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(Proceedings began at 10:01 a.m.)

THE COURT: Good morning. Thank you-all for being here. We're here in the case of United States of America vs. The City of Ferguson, Case Number 4:16-CV-180. We are here for a quarterly status hearing. This is a hearing where we're going to hear from the members of the public who have signed up to speak and -- I just realized. I ask you-all every time how to pronounce your names and I forget. I have a little cheat sheet, but I didn't bring it with me so I'm going to apologize in advance for mispronouncing people's names, but let me start with the lawyers.

Would counsel for the United States please identify themselves for the record?

MR. MURRAY: Jeffrey Murray for the United States.

MR. CAREY: Apollo Carey and Ryan Priscott for the City of Ferguson.

THE COURT: And would the Monitor or anyone else here on the Monitoring Team please identify themselves for the record?

MONITOR TIDWELL: Good morning, Judge Perry.  
Natasha Tidwell on behalf of the Monitoring Team.

THE COURT: Thank you. All right. So we do have members of the public who have signed up to speak, and I think you all know the routine. Most of the people -- maybe not everybody is speaking has done it before or have been at these

hearings before, but you have five minutes to speak and we want to hear what everybody has to say so you can just step up to the lectern and say your name. The yellow light will come on when you have a minute left and then the red light will come on -- and so after four minutes, the yellow light will come on and the red light will come on after five minutes. So the person whose name I can't remember how to pronounce is Mr. Buthod.

MR. BUTHOD: Buthod.

THE COURT: I knew it was something I was not going to say correct.

All right. Another phonetic cheat sheet. I would like to remember it next time. I would like hear anything that you wish to say.

MR. BUTHOD: Thank you, Your Honor. The Ferguson -- everything, everything is connected. Ferguson is now in Federal Court because Ferguson systematically denied citizens of their rights based on their race. The Court found this to be true. The City consented that it was true and agreed on a plan to end the pattern and to correct and reverse it. Almost immediately, the City slow walked implementation of solutions. The years have passed. The City finally got serious about its obligation. This can happen. Just as that corner turned, the loudest voices on our city council are trying to renege on the Court imposed and City agreed to reforms. They claim the work is complete. They claim the City cannot afford to fulfill our

responsibility. The City doesn't have the money to live up to our obligation.

Outside this Court, the City claims we have plenty of money to abate the taxes of our largest parcel of land for ten years and possibly longer. This land -- this loud voice cannot hear themselves. They cheer for a development that will overtax the citizens for the benefit of outsiders. Why? Why? Why?

Let's go back to the beginning of the story; the racial motivation that led to over-policing, over-enforcing, over-penalizing our black neighbors is back in play in over-polluting, over-taxing and over-loading the public services in a mostly black neighborhood. This isn't two stories. This is one story, a story of continuing shame. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you, sir. And then the second name I actually can't read the last name and the first name is Henry. I apologize, sir. You will have to tell me your last name.

MR. IWENOFU: Good morning, Your Honor. Henry Iwenofu.

THE COURT: How do you spell your last name?

MR. IWENOFU: I-W-E-N-O-F-U. I've been here for 50 years, but people ask me how to pronounce it, and I tell them "I win for you."

THE COURT: That will help me to spell it.

MR. IWENOFU: I don't have much to say this morning other than to thank the judicial branch for making sure our system of government is functioning. It is unquestionable for somebody to have a contract and because of political change they can use budgetary constraints to change the contract that they have. I really want to thank this Court and thank you for holding their foot down. It is imperative that this Court make sure that they don't hide behind financial constraints.

The previous speaker just talked about what was going in our community. We all live in Ferguson. We want Ferguson to move forward, and it cannot move forward if you deny a certain group of a part of the community the opportunity to have a fulfilled life, to live like every American citizen.

The founding fathers, all though they were slave owners, looked at the magna carta for freedom. They wanted freedom for themselves, and that is what we are working on, the three branches of our government, the judiciary, the executive and the legislative. These days we only have one government except for the judiciary that is trying to stop people from doing the things that they think that they can get away with. I'm asking the Court to continue, as long as you can hold the case, to continue to put your foot down and make sure that they comply to the agreement that they made with the City of Ferguson. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you. And Ms. Cassandra Butler.

MS. BUTLER: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MS. BUTLER: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I wish I had better observations to report, but Ferguson is an institution that has basic tendencies which has gotten us into your courtroom in the first place, and those basic tendencies remain. We don't really want to be accountable. We still resent that we even got caught. We want to half way do the work. Our tendency is to look like we are compliant and at best it would be only technically compliant.

The spirit of the law is a foreign concept instituted by many council members. Remember way back when at the beginning of the Consent Decree where the City did national searches for a city manager? Those searches resulted in the hiring of De'Carlton Seewood and Eric Osterberg. When Osterberg resigned, the council decided to select the next city manager in private and among a number of qualified candidates determine it was best to select an internal candidate, even though he would remain as fire chief too. And we are transitioning again with the move that was set up two years ago with the appointment of an assistant city manager. No one else was even considered for becoming the next city manager.

Let me be clear, I am not opposing the selection, but I am opposing the process. I believe it is a protective

process to control the type of decisions that are made by the city manager. With an open hiring process, who knows what the most qualified person may think and do.

Controlling processes in order to limit and control outcomes seems to be how this iteration of the council and by their closed door selection process their employee, the city manager, is operating. This impacts their implementation in the Consent Decree in many ways.

Today I want to highlight just one of them. Just at the last council meeting, the mayor made a claim that the NPSC is an entity of the City and thereby owned by the City. The implication was that therefore the NPSC activities need to fall within parameters that would be approved by the council city manager. The trigger for this claim appears to be the use of NPSC logo on a community canvassing event in which a member passed out flyers promoting NPSC to the community.

Because the mayoral candidate was also involved in the community canvassing event designating because -- yeah, because a candidate was involved, it was seen that designating the NPSC as a city entity allowed the inference that the logo also belonged to the City and thereby was improperly used without the City's permission. Members of the NPSC rejects this claim outright. We believe this claim was manufactured in order to make the NPSC more compliant to the City's tendency. The easiest way to do this at this point is to create

ordinances whereby the council appoints members to the committee, the NPSC committee. I believe that pointing to the Consent Decree after ten years to change the nature of the input and advice they get from the NPSC about how the community wants to be policed is more evidence of who we are led by at the municipal governing level.

