17, that people are afraid to look at. If they see them, they're going the other way.

That's where we are. This year, we've only had 9 murders so far, knock on wood. So that's been great, because in January of last year, we had 19. So we're at 9, we're February 1st. So we're good.

Q. He's moving down here.
A. Come on down. We'll be glad to have you.
So we only have 9 for the 1st of the year.
So that's great. But to answer your question, I just think that's where we are.

Q. Sure.
A. I'm not really excited --
Q. I share that opinion, by the way, as well, when we talk about the data, nonfatal. Thank goodness for shock trauma, because there could be
more numbers.

A. Right. And that's just where I am. I do
care about -- I'm glad for the 146, but we still
need to address the 248 shootings that we have,
because you still have to be able to connect what
happened if you had 10 victims from that 248 that
actually turned into 30. So you got 10 extra bodies
to add to that 146. We have to find ways to address
the nonfatal shootings.

We also have to find a way -- the police
department here has got to find a way to connect
detectives that handle the nonfatal shootings with
the homicide division. They don't talk. And that's
my pet peeve, because I come from doing homicide
investigation at the DA's office. So I'm very
strong when it comes to homicide. I get livid when
people don't do it right. It's just that we need to
make sure that moving forward, that your detectives
that's handling nonfatal be able to communicate with
the guys that's working homicides, because that's
very important. Because if I'm not talking to you,
and you're working a case, I may have all the
information that led to your murder from the
shooting that happened 6 months ago. So that's one
of the things that was kind of like a breakdown for
us.

Q. Anything else we need to know?

Why do you think he wants the job? What
do you think the motivation is?

A. I think he's -- in all honesty, Mike has
got about 28 years, because I'm at 23. So I think
it's just like with anything else, you've done all
that you can do. Our mayor didn't have a problem
with him. I just think he wanted to move on,
because he's been under -- I don't think he saw we
were getting out of this consent decree, but he's
done so much work on this consent decree. And
sometimes that can put you in a whole -- it's a very
tedious process. You got to have somebody that's,
one, articulate, deal with the judge, deal with the
consent decree monitors, because they're very needy.
And you also have to monitor their budgets, too,
because, you know, I think they get paid $379 an
hour. So it's always a money deal that comes with
the consent decree. And that's why they always want
to keep you needing more, so that they can keep
But for the most part, Mike was, I think he did -- I know he did a very, very good job.

Actually, with the consent decree, I told him, you're good. I would have said, I'm out, send me back to being a commander, and y'all can handle the this foolishness. But he stuck in there, did what he needed to do, because we all have kids, born and raised here. This is, like, your home.

So I think he's just ready to move on, you know, spread his wings and actually use what he's learned here to help another city, like Baltimore, who may need what we have. Trust me, NOPD is not where we were in 1996. We probably were like where Baltimore is. But it's a transformation that actually happened, and it is a good transformation.

And I think any police department that's moving into the 21st century policing need to actually come here and see what we have done, because we have done a lot.

If you go back and compare the stats, when you have police officers, manning, working the detail on the drugs that was coming in, they had the police that was hired, murder for hire, because the
woman called in a complaint on him. He's on death row. You had the partner working the detail turn and shoot her partner, kill her partner in a robbery. It's like, we've gone through -- yes, it's been a whirlwind for all of us who's actually been with this police department for a very long time.

Q. Thank you for your time.
INTERVIEW OF MELANIE TALIA, J.D.:

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's ability to implement community-based policing practices, and can you speak to specific examples?

A. Let's see. Community-based policing practices. Well, it's a little bit unorthodox, not the traditional community-based policing practice, but a connection to the religious community. New Orleans is obviously very catholic, but we have many, many religions that worship here. And one of the things that Chief Harrison implemented while he was here was an interfaith advisory committee. I think there were 12 different worship leaders that were on the interfaith advisory committee. Our role in that was, we would arrange a location for the chief and the clergy to meet every quarter. And the chief would communicate with them messages that he needed to get out to the community. And it's one thing to come from him. It's one thing to come from the mayor. The list goes on, not to come from the media. But when that message gets out, and it comes
from your faith leader, and it comes from the pulpit, or it comes through social media that's driven out by your faith leader, it makes a difference.

At the same time, they were able to communicate back to him concerns of their, I say, parishioners. Again, it's a New Orleans thing. Congregants, I guess, is the word I'm looking for. They were able to communicate back to him concerns that their congregants had shared with them.

Obviously, people sometimes being afraid to step forward or to go into some sort of public light and complain about the police department or the crime in their neighborhood. So that became a very effective way to communicate and to help us get a handle on some of our crime situation here.

Q. Okay. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's ability to successfully investigate and discipline officers, if necessary?

