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# Transcript of Recorded Hearing

**Date:** May 13, 2019

**Case:** Meeting/Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services

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Transcript of Recorded Hearing  
Conducted on May 13, 2019

1                   Recorded Hearing held pursuant to  
2                   agreement, before Julie Ouedraogo, Notary Public  
3                   of the State of Maryland, at the MidCounty Service  
4                   Area, Charles W. Gilchrist Immigrant Resource  
5                   Center, 11002 Veirs Mill Road, Wheaton, Maryland,  
6                   20902.

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E X H I B I T S

(None.)

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MS. MONTERO: Good evening. Thanks for  
3 being here on this rainy, cloudy afternoon. I  
4 don't want to take up too much time, just to say  
5 my name is Luisa Montero. I'm the MidCounty  
6 regional service area director, and I just want to  
7 thank Gilchrist Center for hosting this and  
8 helping us to set up.

9 And I also want to thank the rec  
10 department who came here early and loaned us their  
11 microphone system and Trish Gill wherever she is  
12 moving tables and chairs and stuff, so thanks very  
13 much, and I hope you all have some questions for  
14 the county executive and council vice president,  
15 and I'll turn it over to them. Thanks for being  
16 here.

17 MR. ELRICH: So which mics work, this  
18 one?

19 MR. KATZ: Maybe -- should we go ahead  
20 and use that mic? No, these mics are just for --

21 MS. MONTERO: Yeah.

22 MR. ELRICH: Oops. Sorry about that.

23 MR. KATZ: That's okay. You can use  
24 it. This mic will sit there waiting.

25 MR. ELRICH: I have a bad relationship

1 with microphones. I'm still trying to master  
2 them. So we're doing our fourth?

3 MR. KATZ: Yes. He's not gotten the  
4 number right once.

5 MR. ELRICH: I got it right this time.

6 MR. KATZ: Yeah, yeah, you did. Okay.  
7 He's up to one.

8 MR. ELRICH: So we're doing our fourth  
9 listening session. We have two more to go. All  
10 right. So this math is working, and look, this is  
11 about listening to the people in the business  
12 community who want to talk to us about how  
13 Montgomery County policies, procedures, impact  
14 businesses in Montgomery County.

15 You know, we've heard a lot about  
16 issues that people have with the county's  
17 policies, and when I was campaigning I thought it  
18 would be a novel idea if perhaps we just sat down  
19 with people in the community and said okay, what  
20 are these issues, because it's one thing to say we  
21 don't like all the regulations and it's another  
22 thing to ask people to sit down and tell us what  
23 are the specific things that we need to deal with.

24 And that's what we're trying to do, is  
25 to hear what people in the community have to say,

1 tell us what your experiences are, what we've done  
2 that's affected you negatively or positively, and  
3 our goal is by the end of this year earliest in  
4 January to actually introduce legislation and  
5 regulation changes that alter the way Montgomery  
6 County works with businesses to make sure  
7 Montgomery County is not doing things that other  
8 surrounding jurisdictions don't do.

9 We want to make sure that we haven't  
10 created a regulatory environment that's more  
11 difficult than Frederick or Arlington or the  
12 district, and so if there are reasons why people  
13 find other places more friendly than us we would  
14 like to correct that problem, we would like to get  
15 to the point when our residents and business  
16 people would tell their friends why don't you do  
17 business around -- other business in Montgomery  
18 County because we're willing to work with and deal  
19 with the kind of concerns that people have, so our  
20 goal is to get this done.

21 There are going to be times during the  
22 next few months that as the department see things  
23 they can change they're going to change them on  
24 the fly. They're not going to wait for a report.  
25 So, for example, our procurement officer, having

1 heard complaints about how long our contracting  
2 papers were, took a very thick sheath of  
3 contracting paperwork and reduced it to a few  
4 pages just looking it over and said what do we  
5 really need to do, what don't we need to do.

6 So we're working at it as long as we go  
7 along, we're not going to wait until the end, but  
8 some stuff is going to take a little bit longer.  
9 We're taking written comments up to July 1st, and  
10 then we're going to have people go through the  
11 written comments and making sure that we change  
12 the things that we're pretty comfortable changing.

13 I really don't want people to feel this  
14 is the worst place to do business. It's kind of  
15 not the best reputation to have, so we want to  
16 change it, and I want to thank everybody for  
17 coming out tonight and participating, and if you  
18 don't want to say something you can always submit  
19 your comments in writing.

20 And if you have an issue with  
21 inspectors or anything where you're worried about  
22 what they're saying that could cause you grief  
23 down the road then you can submit your comments  
24 confidentially and nobody will see those comments  
25 but those people who are actually working and



1 analyzing what's been submitted to us, so we want  
2 everybody to feel comfortable, and let's see, who  
3 else is in the audience.

4 MR. KATZ: Ash just walked in.

5 MR. ELRICH: And so our new director of  
6 procurement is in back there. That's Ash Shetty.  
7 I've got Andrew Kleine who is the CAO is in the  
8 room. Who else is in the room? Judy Stephenson  
9 who works on small business stuff.

10 MR. KATZ: You have liquor control.

11 MR. ELRICH: Liquor control.

12 (Inaudible). I have Dale Tibbits from my office.  
13 I have -- who else is here?

14 MR. KATZ: Diane (inaudible).

15 MR. ELRICH: Oh, Diane from DPS.

16 MS. MONTERO: DPS, A number of DPS.

17 MR. ELRICH: There are a number of DPS  
18 people and there are a number of other economic  
19 development people in the room and Daniel Parra  
20 from the ECMCDC, economic development corporation,  
21 and that's where we are. And Sidney, do you want  
22 to say something?

23 MR. KATZ: Yeah. Yes, thank you.

24 Well, just as an aside actually my background is  
25 in small business. My grandparents actually

1 started a small business in Gaithersburg in 1918  
2 and I ran that store up until the time it was 95  
3 years old, until I got on the county council.

4 I was the mayor of Gaithersburg and I  
5 was part time there and a full time owner of a  
6 small business, and candidly I love small  
7 businesses. I realize that in Montgomery County  
8 to this day that there's -- most of the -- a  
9 majority of the employment that we have depending  
10 on what your definition of a small business is  
11 really are from small businesses, that we employ  
12 most people through a small business.