This control is similar to how the council felt empowered to try to end the Consent Decree by cutting its budget rather than putting more money to purchase more manpower to complete the work sooner.

Your Honor, I've asked at the last two council meetings the same question you asked at the last status hearing. Did the council restore the second half of the budget that they so publicly cut? Crickets. I still don't know. Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you. All right. Ms. Naquittia Noah.

MS. NOAH: Hello, everyone. Hello, Judge Perry. I am Naquittia Noah, serving and representing Ward 3 Ferguson. This morning I would like to offer a thank you to all of the current and past elected officials and staff who have worked towards compliance and completion of the Ferguson Consent Decree. I want all of them to know that their efforts, attention to detail and work ethic hasn't gone unnoticed.

Mayor Ella Jones, Fire Chief and City Manager John

Hampton, FPD Chief Troy Boyle, Patricia Washington, Lisa Stephens and any other FPD and Ferguson admin staff not mentioned, thank you all. We have accomplished so much together. While we still have work to do and changes occurring in our city government, I ask any incoming and current elected officials and staff to stay the course. Let's not forget our way. Let's approach every area of Ferguson administration reform with a work ethic that promotes and represents the City of Ferguson in a manner that proves that we are one Ferguson moving forward together, working towards positive progression and representation for all of our residents. Judge Perry, as you like to say, let's keep the momentum going. Thank you for the time to speak.

THE COURT: Thank you. Mayor Ella Jones.

MS. JONES: Good morning, Judge Perry. Thank you for the opportunity to speak my thoughts concerning the Consent Decree that Ferguson has been working toward compliance for the last ten years. I have never missed a status hearing since the beginning since I've been on council.

I am a 50-year resident of the City of Ferguson. I have shared several statements before; therefore, I will be as brief as possible. Ferguson is working to achieve compliance of the Consent Decree in the next year and move to the monitor stage of the Consent Decree. John Hampton, city manager, and I worked together to hire Troy Doyle as the chief of police and

work with him to sign his new contract for 2026 through 2030. The hiring and renewal of Chief Doyle's contract has created a sense of urgency and accountability to move the police department toward compliance with the Consent Decree. I just want to say thank you to Natasha Tidwell for taking that telephone call and moving from one group to another so this Consent Decree continued to move forward.

When Troy arrived, the Department's staffing levels were at a concerning 49 percent. Through concerted recruiting efforts and improved retention strategies, we have successfully increased our staffing to 85 percent. Since John Hampton has gone over and beyond working as a fire chief and city manager we have had record numbers of infrastructure improvement, especially with the work that Koray Gilbert and the Public Works team have completed with several streets repaired, much more. The hiring of Nathan as the economic development director, Terry as the director of code and David Musgrave has turned around from the park department to assistant city manager and now city manager. There's no need for us to pay \$50,000 for a search when we can hire within. I just like to say they have continued to work with me with the Community Project Fund, and we received \$1,000,000 from Congressman Bell to improve Plaza at 501, and to all the donors who invested in the Helping Unity Park in Ward 3, with Councilwoman Fadre Nelson leading the way with \$150,000 in donations.

I cannot say enough about Jonathan, LaVetta, Nodric. They are par excellent as our management team.

John is more than ready to return to the fire department, and I am more than ready to start another chapter in my political career as the St. Louis County councilwoman of District 1. I didn't stay in the role of mayor for six years and on the council for five years, for a total of 11 years, to seek approval of many as to what they wanted me to do. My goal was to support the staff, to move Ferguson forward out of the crisis and to develop intergovernmental relationship for the sustainability of our community, which I am most proud of. No, the council is not perfect, but we found common ground several times for positive outcomes for our community. I am hopeful that the council will fund the Consent Decree.

As far as the NPSC, it is an advisory board and not a political group. The same for the personnel board. We have rules and regulations. No board has the right to meet without staff and without a council representation.

As I come to the close, Abraham Lincoln gave this address June 16, 1858, at what was then the Illinois state capital in Springfield after he accepted the Illinois Republican party's nomination as the state's US senator. Abraham Lincoln's address simply said that a group must be united and not fight one another if it wishes to survive. Also, a house divided by itself cannot stand. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you. Next on the list is Chalanda Garrett.

MS. GARRETT: Good morning, Your Honor. I am a 30-year resident of Ferguson, Missouri. When I moved there, I felt that I was comfortable that I could stay there as long as I wanted to stay there. The rules and regulations of the Consent Decree, I'm happy that it is in place to be able to voice concerns of different things that are going on that is not being addressed.

What I want to say is that I would like to see the overall City government, starting with the mayor, whoever is the new mayor, the chief of police and the police treat the citizens with respect, not disrespect residents to make them feel as if they're no longer wanted in Ferguson and that they have to be told nasty things to digest is not acceptable. So what I want to see is that they speak to people how you want people to speak to you and treat you.

Other than that, I see how the police are interacting with the community. When there is strange things going on, they will come and address them. They have been communicating through St. Louis County dispatch since February of 2024. I like that system better because you get a chance to communicate to share with the dispatchers to go over to what needs to be addressed. What is not happening is when the officers get to the residence, it is an attitude. It is not

being impartial on what is going on. So I would like to see that be a better solution to handling residents in a peaceful manner, not go back to 2014. And you hear people say, oh, you live in Ferguson, it is a black mark. I don't want people that are across over in Hawaii say I would like for you to come to me, oh, but I heard about that incident. So I would like to see better and positivity overall from the City government no matter who is in the office. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you. And then last we have Ms. Clines, Mildred Clines.

MS. CLINES: Mildred Clines, 7444 Castro Drive in Ferguson, Missouri. Good morning, Judge Perry, representatives from the City, the DOJ, our Monitor -- our head Monitor Ms. Tidwell and members from the community. Judge Perry, thank you again for this opportunity to speak on record during this hearing.