A. So I should start by saying I'm not directly involved in that process. The process I am involved in is the recruiting effort. And through that, a little bit the retention effort. And we
certainly have had, in these last few years, a
significant number of involuntary separations from
the department. Based upon that, I would think that
his ability to discipline and to enforce the rules
as they are written is quite good.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:
Q. Can you expound on the recruitment work
that's been done under his leadership and
recruitment retention and some of the strategies
that he used to address that?
A. Sure. We have a cooperative endeavor
agreement with the City of New Orleans that funds
the recruiting effort. And then we have the police
foundation has a private match to those public
moneys. And then in partnership with the police
foundation, I'm never acting -- I'm saying police
foundation -- police department, I'm never acting
unilaterally. So I have a counterpart within the
police department. Primarily, that has been Eric
Melancon, who is, I think, chief of staff. And then
we also have a counterpart at our civil service
office. So together, we work -- and then we also
keep in communication with the mayor's office. So
together we work toward recruiting officers.

We launched our recruiting effort mid-2013, is when we started. At that point in the game, the police department was still a paper-driven recruiting division. The application was a 22-page handwritten application. It had to be mailed to you. You couldn't do anything online. It was antiquated, to say the least. So we immediately took that to apply online scenario. We went from about 300 applications in the year 2013, to more than 7,000 applications in the last year or so.

With that, we've managed to hire 500 police officers in the last 3 to 4 years, I guess. Took us a while to keep up with that. Took us a while to get to a positive number and then to get to a double digit positive number. We're there. We're not as far along as we'd like to be, but we're there. And we've worked on a lot of other ways to increase the number of test takers and the ability to get people to New Orleans.

As an example, we think we should have national testing. So that's something we've been working with, particularly Eric Melancon, in identifying a vendor who can host our civil service
exam. There are lots of testing organizations out there, but very few of them are able to project a short video, and then have the test taker follow up with questions. So that's an example of our recruiting effort.

Q. So we understand that the department has done very important work on reforming sexual misconduct policies in New Orleans. What type of partner has Mr. Harrison been in this effort, and has he been supportive of reforms the way NOPD handles cases on sexual assault?

A. So this is terrible; I'm not sure that he was superintendent at the time. I would say he certainly is supportive of handling sexual assault cases properly and expeditiously.

The police department was, not so very long ago, in the news for its poor handling of sexual assault cases. As I recall, Paul Noel was tasked with digging into the problems in the sex offender unit and finding out what's wrong and making it right, not only going forward, but going back into cases that had been investigated, to see if they were investigated properly or not; and
certainly where not, to make sure that those cases
were revisited by the proper persons and with the
proper eye and with the proper attention. So with
that, I would say he's absolutely onboard to make
sure sexual assault offenses, and I'll add domestic
violence to that, that those cases are handled
properly and constitutionally.

Q. Why do you think he wants the job?
A. Well, I don't want him to go. So let's
start with that. I'd rather he stay. I feel like
that's a bad thing for me to say about Chief
Ferguson, and I don't mean it that way.

Why do I think he would want this job?

Wow. So my familiarity with Chief Harrison goes
back to when he was a young police officer. At that
time, I was a brand new assistant district attorney.

So we had some interaction together in the
courtroom. As Officer Harrison, like so many young
officers are, very eager, always came to court. He
wasn't somebody I had to beat the streets down. He
didn't ignore his subpoena. He was properly
attired. He communicated well with the jury and
didn't try to make things better than they are.
This is the case, right. You either try it like it is, and you either win it or you don't, and that's that. So then I think we sort of -- he began his climb through his organization and I through mine.

And then we come back together when he is ultimately superintendent, and I'm at the police foundation. I think he likes being a police officer. I think he enjoys law enforcement. 30 years ago, even 20-something years, certainly wasn't something he did for the money. I went to the DA's office, and my gross annual salary was $18,000. Not enough to pay my student loans, but that's what I wanted to do. And at the time, the police officers were in a very similar position. So you're not in it for the money, and you're not in it for the glory, that's for sure. But I think that he enjoys policing. I think that he's committed to public service. And for us, it has been New Orleans all these many years. I think that in Baltimore, you would see the same thing.

Q. How would you describe his ability to build relationships with community leaders?

A. That's one thing I would tell you, he
Chief Harrison has had a knack, how's that, for communicating with people that's different than our immediate superintendent, Chief Serpas. Great police leader, but different in a community sense. And that might be because of Michael's upbringing, where he grew up in the City of New Orleans, being a New Orleans guy. Not that Superintendent Serpas wasn't, but he did leave for some time and then come back; whereas, Chief Harrison was always here. New Orleans was his only law enforcement job. And just has an ability to communicate well with people, whether it's the mayor, the city council or, you know, the gentleman you're having to pick up on Bourbon Street, right.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. How would you describe Mr. Harrison's level of responsiveness to community concerns?