13 And when Mark and I -- when Mark was  
14 running for county exec he called me and he said  
15 that if -- when he won would I be interested in  
16 trying to help get small businesses back on track,  
17 and I said sure. I mean, it's so very necessary,  
18 and that's how we got from A to B.

19 We actually decided -- at first I  
20 thought the idea should be that we were going to  
21 have a committee and that we were going to -- at  
22 the end of it we were going to have listening  
23 sessions and everything else and we were with the  
24 committee and do all those sorts of things, and  
25 then he said you know what, let's do this in

1 reverse. Let's have a listening session first,  
2 which we've done, and he's right on this. We've  
3 had -- this is the fourth one --

4 MR. ELRICH: Fourth one.

5 MR. KATZ: -- yeah, and -- finally  
6 right on this, and we have obviously two more.  
7 We've actually gotten some very, very good  
8 suggestions, and as was pointed out when Ash  
9 Shetty heard the first day the complaint about the  
10 thickness of the contract that we were needing he  
11 came up by the third one and he said this is the  
12 old one and this is the new one, and that's what  
13 this is all about.

14 We want success. We want everybody to  
15 come here, you are here to be successful, and  
16 that's what we're all about. We have only one  
17 person so far that has said that they would like  
18 to speak this evening, so we certainly are going  
19 to open it up if anybody else would like to.  
20 Either that or I'm going to ask Mark to sing, so  
21 I'm going to strongly suggest that someone speak  
22 anyhow.

23 MR. ELRICH: Please. I'm going to have  
24 you do rap poetry.

25 MR. KATZ: They don't want that either.

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1 MR. ELRICH: Oh, two people have signed  
2 up.

3 MR. KATZ: Two people, all right.

4 MR. ELRICH: So the first person that  
5 signed up is James Mensah.

6 MR. MENSAH: Do I --

7 MR. ELRICH: Yeah.

8 MR. KATZ: And we're going to ask you  
9 to please keep it around three minutes. Obviously  
10 we're not going to hold you to every second of  
11 that.

12 MR. MENSAH: Thank you. Good evening.  
13 My name is James Mensah. I'm a business owner in  
14 Wheaton for the past 16 years, and fairly recently  
15 my wife and I opened a new business off of Elkins  
16 Street where actually the old Gilchrist Center  
17 was, and this business is called FAs Marketplace.  
18 This business is --

19 MR. KATZ: Can you all hear him in the  
20 back?

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yes.

22 MR. KATZ: You can. Okay. If not just  
23 take the mic.

24 MR. MENSAH: Okay. This business is  
25 pretty much a community social shopping

1 environment where it allows for -- a fossil for  
2 economic growth and small business through the  
3 arts and entrepreneurship, and one of the things  
4 about the business that we decided to open this  
5 was from -- through conversations with you, Mark.  
6 I'm not sure if you remember.

7 We met a while ago and we talked about  
8 incubator space and things of the like that  
9 artisans and also entrepreneurs do not have, and  
10 one of the things that we found in opening the  
11 business, there are a lot of challenges for small  
12 business owners in three categories. One is space  
13 for access to information. Information is  
14 somewhat guarded in some degrees of what I found  
15 in opening the second business.

16 Also there was resources that are  
17 available but certain groups, especially the  
18 groups that we serve, did not have these things  
19 available to them, and so that led to lack of  
20 opportunity, and so what we created, this  
21 disruptor type business environment, allowing for  
22 small businesses to have a space where it's almost  
23 similar to what both of you are doing here.

24 In order to get things done you have to  
25 listen to the people and also be where they are,

1 and so the space is as I mentioned off of Elkins  
2 Street, and we'd definitely like to invite you to  
3 come by and see it and experience it because you  
4 have to walk through, and some of the officials  
5 here and government representatives have come by.

6 And it's a space that allows for things  
7 that you talked about during campaign to happen,  
8 and it also allows for different immigrant  
9 populations to have a space where these things can  
10 grow and blossom, so I'm definitely keeping in  
11 mind the three minutes. I definitely want to  
12 invite you by. I'm not certain if I go through  
13 the chief of staff or your office or -- you're  
14 very welcome to come by any time.

15 MR. ELRICH: So I guess I'd ask you to  
16 -- you could probably send it in to us, but what  
17 are the things that you found hard to get  
18 information about? You know, where were there  
19 bottlenecks in getting information? That would be  
20 helpful to them.

21 MR. MENSAH: One of the biggest  
22 challenges was getting the occupancy permit  
23 because we had to go down to Rockville and made a  
24 couple of calls -- made several calls, but  
25 eventually what I had to do was just go down there

1 and spend a good amount of time because our  
2 opening was April 20th.

3 And my landlord said hey, without this  
4 you can't open, so we had marketed, we had done  
5 everything towards a launch, and that piece was a  
6 big challenge in getting it. I had to spend a lot  
7 of time with folks trying to find old records  
8 because the Gilchrist Center, one, the older  
9 location had been closed for over 10 years, so  
10 information was somewhat not around.

11 MR. KATZ: Okay. So I understand, so  
12 you rent space out to other vendors?

13 MR. MENSAH: Yes.

14 MR. KATZ: Is that what you're doing?  
15 So you're sort of like a mini mall in there, is  
16 that --

17 MR. MENSAH: To a certain degree, yes.  
18 We rent space out to other vendors, but we also  
19 have space for -- there's classes for these  
20 vendors that we're trying to have for them. For  
21 example, there are other resources in the county  
22 where it's small business plan writing, grant  
23 writing, et cetera.

24 But what I've found is that these  
25 vendors and these people, they don't want --

1       somehow they can't make it to the locations.  
2       Maybe it's the hours of the time they're open or  
3       maybe it's the distance of where it is. Today I  
4       actually returned some artwork from Highland  
5       Elementary School right off of Arcola of --

6                   MR. KATZ: Uh-huh.

7                   MR. MENSAH: -- a great art teacher,  
8       Ms. Smith. And what they did because the county  
9       had work, the childrens work in Montgomery Mall  
10      displayed there, but what I found or what we  
11      found, a lot of the parents who live pretty much  
12      in the three-mile radius from here, they could not  
13      make it to Montgomery Mall.