During my 38 years as a resident, I've been an active member of my community. I've done my part trying to help this city be its best by volunteering on boards and commissions, engaging with my neighbors in a positive way and attending and participating in community activities. I was a big part of the protest community here in Ferguson after the killing of Michael Brown. I am a part of several community groups; Grade A for Change, which is working to bring diversity and inclusion to the Ferguson Florissant school board, the

Ferguson Collaborative working for civil and constitutional rights for citizens here in Ferguson as it relates to the police department and the court system. I was a member of the CRB task force, which set up the framework for the current CRB. When the DOJ and the City agreed to establish NPSC, I was and still is one of its original members. Other original members are here today as well. Many members have come and gone, but we're still here, still doing the work, still trying to be the change that many in our community want to see. From day one, the NPSC has supported and participated in community outreach and engagement, help with police recruitment, hiring promotions and participated in evaluating police training programs. We've tried to advise on revising the municipal codes and working with the youth. Many members of the NPSC attend most if not all city council meetings. All though we are a fraction in size of the original group that was 11 years, we are more active than ever before. The committee is open to residents and those living in surrounding cities that desire to build relationships with law enforcement.

Very early on the NPSC decided to make decisions by way of consensus. It takes longer, but it works for this group, because we are the marginalized, disenfranchised and the voiceless section of the City. It was important that every person be included and every voice be heard. It has worked up to this point extremely well. We've operated without any

financial support from the City. That is okay, because we're independent. We're in the community listening to the public about their issues with law enforcement and soliciting their input on how to improve relationships, talking to business owners and neighbors, the NPSC worked for nearly nine months on municipal codes revision concerning conflict of interest. We gave a presentation to the city council and they declined to consider our recommendations. They even declined to even have a discussion on our recommendations. That was so disappointing to many of us given all the work that was put in. We are looked upon as a hold people accountable group. Some are not very favorable about that.

This is a citizen led group and citizen involvement is so crucial in its success. Whether the City respects the NPSC or not, we're determined and committed to steering the City, the police department, the courts and the community in the direction where relationships are better, constitutional rights are protected, the courts are no longer using us as ATMs and where the City listens and hears even the least of us. During community outreach activities, we are the NPSC of Ferguson, Missouri, Neighborhood Policing Committee, your community, your police. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you, Ms. Clines. I appreciate all of the citizens who have spoken. It is very helpful for me and has been throughout this process to hear from you each time and

every other time and I really appreciate it. I'm going to start by calling on Mr. Carey and as usual have you introduce the people you wish to introduce and tell me what else I need to know.

MR. CAREY: Thank you, Judge Perry. It is a pleasure to be here. As you know, I do always start off by introducing the folks who are here and we've got a really big group this time so bear with me a little bit. I had to just before we started here -- there was a new face that I didn't even recognize myself so I had to make sure I knew everybody's name. You already heard from our mayor, Ella Jones, and Councilwoman Naquittia Noah, but you did not hear from another one of our councilwomen in the audience. Her name is LaMika Covington, and she is sitting right next to John Hampton. We also have obviously our current city manager, John Hampton, our assistant city manager, Dave Musgrave, who in a day will be transitioning to be our city manager.

I don't know if we spoke about this on our monthly calls, but obviously when John Hampton was hired it was an interim thing because he was still the police chief and he's done a lot of work to sort of stabilize the City in the past couple of years. Obviously, he hired Chief Doyle, and he just sort of helped get the City to get to a point where we feel like we are stable enough and he just desires to go back to his original position as fire chief. And Dave Musgrave, who you

know who has been sitting in on a lot of our calls and sort of involved in Consent Decree compliance for the last year or so, will be taking over for him on April 1st. So that is a change that you heard the citizens talk about that I don't know that I had been detailed about that on our calls or not, but I just wanted to do that here in the public.

THE COURT: Thank you. And Chief Hampton, thank you for what you've done the last few years, and I'm glad you get back to working one job. And Manager Musgrave, since you have been on some of the calls and I have seen you before, I am looking forward to working with you all more.

MR. CAREY: Okay. And then behind that row, we have Jonathan McMiller, who is our HR manager, and then we also have Michelle Richmond, who you know is our court administrator. We have LaVetta London, who is our acting city clerk right now. We have Carmen Black. That was the name or the face that I didn't realize, but she is Chief Doyle's new assistant. And then behind her you'll see Chief Doyle. You'll also see Harry Dilworth, who is a star here in the City of Ferguson with the Consent Decree compliance. You'll see Lisa Stephens as well.

THE COURT: She is back there hiding. I see now.

MR. CAREY: That is right. And then obviously, last, but of course not least, our Consent Decree coordinator obviously is here because she's going to give a detailed report about where we are. A big crowd today, Judge Perry.

Again, just sort of reenforcing the City's commitment to seeing the Consent Decree through.

I want to make a few general comments first about some of the things that you heard from the citizens because I don't know -- some of the stuff that you may hear, we don't necessarily talk about in our Consent Decree meetings. But from the first gentleman who spoke, I think one of things you heard was they were sort of talking about redevelopment and that kind of thing, but that was just a reference to the Emerson campus, which there is a proposed redevelopment for the Emerson campus going on right now, and it involves the potential for a data center and so we had a public hearing about that -- actually, a public meeting about that last week or the week before last. I can't remember. And it just -- the citizens feel, you know -- there's a lot of talk about whether or not that is the best thing for the community. So that was the reference that you heard.

THE COURT: I did read about that in the paper. It was in the local news. I was aware of the issue with that campus.

MR. CAREY: All right. I just wanted to make sure the Court --

THE COURT: At least some of the issues. I'm sure not to the level of details that all the people here know.

MR. CAREY: I wanted to make sure you were aware

that was the reference. Also, there was a reference to the issue of the budget and the cutting of the budget. We have yet to experience ramifications from that as it relates to what the City's available funds are for paying the invoices and the paying the bills of the folks who we have working on the Consent Decree, whether that be the Monitor or some experts that have been helping the City out. We have yet to experience any impact of that.

THE COURT: In other words, they're getting paid?

MR. CAREY: Yes. Well, I just want to say to the Court that we have not had any issues with whether or not people are getting paid and continuing to work on the Consent Decree.

The last thing that sort of was referenced was that there, you know -- it is not a well kept secret that there are discussions between the United States of America and the City of Ferguson about making modifications to the Consent Decree and really I think those modifications are thought about in two ways; one is policing is just a bit different than it was in 2016. You know, the City of Ferguson's Police Department is different than it was in 2016. There are some things in the Consent Decree that were written into the Consent Decree based on how the police department was being -- how it existed at that time that are now obsolete.

