

# City Council Regular Meeting – Budget Hearings Transcript – 8/28/2019

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[6:04:22 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: All right. It is August 28th, 2019. It is 6:04. We have a quorum present, Wednesday August 28th. We're in the city council chambers here in city hall. We have five things on the agenda today, five public hearings. Three of the public hearings have no one signed up to speak. It would be my intent to check if we are speakers and then if not close that public hearing down. The -- we have one that has one speaker on it. We would then recognize that speaker to speak on that issue and then close that public hearing down. We have 160 people signed up for one of them and we'll start then consistent with our rules as we did last week, the first 20 people to speak get three minutes each. Everybody after that gets one minute. And you can have up to two people donate time. They have to be present here

[6:05:25 PM]

as does the speaker. So to start this off, manager, do you want to set it up for us?

>> That would be great. Mayor and council, members of the public, we're pleased to talk to the community about the proposed budget and to give it a high level overview I've asked our deputy finance officer Ed van eenoo to set a very high level and there's handouts at the front of the room as well to provide some explanation about what's in this budget.

>> Mayor Adler: To that end we're going to take up now items 1 through 5 to conduct a public hearing on them and receive public comment on the city of Austin fiscal year 2019-2020 budget. Is this just for item 5 or is this the language for all of them? Just for five. Which case you can lay us out and I'll get to five in a minute.

>> And specific to item five, that will be our second public hearing on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2020. It's a budget that staff is

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very proud to present to you as the city council and to our community members. We believe it's a budget that absolutely reflects the priorities that you laid out in your strategic direction in 2023 plan, particularly in regards to housing and homelessness with historic investments in services for our homeless population of almost \$63 million. Also an historic transfer to our housing trust fund of more than \$14 million. It's also a budget I think that was crafted very carefully with input from the public and reflects the priorities we received from the community. As you know, our nine equity commissions hosted a series of community forums early on in that process shed that input and those recommendations from the commissions weighed heavily in the budget that's before you today. Then finally just to mention that it's a fiscally responsible budget. As we all know there was significant legislation passed at the state this year that is going to

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significantly hamper our ability to balance future budgets. This budget takes a significant step towards addressing those future budget deficits, but at the same time it stays focused on our community with an overall tax increase of 2.5% compared to the previous fiscal year. So for all those reasons it's a budget we can all be proud of and we're happy to continue the conversation here today on that budget.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Let me call up Paul to speak on item number 3. Paul Robbins.

>> How much time do I have?

>> Three minutes.

>> Council, I've signed up for a posted item and I'm on

[6:08:30 PM]

topic, I think I have the technical right to ask an open-ended question. You have an eight-million-dollar surplus in the customer assistance program. A large part of that is unobligated. Is there anybody on the dais who is against is spending this money on low income people. Cool. May I implore you to make a budget direction that states that this is the will of council? There may be discussion as to the best way to spend it. I have made suggestions an increased discount for the first two tiers. Other people may have other

[6:09:31 PM]

ideas. I have fiddle out a way to -- I have figured out a way to make this surplus last as long as possible, but there are other ways that this money could be spent to the benefit of these customers? But I hope you will look at that. I want to bring up a small topic. A small melodrama has gone on about solar incentives and how much money should go to them. I was on the working group where the 7.5-million-dollar earmark for solar incentives in this year was suggested. Both sides are right. Austin energy is saying that we don't want to throw money at a problem. We can do fine with must not

we have: Advocates are saying this is what you put in the working group. My suggestion to you, since

[6:10:32 PM]

the tax incentives are going to start to dwindle next year, perhaps you could word it in a way that says if more money is needed to reach our goals, then money should -- more money should be spent on solar than what has been budgeted. Thank you for your attention. Good evening.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. I don't see anyone else signed up on items 1, 2, 3 and 4. Anybody else? Is there a motion to close the public hearing on items 1, 2, 3 and 4? Councilmember Casar makes the motion. Councilmember harper-madison seconds it. Any discussion? Those if favor of closing those hearings please raise your hand? Those opposed? It's unanimous on the dais with councilmember kitchen is off. All right. We're now going to take up item number five, to conduct a public hearing and receive public comment on the city

[6:11:35 PM]

of Austin fiscal year 2019-2020 proposed budget. We will close the public comment that is required by the Texas local government code on the proposed budget at the end of this meeting. I'm going to call up speakers that have signed up. The first 20 speakers to sign up that are here and get called will have three minutes. Speakers after that will have one minute. You can donate time up to two people and how much time is donated depends on where that person is on the list of the first 20. I don't know if anybody here has children, and I'm going call up anybody like that that has children that would like to be able to speak and leave, but the amount of time you have will be dependent on where you've signed up and not how I call you. So if I have anybody with children that wants to come up early, why don't you come on up.