14                  Maybe it's time, maybe it's hours,  
15      maybe it's distance or public transportation, et  
16      cetera, but having it about a three, four,  
17      five-mile radius within there we had many parents  
18      who came through and they were proud to see their  
19      children's artwork on the wall and were proud to  
20      see it happen because oftentimes the work is too  
21      far where it is and the parents and kids cannot  
22      get to it.

23                  MR. KATZ: Good. Thank you.

24                  MR. MENSAH: Thank you.

25                  MR. ELRICH: And the other person that



1 signed up is Filippo.

2 MR. LEO: You want which copy?

3 MR. ELRICH: You signed up. Did you  
4 want to say something?

5 MR. LEO: No, it's not by this action,  
6 maybe it's a suggestion.

7 MR. ELRICH: See, you signed, so --

8 MR. LEO: Somebody signed for me.

9 MR. ELRICH: -- you have to speak now.

10 MR. LEO: Somebody signed for me now.

11 It's because of a (unintelligible), you know, in  
12 Triangle Lane. I mean, the county took the  
13 parking lot and there was about 165 parking.

14 Now we got a beautiful building and we  
15 all -- everybody in Triangle Lane will survive and  
16 what I suggest, that if it's possible for trial  
17 basis just to give opportunity for the  
18 (unintelligible) to give up one hour free, the  
19 first hour free for the customer to park and let  
20 us see if we can get some customers back, the new  
21 routine of Wheaton.

22 That's the only things I want to  
23 suggest to you, if it's possible maybe you want to  
24 do for a trial just for a year. I mean, we got to  
25 -- definitely we got to talk to DOT, they in

1 charge of the building, but I believe one hour it  
2 would be great for the customer to bring back them  
3 into Wheaton.

4 MR. ELRICH: I can talk to people I  
5 know.

6 MR. KATZ: I can talk to people I know,  
7 too. So right now is it metered, what is the --

8 MR. LEO: Right now we have no parking.

9 MR. KATZ: Yeah, but so -- and you  
10 charge -- the county charges from the first minute  
11 someone gets there?

12 MR. LEO: I really don't know how it's  
13 going to be, the new parking, because at the  
14 moment we got maybe all together in downtown  
15 Wheaton maybe 30 parking if the Kloeckner  
16 Corporation -- the worker, they take the parking  
17 in the morning so there is no more space open --

18 MR. KATZ: Right.

19 MR. LEO: -- for the customer, so I  
20 really don't know how they going to operate it, if  
21 they going to be (unintelligible) or they going to  
22 let people -- the customer come and get a ticket  
23 and then at the end they pay for it. I really  
24 don't know how they going to do it.

25 MR. KATZ: Okay.

1 MR. LEO: Definitely they said there  
2 would be about 400 parking which is a great --

3 MR. KATZ: And what type of business  
4 are you in?

5 MR. LEO: Oh, I got a Italian deli,  
6 Filippo Italian Specialty in Wheaton.

7 MR. KATZ: Uh-huh.

8 MR. ELRICH: I've been getting subs  
9 from there for like decades.

10 MR. LEO: Yeah, we've been over there  
11 for the longest time.

12 MR. KATZ: He will stay there longer  
13 than an hour to eat, so yeah --

14 MR. LEO: No, he's been a great  
15 customer.

16 MR. KATZ: Yeah.

17 MR. LEO: He's been a great customer.

18 MR. KATZ: I'm teasing. That's it.

19 MR. LEO: Yes.

20 MR. KATZ: But -- so -- and obviously  
21 restaurants need something. I mean, it's not an  
22 in and out necessary -- in and out traffic. You  
23 need somebody to stay there if you're a restaurant  
24 for a half hour, 45 minutes, whatever it is, so  
25 that's something we should --

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1 MR. ELRICH: We can talk about that.

2 MR. KATZ: Yeah, that's good.

3 MR. LEO: Okay. Thank you so much for  
4 the direction.

5 MR. KATZ: Thank you.

6 MR. LEO: Thank you.

7 MR. ELRICH: Luisa.

8 MS. MONTERO: Something just for  
9 Filippo and others --

10 MR. KATZ: You're going to need to come  
11 up on the mic, please.

12 MS. MONTERO: Just to say -- thanks,  
13 Filippo, for that, but if there are questions kind  
14 of like that that maybe don't relate exactly to  
15 sort of the processing that we do have folks in  
16 the audience, like we have Rebecca from MCDOT  
17 representing Al Roshdieh, so we'll be making notes  
18 of some of those things, too.

19 MR. LEO: Oh, great.

20 MR. PARRA: And I would like to add  
21 something to what Filippo said because we have  
22 received some complaints about what is happening  
23 right now with parking, and it has to do with the  
24 regulation that says that construction people  
25 should use a parking garage or a parking lot that

1 is close to Veirs Mill Road, but they are not  
2 using that road so we are sending information to  
3 MCDOT so that way they can enforce that. I don't  
4 know exactly where parking is. Do you remember,  
5 Filippo?

6 MR. LEO: Well, the parking is just  
7 whatever is left for parking lot.

8 MR. PARRA: Okay.

9 MR. LEO: Maybe it's like 30 spaces in  
10 the lot.

11 MR. PARRA: Okay. The construction  
12 people is using those spaces, so --

13 MR. LEO: They use it as normal  
14 parking.

15 MR. PARRA: That's why they say that  
16 they don't have parking, but just to complement  
17 that. Thank you.

18 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: The  
19 parking is lot 15.

20 MR. KATZ: Okay.

21 MS. VALENTINE: You guys know me --

22 MR. KATZ: We do. How are you?

23 MS. VALENTINE: -- but for those that  
24 don't know me in the audience I'm Dr. Drena  
25 Valentine. I am the founder and CEO of Integrated

1 Management Solutions as well as the interim  
2 executive director for the Maryland Black Chamber  
3 of Commerce.

4 I was actually going to save this  
5 question for next week when my members show up,  
6 but I want to ask you this because I had a very  
7 good meeting with Ash Shetty and Grace this  
8 morning, and I had asked the question and got an  
9 answer but I want to ask you the question.

10 And my question is this: I like the --  
11 I love what's going on here. I love what's going  
12 on here, and if you read my newsletters that's  
13 what I'm telling my members. I do have a --  
14 somewhat of a concern, though, and my question is  
15 this, and I'm going to give an analogy why I'm  
16 asking this.