For example, the jail situation, we don't house our

own prisoners in the City of Ferguson. We have several sections in the Consent Decree about that. Dispatch is now gone. You heard a reference to dispatch being done by St. Louis County. There is some language in the Consent Decree about that. Our SRO officer program, we no longer have that. There's language in the Consent Decree about that. There are things in the Consent Decree that no longer exist as they did in 2014, 2015, 2016, and so there's an idea of sort of streamlining some of those things out of the Consent Decree to make sure that we have a more manageable document so that we can sort of focus the City's resources on the -- you know, the sort of the meat and potatoes of the Consent Decree which is use of force, accountability, transparency, all of the things that were found to be issues in the Department of Justice's report.

And then sort of the second thing we would like to accomplish is to be able to showcase some of the wins that we actually have had as a city under the Consent Decree. I know that obviously we have a new administration in terms of the President of the United States and the different policies, but one of the sort of changes that have occurred now is that when we used to sit here in front of you it was just me sitting there and there were like four or five lawyers over there and all of them had the City and the same people running in four or five different directions all at the same time, and it made it

really, really difficult to make progress because while you're appeasing one person then you have got another person from the Department of Justice telling you, well, the City of Ferguson hasn't done this and they haven't done that, and there were times when that was absolutely the City's fault, right? Like we just didn't have the staff in place or we hired the wrong person or we were just dragging our feet on things that we probably needed to be more expedient about.

However, we're at a point now where we can sort of focus our resources and really sort of showcase what we actually have done, and I think the modifications to the Consent Decree that we have been discussing with the Department of Justice are also designed to be able to show the public that we do have some wins, that we actually have done some things. Our culture is actually different. Policing is done differently. We have got great leadership. We've got great command staff, people who are embedded in the police department who the community loves. Pat Washington, Lisa Stephens, they aren't going anywhere. They are here.

So the Consent Decree at some point was going to wind down. I think that was the thought process when it was -- obviously, it has taken twice as long as the initial thought process. It was going to wind down, and I know sometimes change feels different, but at the same time I think these modifications that we're talking about with the Department of

Justice are really going to be able to highlight for the citizens what we have done and make them proud that they have a police department whose culture has changed and that we are engaging in constitutional policing and some of these things that were happening pre Consent Decree are just not happening anymore.

I won't say anymore about that. I'll allow the Department of Justice to -- I don't want to steal Mr. Murray's thunder about anything he wants to say about that. So unless you have any questions for me, Judge, I'll go ahead and turn it over to Ms. Washington so she can sort of give you a bit more of a detailed report of where we are.

THE COURT: That would be great. I look forward to hearing Ms. Washington's report.

MR. CAREY: You got it.

THE COURT: You can step on up.

MS. WASHINGTON: Good morning, Judge Perry. Good morning, everyone. I'm going to apologize right off the bat. I'm a little bit under the weather today. There seems to be a man in west county that wants to take my tonsils out and I'm trying to avoid that, but I'm not winning, and so I'm just trying to get through the day.

THE COURT: Well, thank you for being here.

MS. WASHINGTON: There are a couple of things that I do want to talk about in my formal remarks, but I wanted to

address right at the beginning some of the comments that were made by Mr. Carey and that you will hear a little bit later possibly from the Department of Justice, and that is about the modifications to the Consent Decree. I think it is extremely important that people understand that while we are having these conversations these are not conversations that are designed to run rampant through the Consent Decree simply because there is no longer a desire to conform to the Consent Decree. The conversations are about how do we prove that there is compliance in those significant areas that are -- make up the bulk of the Consent Decree, and those areas where we can demonstrate compliance, meaning that we have done the work and it is in evidence that we have done the work and that perhaps those areas can now come out of federal oversight. And yes, there are areas that are somewhat obsolete as Mr. Carey said because the relevance of those particular sections of the Consent Decree is not there, simply because we've evolved on to different modes of getting those things done or in the case of the SRO, the school district has the final say in that regard.

So I don't want to leave the impression from any of those conversations or that dialogue that there is a desire to just close the chapter, just close the book and say we're done. Those conversations have been very thoughtful, very deliberate and so I'm looking forward to some continued dialogue and how we can make sure that we have a Consent Decree that continues

to uphold the spirit of the reason that we were in the Consent Decree in the first place and be sure that we can go forward with constitutional protected activity.

THE COURT: Yes. And that's what I've been hearing and focusing on as well. I would agree with your assessment of it, and I appreciate it from everyone. Okay. Go ahead.

MS. WASHINGTON: So I wanted to start out by thanking Mayor Ella Jones for her steadfast support and for her commitment to the Consent Decree and to her work from the very beginning and continues up to this day as evidenced by what she said earlier, never having even missed a Consent Decree hearing and often serving, at least for me, as someone who can always add perspective and institutional recall as we are considering some of the work that must continue to be done so I appreciate her, and I respect her, and I thank her for all of that.

THE COURT: And I thank you, too, Mayor Jones. It's been greatly appreciated. Let me mention, if you want to sit, you don't have to stand at the lectern. If it would be easier for you to sit down given that you are a little under the weather, as long as you turn that microphone around and talk into it, you can sit -- why don't you have a seat in the chair and do that, and then I will be able to hear you and that will work fine.

MS. WASHINGTON: Thank you. Are we good?

THE COURT: Yeah. Make sure that microphone is sort

of pointing at your mouth.

MS. WASHINGTON: All right. I also want to thank Chief Hampton, who as you heard earlier is returning to his original role as fire chief. He, too, has been someone that I have relied on when I've needed advice. I can't think of a time that I have called upon him to ask him about something or make a request, we haven't always agreed, but he's always been open and he's always been someone that I felt I can have an open and honest dialogue with, even when we are disagreeing. So I was happy to hear that he is going to remain engaged in the oversight and some of the management of the Consent Decree process as Dave Musgrave, our new city manager, steps in and gets acclimated to his new role. So just thank you to both of you. I really greatly appreciate that.