A. I'll have limited knowledge of that, other than at least personally limited knowledge of that. So for us, his response was always efficient and effective. It's not often that I get a phonecall, but sometimes people do find their way to the police foundation, airing a complaint or complaining about
the dope dealer on the corner or whatever it happens to be. Sometimes they confuse us with Crime Stoppers. And when we get that sort of phonecall or e-mail, and we pass it on to the police department, and some of those things are properly passed on to headquarters and others go to other places. We always keep an eye. We're not just going to say, okay, done. And he was not someone that we had to follow up to. He understood the importance of getting back to that individual and keeping us informed as to the result of the resolution of their complaint or if it was just to say I connected with that person, and we're good now.

Q. How would you characterize Mr. Harrison's ability to prioritize and connect with marginalized community groups; for example, race, gender, sexual orientation, people with disabilities or the homeless?

A. So I have not personally ever heard that complaint made of him. In New Orleans, if you didn't already know, you know now, we come in all sizes and shapes and colors, you know. So if you're someone in the City of New Orleans, and especially
New Orleans Police Department, because in the police department, you're going to encounter people from every race, from all sizes and shapes and colors. If you're not a person who can open your heart and your mind, frankly your soul, to people from all different parts of the world and from all walks of life, you're not going to thrive here. So I think his success kind of speaks for itself in his ability to communicate with and to deal with and to accept other people.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:

Q. Has Mr. Harrison implemented a standardized method to file complaints against police and track the progress of a case?

A. I think so. I would say yes to that, but I'm not part of that internal NOPD policy thing. From an outsider looking in, and sign of the cross, not having had to file a police report and go through that process for a very, very, very long time, I think that such a procedure does exist.

Q. Okay. And would you describe him -- well, I guess could you talk a little bit about the work around the consent decree and his work there? I
know he wasn't there in the very beginning, but just sort of working around constitutional policing and sort of setting that direction for the department.

My relationship to the police department, to Superintendent Harrison and the consent decree is sort of limited, because our focus has been the recruiting effort.

Q. Yes.

A. So that being said, on a larger scale, we certainly were not moving as quickly through the consent decree as we would have liked in its early days. But once the appointment of Chief Harrison was made, that seemed to -- that we turned a corner. Now, I don't know if there was a momentum building, or if there was a meeting between the new chief and the consent decree folks that allowed this gate to open. But certainly in the last, I guess it's 4 years now, we have moved at lightening speed through the consent decree.

And you know not everybody is happy about that. People don't like change. There are a lot of officers who have been around a very long time, they're not happy about the consent decree, right.
You're going to experience that now if you haven't already, but that's really neither here nor there. You're going to have to build a ship while you sail it. You're going to have to meet the requirements of the consent decree. And at the same time, you're going to have to deal with those morale issues. There's no getting around that.

I think chief has done that well. I would not begin to tell you that of the 1,200 plus men and women on the street, that they're all happy, but they're getting there. They're getting there. It's going to be a process. New Orleans didn't get to where it was overnight. And we're not going to get to where we need to be overnight. But having met almost 500 paragraphs in the last 4 years, I think we moved pretty quickly. And certainly from me, from the police foundation, the recruiting effort, that has -- it's not easy to recruit, don't misunderstand, but working together has been a very easy process, having a common goal and how are we going to get there.

BY COUNCILMAN STOKES:

Q. I just want to ask a question that's not
In terms of how New Orleans crime was, I guess you lived here all your life, and how it was, I guess it was bad, and since Chief Harrison has been here, on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate him and why?

A. Oh, let's see. On a scale of 1 to 10, I might have to come to the number last. So I've lived here all my life. When I started at the DA's office, you know, it was the early 90s. We, like a lot of the country, we had crime out of control. Corruption was rampant throughout the police department. We got officers on federal death row for drug trade and killing a woman. I personally prosecuted the New Orleans Police Department vice squad. They were shaking down bars on Bourbon Street, letting them run wild and loose in exchange for payoffs. We had one police officer kill her partner police officer. It was a very ugly time in the City of New Orleans.

We got out of that. Chief Pennington came from Washington DC. The police foundation was born, and we pulled ourselves out of it. Unfortunately, we did some backsliding. And that's kind of been
our history, sadly. Although, I don't think we're
unlike a lot of cities.

I feel like in recent years, the numbers
speak for themselves. We have had some major
reductions in crime. And the creation of the tiger
unit has been great. They've done a great job
solving armed robberies. I think in recent years,
some of that is having somebody like Chief Harrison,
having somebody who understands and who can go out
and who can talk to people and who's not afraid to
do it. He'll go to -- he'll come to my church.

He'll go to your church. I've seen him go to the
parks in jeans and a t-shirt, join the community as
they paint the community center. It doesn't matter.

But you have to have that.

I haven't been to Baltimore since I was in
high school, so I can't really comment. But I know
in New Orleans, you have to make a connection. And

if you don't make that connection with somebody,
they're not going to give you what you want, and
you're probably not going to give them what they
want. He has a knack for making a connection.

BY COUNCILMAN BURNETT:
Q. Is there anything else that we haven't asked that you think we need to know?

A. Not officially.

(INTERVIEWS CONCLUDED)