17 My question is this: What are you  
18 doing so that you get buy-in from the folks that  
19 you point out in the audience and from those  
20 individuals, those agencies who have been doing  
21 this, doing this procurement processes for many,  
22 many years. And the reason why I ask this, I was  
23 thinking about this the other day, is like my  
24 husband is obsessed with having his -- the front  
25 yard look like a golf course.

1                   And so he goes out and buys fertilizers  
2                   and everything and keeps it up and the grass looks  
3                   green, but if you look closely there are times  
4                   when there is green stalks that have flowers on  
5                   it. Well, those are weeds.

6                   UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Uh-huh.

7                   MS. VALENTINE: And so you can have a  
8                   pretty green yard but it may not be healthy  
9                   because you have the weeds in it, and so therefore  
10                  what you're doing is very good, right,  
11                  understanding that small business owners have been  
12                  going through this for years.

13                  And we want to know like how are you  
14                  going to get buy-in so that it sticks because  
15                  having it on paper, having all the changes that's  
16                  on paper is a waste of time if you don't have  
17                  folks who have this buy-in and not the culture,  
18                  right, Shetty, Ash, but if -- so I had asked him  
19                  how is he talking -- going to address the culture  
20                  that's been going on --

21                  MR. KATZ: Uh-huh.

22                  MS. VALENTINE: -- in the county, and I  
23                  understood the reason why he preferred not to go  
24                  in that direction, but to me it's the same thing.  
25                  I'm excited to see and hear change because Shetty

1 impressed me when he told me that the pages were  
2 171 pages and he got it down to 9 pages, so that's  
3 real change.

4 MR. KATZ: Sure.

5 MS. VALENTINE: But if you was putting  
6 it on paper and you have folks who have been in  
7 career positions for a while those are who we're  
8 really dealing with.

9 MR. KATZ: Right.

10 MS. VALENTINE: I mean, I'm happy that  
11 you're giving us an opportunity to come out and  
12 speak.

13 MR. KATZ: We got you.

14 MS. VALENTINE: But those are the  
15 people who are on the ground.

16 MR. KATZ: So --

17 MS. VALENTINE: Huh-uh.

18 MR. KATZ: No, that's a good question.

19 MR. ELRICH: I'm appointing people,  
20 putting people in the positions because I expect  
21 them to carry out what we're going to do and I'm  
22 not ambiguous about it, and if I continue to get  
23 complaints I'm going to expect managers to deal  
24 with people who cause complaints to come up. I'm  
25 not doing this, you know, for show because, you



1 know, we had a great report on minority  
2 contracting --

3 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

4 MR. ELRICH: -- and showed it all  
5 around and then didn't do anything. I don't  
6 intend to operate that way, so I expect that we're  
7 going to do what we say we're going to do. I told  
8 people I was going to have these meetings. We're  
9 having these meetings. We're going to take the  
10 input. We're going to change things and people  
11 are going to have to adapt to change. It's a  
12 condition of employment, to be blunt.

13 MR. KATZ: Well, and candidly Ash  
14 Shetty is a perfect example. He was here -- now,  
15 he wasn't here prior to this administration.

16 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

17 MR. KATZ: But he was here. He heard  
18 the problem just like we did.

19 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

20 MR. KATZ: And he did something about  
21 it within a week or 10 days, whatever it was, and  
22 that's what this is about. This is not about that  
23 -- you know, that we are just pretending that we  
24 have a problem. We have a problem.

25 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

1 MR. KATZ: And we're not just  
2 pretending that we want to solve it. We want you  
3 to help us solve it, and that's what this is  
4 about, and I can tell you there's going to be a  
5 change from what we do and in some cases, you  
6 know, everybody gets a little complacent.

7 Everybody says well, you know what,  
8 we've always done it that way. Well, that might  
9 not be the reason to do it, and so now we're going  
10 to be able to say you know we used to do it that  
11 way. It worked okay for a year or so, didn't work  
12 forever.

13 Now we're going to change it, and so  
14 that's what this is about. Just keep helping us,  
15 and you can ask that question again when your  
16 membership is with you next week, but that's what  
17 this is about. We are sincere that this has got  
18 to change and we're going to change it.

19 MS. VALENTINE: Well, I'm going to go  
20 on record now, and it will be repeated next week,  
21 is that we're excited. We're excited, and it's  
22 not very often that we have the opportunity to let  
23 you know what's going on and not feel intimidated  
24 although, although -- and Mark, I know I told you  
25 this, is that folks in the -- even in my last

1 meeting with Montgomery County businesses the  
2 first thing that came up to me -- the first thing  
3 they said to me when I was saying you know, we  
4 need to come out, we need to come out, we need to,  
5 you know, be supportive of this process, and the  
6 first thing that came out from at least a handful  
7 of business owners is that we don't want to be  
8 getting in trouble, we don't want to be  
9 blackwalled, but -- I mean, you're shaking your  
10 head, but I can tell you --

11 MR. KATZ: I understand. I understand  
12 that's a concern.

13 MS. VALENTINE: -- the first time I  
14 came out to one of these --

15 MR. KATZ: Yeah.

16 MS. VALENTINE: -- to this meeting and  
17 when I was listening to you guys speak I laughed  
18 to myself because I was thinking hm, the same  
19 agency that screwed me over is in the room. It  
20 will be interesting to see what that change is  
21 because just because they're in a room, I mean,  
22 this is from being on both sides --

23 MR. KATZ: I hear you.

24 MS. VALENTINE: -- and listening to  
25 small business owners as well as being a business

1 owner myself, does not mean that, you know, that  
2 the change is going to come, at least in our  
3 minds, but we are very happy, very excited that  
4 this is happening, so thank you.

5 MR. KATZ: Thank you, and just as a  
6 note on that one, you know, I have said a couple  
7 of times since the whole thing for procurement,  
8 you know, I've been involved for a long time and  
9 nobody called me and said oh, by the way, we got a  
10 90-page form for procurement. Nobody did that.  
11 They did it here, and so I understand what you're  
12 saying, I do.

13 People do get concerned and say look, I  
14 hope somebody else mentions this. But there's not  
15 going to be -- we want this thing to be a better  
16 system and we've gotten it to be a better system  
17 for procurement and we're getting it to be a  
18 better system for everything else, but that's what  
19 this is all about.