[6:12:41 PM]

And are you in the first 20 people do you think or no?

>> I believe so.

>> Mayor Adler: What's your name, please?

>> Good evening. My name is Edie.

>> Mayor Adler: Hang on a second. Let's see if we can find you you.

>> Mayor Adler: No, you are not in the first 20 so you will have one minute to speak. What is your name, please?

>> My name is Brianne Edwards.

>> I would not be in the first 20.

>> Mayor Adler: You are not either. So you will each have one minute. Why don't you go ahead. I'm sorry?

>> [Inaudible].

>> Mayor Adler: What number speaker are you? 74? So you have a donating speaker who is Erica Reyes, is Erica Reyes here? You will have two minutes.

>> Okay. Well, good evening, my name

[6:13:41 PM]

is Edie. And I'm a resident of 78744. I am a wife and mother of five. We are an active family and we love to support and volunteer in our park during my park day at Kinder page park. And where there is a need of more lighting at Kinder page. And it will help reduce crime and just be more inviting to families, especially in the afternoons when we just really like to go in the afternoons when it's cooler or -- and my kids have gone to that park. We've just enjoyed that park many, many years. It starts getting dark and it feels unsafe. We have to leave. And for us and the residents who live around that area, we are just affected by that, just not feeling safe. And today I'm here in support of Cava and apf and requesting prioritized funding in these three

[6:14:42 PM]

areas, park safety -- number one, park safety, lighting in 10 parks in 78744 and 7 will 745. And for each of the 10 parks we still need two to three lights each to complete their safety lighting needs and we are asking for a recurring 115,000 for park safety, lighting. And number two investment in credible funding, Cava has worked with residents and identified immediate traffic safety issues in 78 '44 and 45. Projects that need funding are painting crosswalks, pedestrian hybrid beacons, speed mitigation, park repair and more. And number three, funding for homeless encampment clean up. Pard does not have dedicated funding or staffing to address needs. The the department is needing maintenance funding for staff to

summoned and we are asking for a recurring 600,000. The park and the neighborhood have a priority to our family and our neighbors and -- cousin

[6:15:43 PM]

dos -- it is important that residents in 78744 to have access to safe neighborhoods and quality parks. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good. Thank you. Please go ahead. You have one minute.

>> I work in Austin police community communications and we currently have seven openings there. The present proposal eliminates three filled positions in favor of converting them to five additional unfilled positions. I request that you continue funding those three filled 30 hour positions at least until the department is able to fill and retain all of its open 40 hour positions. From a business perspective it makes no sense to eliminate filled positions in favor of unfilled positions. In a department that is already short staffed. Furthermore treat of us who hold the positions would be devastated by the loss of hour jobs. These are among our more experienced, more broadly trained and experienced employees in our department. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Would you state your name again for

[6:16:44 PM]

the record.

>> Briannes Edwards.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Anyone else? That needs to go first? Let's start calling people off the list. Is Edna yang here? Come on down. You will have three minutes. What about Moise -- what about [indiscernible]?

>> He is here.

>> Go ahead, please.

>> Before I start I would like to donate any additional time I have to Moise.

>> Mayor Adler: You can't do that.

>> That's fine. Mayor Adler, councilmembers, good evening. My name is Edna yang, I am the deputy director at American gateways, a local non-profit in Austin. We serve Austin and 23 surrounding counties and our mission to to champion the dignity and human rights of immigrants through exceptional legal services, education and advocacy. I want to thank the city for

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prioritizing the needs of the immigrant community and immigrant legal services. We support the city manager's position to create an immigrant affairs position and office. As Austin expands it is important to have a position that deals with the unique needs of our immigrant community members. We would ask for this to be placed in the city manager's office to allow the objectives of the city council to be carried out in the most effective manner possible. In addition, we support the city manager's funding for monthly naturalization clinics for up to two years. Lastly, we strongly support the city manager's position for funding allocation toward immigration legal services. We currently have a contract through the city to provide direct legal representation to low income city of Austin and Travis county residents. We appreciate the continued budget allocation of 315,000 to provide these critical immigrant legal services. We would hope, however, that in the future the city would consider expanding this funding for direct legal service as we do not anticipate a reduction in the need for low cost and free legal services at any time in the future. This funding is critical for

[6:18:45 PM]

us to meet the high demand for legal services. With our current level of funding which includes all of our funding and what is on owe what we receive under the city contract we are only able to represent 15 to 20 percent of individuals it who come to us seeking assistance. Last year we were able to provide services to about 25% of individuals but we recently saw a spike and increase in individuals coming to seek services. All of our clients are low income and seeking humanitarian relief. One quarter of the individuals we serve are in deportation proceedings. We appreciate the city making this practice a priority and making it a friendly city for our immigrant friends and neighbors. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Is seneka here? No? Not now. What about Zach Patterson?