I want to move now, Judge, into some of the updates from -- some of the quarterly updates, and we'll start with the police department staffing. We have 43 total sworn officers. The current leadership includes two lieutenants, three captains and five sergeants. I always feel like I'm leaving somebody else out, but I think I got it right. We also have eight candidates who are in the hiring process -- at least six of those are experienced officers who are coming from other jurisdictions, and we have a continued focus on hiring more experienced officers.

A little bit later on in my report I'm going to

share some of the challenges that we face and it does involve staffing, but when I talk about those things I want to be clear that if the city manager or the city manager to be tomorrow, you know, printed up a bunch of money in the basement this evening and gave it to us, we would not be able to hire. Law enforcement across the country is experiencing a decline. People are not applying to be police officers. There is a sharp decline in that area. So even if we did everything right, we would still have some difficulty in hiring, as you can see by other departments across the region. Even though we do have our challenges, and I'll talk about some of those, it is not because there is a lack of effort.

I want to talk a little bit now about police department training. The annual training calendar has been reviewed and approved by the training committee, and I truly thank them for their work and their support in helping us move that along. The annual Training Plan evaluations from the Training Committee were received by Ms. Stephens and the feedback, which was actually very constructive, was incorporated into the annual plan. As you know, the Consent Decree requires us to have a review of the Training Plan each year and we've set a cadence for when we're going to have that annual review. And during that time, we take a look at training to see what works, what needs to be improved. We look at things that can be delivered in person. We look at things

that can be delivered virtually and just trying to make sure that we are delivering training under some very strong constraints in terms of staffing and being able -- the timing to pull people in, it is very critical that we have a Training Plan that actually fits the work that we have to do, but in the manner in which we need to do it given some of the staffing issues.

We do have some upcoming training. Those include bias-free policing and First Amendment refreshers. We have just completed some new firearms training. We're doing stop, search and arrest training. Our new taser training and body-worn and in-car camera training is ongoing. We have supervisory use of force and investigation. The second module for that is being delivered by Captain Harry Dilworth. Our officers are also scheduled this quarter for our CIT training, and we also have some training coming up for our supervisors on early intervention training and then accountability within the police department. So, again, another full training calendar this quarter and moving into next quarter.

We have contracts that were just approved by the city council for curriculum development, and it is a refresher training in the stop, search and arrest and advisory policing and First Amendment training that I just mentioned. And I think it is important, Judge Perry, to mention here that we are at a point in our training where we are starting to do --

deliver refreshers and not just first time or first round training so I think that is important and that signals a great deal of work and progress that has been made in the training area. The fact that we can now move to second level refreshers for our existing officers and then continue with the full training for new officers signifies that we are where we need to be regarding our Training Plan.

And I also wanted to highlight we have new recruit training. There's some modifications that we'll be having for our experienced officers. I just mentioned that we will have several -- hopefully, they will all make it through the process and agree to join the department, but because these officers are veteran officers, we felt that it was better use of time and a respect for their existing skills to take them through a modified new officer training. So Ms. Stephens and Lieutenant Mink have worked and Captain Dilworth have worked very diligently to modify their onboarding so they can be hired, get through their training and then put their skills to work in patrol as quickly as possible.

We also have training that is coming up for our PTO program. We, as you know, have struggled in the PTO program for quite a while. The committee, the Training Committee, worked very hard to put the curriculum together, but then we ran into a roadblock because we really don't have enough staff and experienced officers that we can designate for PTOs. As

you know, the PTO is the life blood of the department, and those PTO officers, they are accountable for the training and conduct of those new officers well after their training period and for years to come. So you really want to make sure that you have the person who has the right temperament and who has the right training and the willingness to be a PTO.

So we've identified several candidates. We've also opened up the PTO trainer position department wide and so we're looking forward to seeing those officers, what officers will reply to that invitation.

I also wanted to share under the training module, that under the training report that we have new software systems that we are implementing, and it helps us with the training because we can now record trainings that are taking place. We can create virtual training sessions and create an actual training library that our officers can access at any time. So this is, I think, an extremely important progress in terms of how we are looking at training and making sure that we can deliver it in a cost effective efficient way because training is expensive. It is an expensive investment. But with all of the modern technology that is available to us, we must be able to capture that and harness that to make sure that we're providing and delivering training in a more modern and effective and efficient manner.

The other thing that I wanted to brag about because

it ties right into our next segment is that 100 percent of our police department is now trained in SARA Model Problem Solving for Community-Oriented Policing. That means our sworn staff, all the officers and all the command staff have all been trained as well, so that's a major milestone for us.

As that ties next to the section, community policing, and it relates to the community policing segment of the Consent Decree. I am happy to say that we have completed four, five, I think briefing sessions with all of our officers, our new officers and the officers who have been with the police department for quite sometime to do a refresher on both the Community-Policing Plan and the Crime Prevention Plan. All of those sessions have been very well received by our officers and I appreciate them for the accommodation of those four or five sessions. We still have one session that we want to do for those officers who were either ill or on vacation, an additional training that we need to get done. The reason why that is important is because that Community-Policing Plan and that Crime Prevention Plan really are the heart of our community-policing initiative, and so we wanted to make sure that even though the officers knew -- they inherently know and embrace community policing, but it was important for me to make sure they understood how all of this tied together, how all of it works, not just for the Consent Decree, but because community policing is the bedrock of what we're doing as the

Ferguson Police Department. So it is one thing to kind of be in it and of it, but it is another total to understand how it all connects and how it all works together, and that it really is a strategic endeavor and not just something that you might haphazardly do or inconsistently do.

So I was very pleased we were able to get that done. We have completed the community-policing audit. I'm sure the Monitor will talk a little bit more about that and provide an update on that, and I'm looking forward to getting the feedback from that audit process.

And in the chief's Community Engagement Committee, this was a new committee to put together and pull together representatives from the community. We have nonprofit leaders, juvenile justice professionals. We have members on the St. Louis County family court and a number of youth services organizations, and all of these people meet once a month at the police department, and we talk about how we can provide resources for our young people. What can we do to do some intervention with our young people, particularly as school is out and the summer months are coming up.

So right now we are planning a team resource event. This will be the second event that we've hosted. It will have a job fair connected to it, and it will also have support for those people who are interested in learning new technology and some of the humanities and arts programming that will be part

of that. From that event, we will hope to identify some additional young people to serve on the Youth Advisory Board for the police department.