20 MR. ELRICH: I just want to add that,  
21 you know, my intention is to have a more  
22 centralized and a more uniform procurement  
23 process. We've gotten -- we've fractured our  
24 procurement across too many places, and I think  
25 it's hard to track what people do and I'm not

1 particularly happy with the results of our  
2 procurement processes in the past, period.

3 So I have no interest in continuing  
4 business as usual, period, and so you're going to  
5 see a procurement department that more uniformly  
6 carries out a set of policies and procedures and  
7 more uniformly does procurement.

8 MS. VALENTINE: Can I ask another  
9 question? I'm sorry.

10 MR. KATZ: Sure.

11 MS. VALENTINE: I'm sorry, guys, to ask  
12 another question. The other reason why I'm asking  
13 that question because -- are you giving your --  
14 those who are in the position who is on the ground  
15 floor, are you giving them an opportunity to also  
16 come with you -- come talk to you about what has  
17 been historical in this county?

18 And the reason why I was asking this is  
19 -- I asked this of Ash Shetty also, is that could  
20 it be that one of the reasons why the system is  
21 fractured as you put it is because there's challenges  
22 with the budget, and challenges with what you say,  
23 what's been going on for a while, so it still  
24 applies to this buy-in because seriously if you --  
25 I mean, hearing the small businesses is a huge

1 first step, but we're not going to be talking to  
2 you on a regular basis.

3 The agencies that I go after, which  
4 means that I'm focused on because I know they buy  
5 my services, I'm not talking to you, and then when  
6 I run up against these challenges -- now, I did  
7 find out that Ash is going to put things in place  
8 to allow businesses to come in and speak to him on  
9 a regular basis.

10 But when an RFP, RFQ come out and I'm  
11 in the throws of a challenge, if you will, and I  
12 know I'm talking ahead, it is good that you're  
13 allowing us to talk to you, but we won't be  
14 talking to you on a regular basis. That's all I'm  
15 saying.

16 MR. ELRICH: But some of this stuff is  
17 structural. The bundling of contracts --

18 MS. VALENTINE: Yes.

19 MR. ELRICH: -- that's something that  
20 we can fix. If you see contracts still bundled  
21 that's not what I want. Requirements that you do  
22 business with the county for five years before you  
23 can get a contract on your own, I'm not interested  
24 in that because people will forever stay the sub  
25 and they'll never be the primary.

1 MS. VALENTINE: Specifically to what  
2 you just said about how many years you need to be  
3 in business, et cetera, when you look at contract  
4 specifics, and I don't want to generalize, but if  
5 they have a specific service that they're looking  
6 for, I mean, that -- that's the norm, that's the  
7 norm.

8 And so changing a law which is what I  
9 understood to be happening is so much different  
10 from when there's a need for the county and a  
11 specific solicitation goes out and there can be as  
12 many laws out there as there need to be, but when  
13 it comes down to this agency, this department meet  
14 these services and we don't care, you know, if  
15 you're an expertise in your area and you can fully  
16 prove that.

17 But if you're not in business, and this  
18 is one of the things -- one of the challenges that  
19 I experience personally. What -- the work that  
20 I'm doing, I've been doing it for over 20 years,  
21 but because I had not opened my -- or had been in  
22 business --

23 MR. KATZ: Uh-huh.

24 MS. VALENTINE: -- long enough they  
25 weren't going to look at me, and they literally

1 told me you haven't been in business, Dr.

2 Valentine, long enough, which is crazy.

3 MR. ELRICH: All I can say is we're  
4 changing things like arbitrary requirements that  
5 make it hard for people --

6 MS. VALENTINE: Okay.

7 MR. ELRICH: -- to meet those  
8 requirements and a bunch of other stuff like that  
9 then become policies so contracts don't go out and  
10 people don't look at the contract and say I'll  
11 never be the prime or, you know, I have to hope  
12 I'm the sub and then you know that the prime  
13 contractor always calls on the same group of subs  
14 that they always call on --

15 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

16 MR. ELRICH: -- so you never get entry  
17 into the system.

18 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

19 MR. ELRICH: And I've heard all these  
20 complaints which is why we're doing this and why,  
21 you know, Ash is familiar with this because we sat  
22 down and talked about it. My intent is to break  
23 the system as it exists now and to open it up to  
24 other people. I can't guarantee who is going to  
25 win a contract.



1 MS. VALENTINE: Oh, I understand that.

2 MR. ELRICH: But I can guarantee that  
3 it's not going to be a closed circle of the same  
4 people repeating over and over again and with  
5 other people saying I couldn't even get  
6 considered. I've heard this too many times --

7 MS. VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

8 MR. ELRICH: -- from too many people  
9 and it doesn't serve the county well, and I'm  
10 making sure I've got everybody in place who  
11 understands that business as usual doesn't serve  
12 the county well.

13 MS. VALENTINE: Okay. Well, I want to  
14 say again so we end on a good note that the --

15 MR. KATZ: That's a good note. That  
16 wasn't a bad note.

17 MS. VALENTINE: -- Maryland Black  
18 Chamber of Commerce is here supporting that  
19 effort, and that's the reason why I'm here,  
20 because I want to hear also what other small  
21 business owners are and anything that we can do to  
22 make sure this change rolls out smoothly, that's  
23 what we're here for, so thank you.

24 MR. ELRICH: Thank you.

25 MR. KATZ: Thank you. Anybody else?

1 MR. ELRICH: Anybody else? The  
2 microphone is free. Raise your hand. You can  
3 come up here, ask a question, say something  
4 because I'm not going to sing and he's not going  
5 to read poetry.

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank  
7 you.

8 MR. ELRICH: We'll spare you guys that.  
9 Yeah.

10 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you for at least  
11 having this meeting.

12 MR. ELRICH: Yeah.

13 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Leroy Johnson.

14 MR. KATZ: Can you speak into the mic a  
15 little bit?

16 MR. JOHNSON: Sure.

17 MR. KATZ: You can raise it up. Yeah,  
18 there you go.

19 MR. JOHNSON: I'd like to know what the  
20 spend in the procurement area for the county is,  
21 the numbers, the actual numbers.

22 MR. SHETTY: It's just over a billion  
23 dollars.

24 MR. KATZ: Ash, you're going to have to  
25 come up, please.

1 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, come on up, Ash. I  
2 was going to invite you up anyways so come on up.

3 MR. SHETTY: Always happy to.

4 MR. JOHNSON: Everybody, this is Ash.

5 MR. SHETTY: It's just over a billion  
6 dollars, so it's a billion point something, and I  
7 don't know if Jayce has the exact amount. It is  
8 on our website, but it's a hair over one billion.

9 MR. JOHNSON: Is that an increase from  
10 last year, or --

11 MR. SHETTY: Yes, it is.

12 MR. JOHNSON: To what percentage?

13 MR. SHETTY: It's a nominal percentage  
14 increase, but it is an increase. In other words,  
15 our spend did go up, not down, the spend managed  
16 by procurement. The number of contracts went up,  
17 too.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, okay. I wanted to  
19 make sure you were increasing, you know. I'm here  
20 for an opportunity, and it's -- thanks, Ash.

21 MR. SHETTY: Yeah, yeah.

22 MR. JOHNSON: I'm here for an  
23 opportunity to do some print work and to do some  
24 business with the county, and I just want to thank  
25 you for having us, you know, and I'll be ready,

1 I'll be here, to hold your feet to the fire to say  
2 -- I don't mean it disrespectful but, you know --

3 MR. KATZ: That's all right.

4 MR. JOHNSON: -- people always say one  
5 thing and do another, you know. I'm a -- sort of  
6 a straight forward shooter, you know, so -- but I  
7 look for opportunities that are knocking at your  
8 doorstep. Okay. Thank you.

9 MR. KATZ: Can I ask, you said you're  
10 in the printing business?

11 MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

12 MR. KATZ: So you don't just want to do  
13 business with the county. How about how are we  
14 doing in other areas to help you do business?

15 MR. JOHNSON: We're doing --

16 MR. KATZ: You got to come close to the  
17 mic.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, okay. Sure. We're  
19 doing other business elsewhere but, you know,  
20 we're not doing business in Montgomery County.

21 MR. KATZ: Got you.

22 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. KATZ: Thank you. Anybody else?

24 MR. ELRICH: Anybody else?

25 MR. KATZ: Going once.

1 MR. ELRICH: We got a room full of  
2 people and no questions.

3 MR. KATZ: Please.

4 MR. FELDMAN: Hello, Mark and Sidney.  
5 My name is Dave Feldman. I know both of you guys.  
6 For those of you who don't know me I work as a  
7 founder of Bethesda Green which is a (inaudible)  
8 incubator and working with One Montgomery Green,  
9 Dave Taghipour is on the board of One Montgomery  
10 Green.

11 And we're actually in the process of  
12 launching a go local program right now which is  
13 going to help promote businesses that are local in  
14 Montgomery County, and the goal is to kind of give  
15 a brand and a face to allow these businesses -- we  
16 have a shop local, a recycle local. There's  
17 actually a big green component to it, and the  
18 first step that we took was we actually mapped all  
19 of the -- well, not all.

20 We mapped 300 businesses in a number of  
21 different sectors in an application, and we're  
22 actually going to be keeping adding onto that over  
23 time. Our -- I guess my question is that we want  
24 to work as closely with the county as we can.  
25 We've actually had that conversation with MCEDC.

1                   We're working with the food council.  
2                   We're very collaborative across a whole range of  
3                   different groups. Even the work that you're doing  
4                   I think there's some synergies to start to connect  
5                   with others. How can we best serve the county,  
6                   and how can you support this kind of initiative to  
7                   really grow the local businesses, put them on the  
8                   radar with a lot of folks who, one, don't realize  
9                   that there's a value in shopping local.

10                   When you buy local the money stays more  
11                   local. I think it's like 45 percent of the money  
12                   stays in the county when you buy from a smaller  
13                   business rather than a larger business, so there's  
14                   also an education program that goes along with  
15                   that, so how can we support each other and really  
16                   kind of get Montgomery County known as a place  
17                   that's supportive of local businesses.

18                   MR. KATZ: One of the first things has  
19                   got to be communication. I mean, somebody has to  
20                   know about you in order for it to happen, and so I  
21                   think we probably need to have a marketing plan,  
22                   whether just, you know, for you and with the  
23                   county and everybody else.

24                   Communication is a key here, and then  
25                   we have to figure out what's the best way to move

1 forward with it but, you know, Dave, one of the  
2 things that has been discussed is the branding of  
3 Montgomery County in general and, you know, we  
4 don't do a great job of it.

5 We have a pretty good story to tell but  
6 we don't tell it enough, and the Montgomery County  
7 Economic Development Corporation, they send out  
8 quite a bit of literature and they'll talk about  
9 the educational backgrounds that people in  
10 Montgomery County have, I mean, the disposable  
11 income that many people in Montgomery County --  
12 not everybody that is but, you know, on an average  
13 basis we have a good disposable income.

14 We have all of the things that are  
15 necessary, but we don't market ourselves well. So  
16 if we can start to do that -- and also, you know,  
17 we've -- and the reason -- one of the reasons Mark  
18 and I became buddies was over this whole thing for  
19 minimum wage. I mean, he was on one side of the  
20 fence and I was on the other side of the fence and  
21 we worked out so we could get a 9/0 vote from  
22 Montgomery County to have a pretty good program  
23 for minimum wage.

24 Now, the state of Maryland has taken  
25 that one on as well, but -- so there are things we

1 do in Montgomery County that other places don't do  
2 but it can absolutely if we do it right be a help  
3 to business and we need to work together to do it,  
4 but I think candidly the bottom line is we need to  
5 have people sit down with each other and come up  
6 with a good marketing plan for the county.

7 MR. FELDMAN: Yeah.

8 MR. KATZ: Branding.

9 MR. ELRICH: And the other side of it  
10 is I want to do local preferences in the  
11 contracting process. You know, Prince George's  
12 County has them so I listen to people tell me they  
13 get killed over there but, you know, Montgomery  
14 County has no protections and I think that, you  
15 know, you said it, you know, money spent locally  
16 stays local.

17 And so if I sign a contract with a  
18 Virginia company or a Pennsylvania company my  
19 money is gone. If I sign it with a Montgomery  
20 County company I got property to tax, incomes to  
21 tax, inventory, so many wonderful things to tax.