And then finally, in the community-policing notes, I do want to note and thank Captain Dilworth for moving forward the Force Review Board. We had not had the Force Review Board active and so within the last six months or so we've been able to identify the candidates. They have started to meet. They are reviewing cases, and we are scheduling a joint session with the CRB to fine tune and review how these two important civilian review entities support FPD.

As it relates to the Ferguson municipal courts, I was aware that the NPSC has done a couple of different monitoring visits to the courts and they have had some interviews with those who have been appearing before the court. Those reviews from those people have generally been positive indicating that they believe that they have received fair treatment. They may not have liked the outcome, but at least the process was fair.

I also took the opportunity to observe two court sessions, and I want to report to you that the tone and the demeanor of our judges was respectful and very helpful. I spoke to one individual. A smile comes to my face because he was quite animated. I can't use some of the words that he shared, but to paraphrase, he just said, "This ain't the old

Ferguson," and he was extremely enthusiastic about the outcome of his experience there at court, and so I was pleased to report that to you today.

I also -- when I come here, and I do these updates, I talk about the court administrator, Michelle Richmond. I cannot say enough about the work that she continues to do in managing our courts. She has been phenomenal. She continues to be phenomenal. In talking with her -- just recently, she shared that some of the final items the court needed to complete before some of the members of the DOJ departed, included the self-assessment chart, updates to the website to ensure that information was easily accessible for defendants and implementing measures to ensure compliance with the caps on city revenue. All of those things have now been completed. The website has been updated. They continue to engage in the court self-assessment, and that is designed to ensure that the municipal court proceedings are administered fairly and are in full compliance with policy as well as federal and state law.

Additionally, Show Me Courts has developed an aggregate court data report that includes a breakdown by protected characteristics for all assessments in accordance with paragraph 360 of the Consent Decree. And this May, the entire court staff will participate in their annual implicit bias training at the 2026 spring conference, and that training will be presented by a municipal court judge from Missouri. So

they continue with their self-improvement, with their self-assessment and ensuring that not only are they complying with the Consent Decree, but that the court is operating effectively and efficiency.

So now if I may talk about some of the challenges. It is one thing to come and share all the wonderful things that we are doing, and I appreciate the support and the work of everybody because there have been so many people who work tirelessly, and they don't have to do that. They are giving up their time and the time away from family to support and serve on these various committees and to do this work, and I appreciate that.

Earlier I talked about staffing and that continues to be the biggest challenge in the police department and impacts everything from promotions, to training, to administration operations. Too often our commanders must forgo their regular duties to support shortages on patrol due to vacations, illness, injury, absences, you know, things happen.

We often cannot consistently schedule our officers for neighborhood meetings. We do our best. We try to make sure that our officers are there, that they are present, but they may get called out on a call while they're at a neighborhood meeting so we don't have a dedicated neighborhood officer, and that would be something that I know that we've had in the past and would like to get back to that. But while the

staffing and the ability to participate in neighborhood meetings and the ability or the inability to have some of those special patrol units that we desperately need, whether they are concentrating on those areas where we are experiencing some increase, whether it is violent crimes or gun crimes or domestic violence, those require not just a one time answer the call, go to the next call. They deserve and require some special attention and that takes staffing.

So I know that we are working diligently on that issue, and again, as I said, it is not just an issue of money. Law enforcement across the board is experiencing challenges with recruitment, and we are no different. What I can say is that the people who do end up joining our department are committed to being there and they want to be there because they know that they can put their skills to use and make a difference where it matters.

The other area that I want to address in terms of a challenge or something that we need to make sure that we're paying great attention to is organizational transformation, and that is required to sustain our progress, which is real progress. But sustaining it requires transformation, not simply transformation that adds more duties or checks off additional boxes in requirement. It is about fully embracing the process and taking ownership of our individual roles in it. Every member of this department, every member of city

government plays a part in ensuring that what we have built does not just meet expectations or does not just get a compliance finding but that it lasts and it results in true systems change.

At the center of that transformation is something that we often overlook, and that is communication as an asset. Communication is not just a function. It is a force multiplier. It improves efficiency. It reduces duplication of efforts. It strengthens accountability, and it ensures consistency in how we operate and how we serve. In a department like ours and in a city government that also is not fully staffed, there are many people who are already doing the work of two, sometimes three people. We need clear, intentional communication. It is not optional. It is essential. When we are working in a resource-constrained environment, we are a small team with significant responsibilities. It means that transformation must also include developing skills that improve efficiency. It is not acceptable to say this is how we've always done it and this is what I'm used to. We have to be able to share knowledge across roles and we have to identify ways to work smarter, not just harder. Organizational transformation requires a commitment, not just something that is on a piece of paper.

And so I want to give you an example of transformation in action. I want to recognize Lieutenant Todd

Mink and Training Coordinator Lisa Stephens for demonstrating exactly what organizational transformation in action looks like. Together, they tackled one of our more complex challenges, which is training -- scheduling training, and they turned it into an opportunity for collaboration and growth. Ms. Stephens took the initiative to learn more about the scheduling system that Lieutenant Mink was using, and she didn't just learn it, she really took the time to try and master it. As a result, she is now able to take on key scheduling responsibilities freeing Lieutenant Mink to focus on critical patrol operations, and that's what transformation looks like, and that's what collaboration looks like. It is teamwork, and it is skill building and it is a shared ownership of the outcomes and that's what we must continue to do regardless of whether we're under federal monitoring and oversight or after we've transitioned into a period where the Consent Decree components become part of our strategic operating plan.

So in closing, I do want to just say a couple of things. We heard a couple of times about the election. There's been some comments back and forth about the upcoming election, and so I just want to say this; let's remain calm. Let's stay focussed and let's continue doing the work no matter the outcome of the election. The mission does not change. Our responsibility does not change, and our commitment to this

community cannot be tied to political cycles.

Now, I'm a basketball fan, and so since it is March Madness, it is only fitting to borrow from one of the greatest coaches of all time, John Wooden, and he said the true test of a person's character is what they do when no one is watching. Federal oversight will end, so what will we do when no one is watching? We are approaching a point where substantial compliance is being achieved in several areas of the Consent Decree. We can begin to see a future where federal oversight is no longer necessary, and that is something that we should be proud of. But if we are being honest, it also brings a level of uneasiness because it raises a fundamental question; who will ensure that we sustain this progress? And the answer is simple. We will. I've said it here often, and I say it again today. It is the people. It's always been the people. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you very much. Mr. Murray, you have a lot to follow here.