22 MR. FELDMAN: Right.

23 MR. ELRICH: That, you know, the money  
24 comes back to the county, so instead of just  
25 looking solely at the price of a contract you've



1 got to consider the total economic benefit to the  
2 county.

3 We don't do that, and I tell people if  
4 somebody was talking to me about an economic  
5 development program they'd tell me this company is  
6 good to come here not just because of it being  
7 here but because there would be this multiplier  
8 effect of the houses, people buy and the money  
9 they spend in local stores and that you really  
10 have to look at this as in the big picture, not  
11 just the dollars and cents of what it looks like  
12 to deal.

13 And I think that applies to small  
14 businesses, so we want to make sure that we're  
15 advantaging local businesses and we keep as much  
16 of the business in the county as possible. It's  
17 different than a small business reserve which has  
18 kind of a minimalist (inaudible) to it. It's  
19 genuinely -- I'd be perfectly happy with as many  
20 contracts going to county residents as possible.

21 You know, I don't view achieving the  
22 minimum to be the standard. It would be good if  
23 Montgomery County businesses were able to  
24 successfully compete across the board and win more  
25 contracts and keep the money in the county, so I'm

1 really committed to that.

2 MR. FELDMAN: Yeah, if there's a  
3 procurement piece that would really help. That  
4 would incentivise both at the county level --

5 MR. ELRICH: Right.

6 MR. FELDMAN: -- and for other  
7 businesses as well.

8 MR. ELRICH: And I think it would  
9 encourage people, you know, to come here --

10 MR. FELDMAN: Yeah.

11 MR. ELRICH: -- you know, because it's  
12 a -- they'll know that it's an environment that,  
13 you know, values them, and I think that's the kind  
14 of thing that would make a difference.

15 MR. FELDMAN: More to come, more about  
16 the launch in 30 days.

17 MR. ELRICH: Okay.

18 MR. FELDMAN: So hopefully we'll talk  
19 more. Thank you.

20 MR. KATZ: Thank you. Anybody else?

21 MR. BONILLA: My name is Luis Bonilla.  
22 I've been in business for the last 19 years here  
23 in Wheaton, and I just learned today that -- maybe  
24 this is late, but I just learned today that  
25 they're increasing the charging time of the meter

1 from six to ten, I guess they want to do that.

2 And I guess that's something that being  
3 the fact that the redevelopment hasn't been  
4 completed, I mean, we haven't really had any break  
5 after all the parking that was taken, not of  
6 parking available, so I guess that's something  
7 that I don't know if you could do something about  
8 it because I think that's going to hurt our small  
9 businesses mainly because of the fact that we're  
10 talking about helping business, small businesses  
11 that I don't think that's going to help.

12 MR. ELRICH: So the reason people  
13 raised this is they said they wanted more turnover  
14 on the meters so the customers could find places  
15 to park, and there's particular concern about an  
16 open lot where apartment dwellers, because they  
17 don't want to pay the price of parking in the  
18 apartment building, were parking in the parking  
19 lots after 6:00 p.m. and using up spaces.

20 And then customers try to go to the  
21 shops there and they can't get a parking space  
22 because the people living in the apartments are  
23 parking in the parking lot, so we were trying to  
24 respond to people who were saying we need more  
25 turnover in the parking, we need the spaces free

1 not occupied by apartment owners or apartment  
2 renters.

3 MR. BONILLA: Yeah, but it will work --  
4 I mean it will hurt both ways, but I think it will  
5 hurt the business. They're going to get hurt more  
6 than, you know --

7 MR. KATZ: So what time would you say  
8 that they should start the parking --

9 MR. ELRICH: Stop the parking.

10 MR. KATZ: -- or stop the parking?

11 MR. BONILLA: I mean, for me and, you  
12 know, I talk to some of my colleagues around and,  
13 you know, we expect at least they would leave it  
14 the way it is right now until maybe, you know, a  
15 couple of years later because we know in Bethesda  
16 they do that, but in here we're still in the  
17 middle of the redevelopment.

18 MR. KATZ: Right.

19 MR. BONILLA: And I guess we should at  
20 least be able to tell our clients well, we have  
21 free parking after, I mean, 6 o'clock because if  
22 they -- I mean, if it's changed to -- like until  
23 7:00, you know, or clients wouldn't have any break  
24 and, you know, it's already uncomfortable to be  
25 feeding meters within the day and then, you know,

1 the evening it's going to cause more problems.

2 MR. KATZ: So you're saying that after  
3 6 o'clock at night there should be free parking.  
4 Is that what you're saying?

5 MR. BONILLA: Yeah, which is the way it  
6 is right now.

7 MR. ELRICH: That's the way it is right  
8 now.

9 MR. KATZ: That's the way it is now.

10 MR. BONILLA: Yeah.

11 MR. KATZ: But if you went from 6:00 --  
12 say from 6:00 to 10:00 it would be free or 6:00 to  
13 9:00, would that be something that would be  
14 workable?

15 MR. BONILLA: Yeah. I mean, we'll  
16 appreciate it if it could be left the way it is  
17 right now for at least --

18 MR. KATZ: Then you wouldn't have the  
19 overnight parking.

20 MR. ELRICH: But then you have the  
21 overnight parking.

22 MR. KATZ: Right, after that, yeah.

23 MR. ELRICH: Okay.

24 MR. KATZ: Something to consider.

25 MR. BONILLA: Thank you.

1 MR. ELRICH: Thank you. It's in the  
2 budget now.

3 MR. KATZ: Hm.

4 MR. ELRICH: It's in the budget now.

5 MR. KATZ: Yeah, thanks.

6 MR. ELRICH: You're welcome. Anybody  
7 else?

8 MR. KATZ: We got cookies. You can  
9 enjoy the cookies. Nope?

10 MR. ELRICH: Nothing's going to make  
11 you guys more talkative.

12 MR. KATZ: All right. Yes, please.

13 MR. WILSON: My name is Pete Wilson. I  
14 was a small residential not on contract for about  
15 30 years in the Silver Spring/Wheaton area. I'm  
16 currently retired but had to start a new business,  
17 a consulting business to handle some work that  
18 came my way, but anyway my request or idea about  
19 trying to help incentivise small businesses do  
20 better is that if you've got any business you've  
21 got federal rules and regulations that you have to  
22 abide by.

23 You've got state rules and regulations  
24 that you're -- whether it's payroll stuff. I  
25 mean, you've got a whole slew of stuff. Then you

1 get into the county level of stuff. You've got  
2 your permitting. You've got your C of O which the  
3 other gentleman talked about. Obviously the  
4 federal and the state stuff you guys don't have  
5 much control over.

6 But when it comes to life safety  
7 things, which is your permitting, you've got food  
8 safety, you've got a huge amount of stuff that is  
9 very important to monitor. And I know from the  
10 county's position when small businesses come in  
11 and they start complaining about the burden of  
12 regulation the minute you have food poisoning or  
13 if you had a fire and a sprinkler -- you know, you  
14 would get a huge amount of heat.

15 So the agency folks, I mean, I'm  
16 sympathetic to the agency folks as you try to,  
17 quote, streamline and make it a better place to  
18 live or to do business. It's a tricky balancing  
19 act because whether it's zoning or environmental  
20 storm water, I mean, there's just a whole lot of  
21 different things that the county is responsible  
22 for --

23 MR. KATZ: Uh-huh.

24 MR. WILSON: -- our communal  
25 well-being.

1 MR. KATZ: Absolutely.

2 MR. WILSON: Okay. So in any event --  
3 and then one of the things that's come up in the  
4 Wheaton area is that you've got leasing, you've  
5 got the private sector requirements of the leasing  
6 stuff, you know, that sometimes the smaller  
7 business person runs into trouble with.

8 So in terms of a place to do business  
9 that's friendly, easy, helps the business person,  
10 the idea of -- you know, and I hate to say oh, you  
11 need another county support thing, but I think  
12 there is some merit to kind of an overview, not  
13 just of county issues.

14 But if you want to help the small  
15 business person to have a means and a way to look  
16 at the total package and that Montgomery County is  
17 a place where you can look at the total package  
18 and insurance, your private, you know, your  
19 company, I mean, there's just so many issues that  
20 the small guy -- and you start missing them.

21 So by the time it comes to get your C  
22 of O you're so fed up with having to balance this  
23 stuff unfortunately the county takes a lot of heat  
24 for the fact that it's just a really big bundle of  
25 issues that the small business owner has to



1 manage, so it was just a suggestion of a place  
2 where the small business person could go to get  
3 help with the bundle --

4 MR. KATZ: Yeah.

5 MR. WILSON: -- as an option. The only  
6 other thing is I'm going to just put a plug in to  
7 -- for the Wheaton area, and specifically in terms  
8 of the business community is that I continue to  
9 feel because of the diversity of the population  
10 that it's a great place for a kind of  
11 international business center, an international  
12 arts center.

13 Geographically throughout the area if  
14 you go into Virginia, if you go downtown D.C., if  
15 you go up to Baltimore, if you mention Wheaton  
16 people know immediately it's diverse, okay, and  
17 that can have a negative connotation but it can  
18 also have a little bit of an exotic connotation  
19 also.

20 And I think on the kind of positive  
21 exotic side that international arts, international  
22 business we have so many already, Korean markets,  
23 African cultural -- I mean, there's so much  
24 already here, but that that's a place where the  
25 county could continue to foster that theme within

1 the Wheaton area and I think and do some good  
2 things in terms of that that could help the county  
3 at large and also the Wheaton area. Anyway --

4 MR. KATZ: Thank you.

5 MR. WILSON: -- those are my thoughts.  
6 Thanks.

7 MR. ELRICH: So I was about to say  
8 we're continuing to try to promote Wheaton for  
9 exactly what Wheaton is, and I hope we can manage  
10 to hold up under redevelopment and still preserve  
11 the diversity.

12 My concern has always been that you  
13 could change this place into something that's  
14 totally unrecognizable if you're not careful and,  
15 you know, I like Wheaton, and I like the people  
16 who are here and the mix of businesses that are  
17 here, and there ought to be a future for them and  
18 not have everybody get replaced.

19 I think, you know, on the regulatory  
20 side of things I think there are about -- I  
21 thought I saw there were changes on the county  
22 page relating to economic development, and I think  
23 you're going to find more information on all of  
24 the things that you have to go through, not just  
25 the Montgomery County stuff.

1           And we were doing this to go -- to try  
2           to get beyond you have too many regulations, to  
3           people telling us what they think specifically is  
4           something that you shouldn't -- we shouldn't do or  
5           something that if they were someplace else they  
6           wouldn't have to do, so we can actually weigh it  
7           and ask ourselves does this make sense or doesn't  
8           this make sense.

9           I mean, I've been around construction  
10          and things enough to have my own feelings about  
11          stuff that I think is excessive and stuff -- and  
12          things that make perfect sense. And you're right,  
13          you know, no one wants to lighten up on a  
14          regulation then have a fire or a mass poisoning  
15          incident and then have people saying what were you  
16          thinking.

17          So we have to, you know, walk a fine  
18          line, but it doesn't mean that everything we do is  
19          right and it -- but it doesn't mean that most of  
20          the things we do are wrong, and trying to find  
21          that balance is what we're trying to do and that's  
22          why we opened this up to the community to give  
23          people a chance to come out and, you know, talk to  
24          us and you've got two elected officials who have  
25          got the ability to, you know, bring about and

1 implement changes.

2 That's why we've put ourselves out here  
3 to give folks the opportunity to really say, you  
4 know, this is a problem and can you look at this  
5 in the future, so that's what we're trying to  
6 provide everyone.

7 MR. KATZ: Yep, yep. Anybody else?  
8 Anybody else? Going once. It's like it's an  
9 auction here. No? Thank you all very, very much.  
10 We're going to stay in case somebody wants to come  
11 up and whisper to us for a little bit.

12 MR. ELRICH: Come eat cookies.

13 MR. KATZ: And there's cookies, yeah.  
14 Thanks. Thank you.

15 MR. ELRICH: Thank you.

16 (The Recorded Hearing was concluded at  
17 7:57 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I, Julie Ouedraogo, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that said proceedings were electronically recorded by me; and that I am neither council for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.



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Julie Ouedraogo, Court Reporter

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, Bonnie K. Panek, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the recorded proceedings; that said proceedings were transcribed to the best of my ability from the audio recording and supporting information; and that I am neither council for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

*Bonnie K. Panek*

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BONNIE K. PANEK

MAY 23, 2019

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