MR. MURRAY: Yeah. The Monitor was just telling me. You are a tough act to follow.

Good morning, Your Honor, and thank you for the opportunity. Just a few comments. First, I'd like to begin by thanking the members of the community who took the time today to come and provide their thoughts and opinions and comments on the process and things going on around Ferguson. It is very

important that they continue to do so and that we listen to them and keep their thoughts and concerns in heart as we proceed going forward.

I think they're onto something, right? The core issues of the Consent Decree need to be realized, they need to be accomplished, and that is the United States' primary goal is to see it successfully completed. There are some conversations going on in the negotiations between the City and DOJ about streamlining as Mr. Carey previewed, and they continue, but as Ms. Washington elaborated the focus is I think to call out the things for which the City can take the win, that we can, you know, point out either substantial compliance has been achieved and a durable remedy is in place or that there's no longer a need to seek compliance because the actual processes or practices are no longer happening either within the police department or even within the City's jurisdiction such as dispatch moving to the county. So those are the types of things we're looking at. I think we will come to some sort of resolution on these negotiations in the coming weeks and be able to provide something to the Court in the very near future.

Parallel to that, the United States would like to really encourage the City and Monitor to adopt a greater sense of urgency regarding getting compliance reviews completed so that we can show compliance as soon as possible. I think it is in all of our interests maybe to get together as the parties

and the Monitor and start thinking creatively about ways that we can achieve more frequent or more maybe -- well, I don't want to think out loud, but just get assessments that are leading to adequate resolutions of the Consent Decree's requirements. I think about half of the provisions in the decree have not yet been assessed, and that is something that my leadership in Washington notices and has concerns about and so to the extent we can sort of address those I think it will help us move the ball along and move into a more regular practice in this case.

Yeah. And so I think as we get more assessments and some of these modifications that we are seeking to work out, resolve, we will end up with a more tailored Consent Decree that allows everyone to focus their efforts on the core issues, the constitutional issues, like use of force and stops and arrests that are appropriate, and, you know, that reasonable accountability practices are in place. Such as the appropriate use of body worn cameras and the development of early intervention systems and some technology uses that will further help the department move forward.

That's it for me. Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you. Ms. Tidwell.

MONITOR TIDWELL: It is much easier to follow Mr. Murray than it is Ms. Washington so I'm grateful for that.

Good morning, Judge. I too want to thank the

members of the community for their attendance today and for sharing their remarks and their updates of actually what is happening in the City. It is always really helpful to hear that. The parties have detailed much of the progress made since the hearing in December so I'm not going to rehash a lot of what Ms. Washington shared. I will, however, give a brief summary of the Monitoring Team's activity this quarter.

A few weeks after the December hearing, the parties approved and the Monitoring Team filed a status report with compliance assessments for the Consent Decree sections that weren't part of the August of 2025 semiannual report; specifically, sections 13 through 21, which includes supervision, recruitment, accountability and civilian oversight. The report also included the findings of the Monitoring Team's accountability audit, and as has been our practice, the Monitoring Team facilitated a virtual town hall event with community members where we summarized the report and answered questions. We thanked the members of the community who made time to attend and want to send a special thanks to the CRB members who attended as the accountability and CRB civilian oversight audit was part of the last report, so it was helpful to have them here and get their realtime reactions.

As the accountability audit report explains in further detail, one area in which there was insufficient data for the Monitoring Team to make a compliance finding was in

disciplinary outcomes. In short, based on the completed investigations we reviewed, for those that had sustained findings, we were unable to determine what discipline -- in some instances what discipline was imposed, if any, and whether the CRB made any recommendations as to a different discipline, and if so, whether that recommendation was accepted by FPD.

So in the coming weeks, we will issue a document request for additional information to both the police department and CRB as we understand that Ms. Grady from the CRB tracks this information separately. We would also anticipate scheduling a meeting with Chief Doyle and Lieutenant Rice to get a better understanding of the disciplinary process and that will hopefully button up the accountability section.

There are, obviously, as the report details, some sections that are either not in compliance or in partial compliance and we will work with the parties with FPD to hopefully get those to substantial compliance in the near future.

Compliance assessments and audits are also progressing in other areas. The audit of FPD's compliance with Consent Decree, section seven, eight and nine, which is stop, searches and arrests, First Amendment protected activity and use of force, is ongoing. Last month, FPD provided an initial tranche of incident data to the Monitoring Team, specifically Dan Gomez and Roger Nunez, who have been working with Captain

Dilworth to supplement the data and fill some gaps. Although we hope to confine the review to the 100 randomly selected incidents from the auditing period, the incidents that we selected do not offer sufficient data from which the monitoring team can properly assess compliance. So we'll conduct more targeted searches. We may have to identify specific offenses, drug offenses or other arrests so that we can get a reasonable population of materials to make an assessment from. So Dan and Roger will continue to work with Captain Dilworth on that, and we'll report back with any progress or other issues that we encounter.

As with this and other audits, we endeavor to conduct meaningful and fair assessments and to offer recommendations and observations that will improve systems; not just check boxes, but to improve systems. These take time, especially given the small composition of the Monitoring Team, which is purposeful based on FPD's size and its budgetary constraints. The Monitoring Team's conservative staffing model also hopefully counters what Mr. Carey described as the asymmetry and disorder that results when you have multiple people, multiple voices overtaxing Captain Dilworth and others with competing work streams. We can certainly explore ramping up, but only if doing so makes sense given the staffing challenges that Ms. Washington described.

The remaining audit is in the community policing and

community engagement section, section three of the Consent Decree. In December, as the Court may recall, Dr. Leigh Anderson, the Monitoring Team's subject matter expert in that area, was here in Ferguson to complete the in-person portions of that ongoing audit. She has completed her work, and I am working with her to finalize a report for circulation to the parties. The audit extended beyond assessing outputs to achieving a range of tangible and intangible outcomes. These included ensuring operational alignment with community policing principles and confirming that internal policies and practices were aligned and appropriately communicated externally. The audit sought to verify FPD's compliance with the problem-solving model and ensure that policing plans that FPD has drafted were rooted in community needs and collaborative approaches.

All though the report is not complete, I can tell the Court that the results were overwhelmingly positive. Dr. Anderson found the police department demonstrated substantial and measurable progress in building community trust, transparency, fairness and collaboration consistent with the requirements of the Consent Decree. Based on Dr. Anderson's interviews with officers, supervisors, command staff, civilian partners, youth program leaders and others, along with comprehensive review of policies, training curricula and operational practices, she found that the community

engagement and community policing principles are being fully integrated into the department's daily operations.

The findings reflected a clear department wide culture shift. Community policing is no longer treated as a standalone initiative or reactive strategy implemented during a time of crisis. Instead, it has become a part of FPD's core organizational identity due in no small part to the work that Ms. Washington detailed, her work and the work of others within the department.

Leadership at all levels reenforced and modelled this approach. Chief Doyle consistently framed the Consent Decree as a tool for growth rather than punishment while community policing was fully integrated into the department's mission, strategic direction and leadership messaging. Command staff and supervisors were held accountable for reenforcing these engagement expectations and leaders modelled these principles through attendance at community meetings, direct meetings with residents and active leadership and problem-solving initiatives.

Captain Dilworth's leadership was repeatedly cited as exemplary, reflecting hands-on mentoring, SARA-based problem solving and a consistent reenforcement of procedural justice.

The report will also identify a few remaining priorities and growth opportunities, including expansion of public transparency and reporting, but we're hopeful that with

a few refinements FPD will be well positioned to serve as a model for post Consent Decree community policing.

Lastly, before I conclude, I'm begging the Court's indulgence for a personal note of appreciation. First, to outgoing City Manager John Hampton for his leadership, especially at a critical juncture where a steady hand was needed. He made some crucial hiring decisions that have led to this period of sustained momentum. Mr. Musgrave has big shoes to fill, and on behalf of the Monitoring Team, we welcome him and look forward to working with him.

And now Mayor Ella Jones, last July when I was here following the departure of many of the original DOJ team, I summarized and listed those individuals like you and Mr. Carey who had been a part of this matter from the beginning and included Captain Dilworth and Mayor Jones as the other, as the kids would say, OGs. I want to thank Mayor Jones for her commitment to this process and her support for the Monitoring Team, whether in gathering information for community surveys or providing the kind of historical perspective and institutional knowledge that is critical to our work and for just being present hearing after hearing, town hall after town hall. It is unlikely that I would have been here on day one without her intervention, and I'm not entirely sure that I would still be here in year ten without her leadership, so thank you, Mayor Jones.

THE COURT: And just so you know, she did step out, but I'm counting on these people to tell them all these things you're saying.

MONITOR TIDWELL: Well, I'm glad she is not here to hear. I'll stop there unless the Court has questions.

THE COURT: No, I don't have questions. I do thank you, and I think that doing the audits and the compliance work that needs to be done is very important, as Mr. Murray and Ms. Tidwell have noted, but it is expensive and time consuming and one of the things I think that I've appreciated is that they are figuring out ways to do it to not be as time consuming or as expensive so I think that is a good way to do it, and I think Ms. Washington once again expressed very well for all of us the goal here. I think everybody sort of said the same thing. It is -- I don't know if it is right. I'm not good with sports analogies of any sort. I was going to say home stretch, but I'm not sure what that really means in horse racing so I don't want to say home stretch, but we are making a lot of progress right now and I want it to continue and I'm sure it will. I appreciate very much the commitment of the City and its City officials and I know that there's a lot of momentum to continue. And every city, every municipality has differences. When I read about the Ferguson meeting about the data center, that's like every day there's a community having a big meeting about data centers. I mean, it is a new thing.

So, you know, people are going to disagree about what they think is right, and that's what we do in a democracy and then we figure out a good path forward.

I have been talking to the parties about the streamlining of the Consent Decree to try to sort of -- the lawyers and I have had a couple of sessions to just talk about what legally they thought they were headed to and what is happening, and I'm very impressed with the responsiveness of everyone and the way everyone is working hard to -- this is not -- it is to streamline and to -- there are some things that have happened that have been really good, and I think we can recognize some of those things. And if there is something in there that rather than say, oh, this provision about school resource officers, well, that hasn't been implemented, well, yeah, there is a reason for that. That has always been the way it was, and the dispatch and the jail, those are the things that were mentioned in there. They are the easy examples.

I don't want anybody to panic or be concerned about that. We are in this process. We are not -- nobody is just saying we're going to just say it is done and go away. That is not going to happen as long as I'm the judge in charge of it, just so you know that, but it is also really good to see how hard everyone is working to make sure that we are conserving resources and doing it so that it can be sustained. The most important thing as several people mentioned is that once

there's not federal oversight on this sometime in the future when that happens that these reforms continue, and I have a lot of faith that they will because of the hard work that you all have put into it so far and want to make sure that we do continue them. So we've got a ways to go. The final stretch is probably wrong if I'm thinking about how horse racing may work, if I understand it, which I don't understand even basketball, just so you know. But, you know, we're getting there. So thank you all very much. We will have another meeting. We will hear from you again. I'll talk to the lawyers, and we'll schedule the next hearing and get an order out on it.

I just want to thank everyone. I really appreciate the big turnout here today. I appreciate the continued interest and involvement of all the people. Whether you are speaking or not, you're here. I see people here, and we really want you to be here, and we appreciate it. And of course, to all the people in the City that are working so hard to achieve this, thank you very much. That is it. The Court is in recess.

(Proceedings concluded at 11:26 a.m.)

CERTIFICATE

I, Erihia T. Schuster, Registered Professional Reporter, hereby certify that I am a duly appointed Official Court Reporter of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

I further certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings held in the above-entitled case and that said transcript is a true and correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that this transcript contains pages 1 through 50 inclusive and was delivered electronically and that this reporter takes no responsibility for missing or damaged pages of this transcript when same transcript is copied by any party other than this reporter.

Dated at St. Louis, Missouri, 2nd of April, 2026.

/s/ Erihia T. Schuster  
Erihia T. Schuster, RPR  
Official Court Reporter