[6:19:46 PM]

What about Jenni brycemister? What about Colin Wallace? What about Joyce Colin Wallace. There's Colin. Sir, you have three minutes.

>> Thank you. My name is Maurice

[indiscernible]. I am a resident of the city of Austin. And I currently work for capital metro. I am currently receiving immigration legal services from American gateway. I am there Rwanda. It is close to the republic of Congo. I sought asylum in the United States in 2015. The American gateway is successful in me having received asylum in 2017. American gateway is now help me to apply for any

[6:20:48 PM]

permanent residence and bring my wife and my 11 years old daughter. American gateway saved my life when I came here. I know without that I would not have been able to apply for this immigration I have on my own. I didn't know the law. I didn't know where and how to apply. I didn't know how to fill out the long application required of me. I would -- I wouldn't have been successful in receiving my asylum without the help of American gateway. I remember when I was waiting for my asylum decision when my work permit expired and my family back home and I didn't have food and I was not even able to pay my rent. And I was at risk of being

[6:21:50 PM]

evicted. So my American gateway attorney helped me to draw up everything and I will never forget that day. I have been blessed in the city of Austin when I came here and no one knew me. I don't have family here in the United States. I didn't have friends at that time. And American gateway still helping me. So I've found hope when I met American gateway. Thank you so much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Colin, before you speak your three minutes is Joyce here? You will be next for three minutes. Go ahead, Mr. Wallis.

>> Good evening, mayor, mayor pro tem, councilmembers. Thank you for allowing me opportunity to speak tonight. I know most of you, my name is Colin Wallis. I'm the CEO of the Austin parks foundation. We are an organization that

[6:22:50 PM]

works in all of your districts to make sure that Austin has the quality of parks that our residents deserve. As you all know we've got some huge issues in our parks and we are very thankful this year for city manager Cronk for including additional funding for the very underresourced parks department in his proposed budget. As you might expect there are a few areas where we would urge you to take a hard look about including some additional funding. And those are in no certain order. Y'all have been working incredibly hard and I commend all of you on the homeless issue that plagues our city. And the parks are not immune to that issue. The biggest issue our parks department has is around maintenance and our inability to do it and they have had to pull staff from routine maintenance to do some pretty significant cleanup on that front and so

[6:23:51 PM]

we're asking for some additional funding for cleanup around that aquatic staffing. My wife and I took our kids to Bartholomew pool last week and our daughter was told the slide was closed because they didn't have enough lifeguards to keep it open. And this is an issue all across the city. In case you haven't been outside and it is possible that a lot of you have not been outside recently. It's kind of hot. So you all know that aquatics is a huge issue and we urge you to earmark some more funding for staff after school programming, pard does a great job of no or low cost childcare in their programming and they simply don't have enough staff to meet the command. If you've ever tried to get a kid into after school care with pard, it's either do it on the day of or you're not getting in. So we urge you to look at that and allocate some more funding. Our preserves, which we are

[6:24:52 PM]

so so blessed to have unfortunately has only ever had one staff member and Rene barra unfortunately passed away this year and so we are asking you to seriously consider some additional funding for a preserves plan and some leadership there. And finally, safety lighting in so many of your districts it doesn't exist. So particularly in southeast Austin there's a huge need for safety lighting for our residents to enjoy parks in the evenings. The parks foundation is really proud to partner with the city and raise funds for our citizens who are glad to donate to make sure our parks are better and we're asking that you take a really hard look. We know it's a difficult budget process --

[buzzer sounds] Thank you for the time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Ms. Stass is the next speaker and then is Caroline Alexander.

>> I have some donated time.

[6:25:52 PM]

Can I use that?

>> Mayor Adler: You certainly can. It's not showing up on my sheet.

>> There should be a David hogan who is donating time for me. Fairly far down on the list, I think.

>> Mayor Adler: If Mr. Mow Mr. Hogan would go over to the clerk and square that. You have three minutes, so three plus one. And before you start, let me call the next speaker. Is Caroline Alexander here? Not? What about Daniel la Nunez? What about Miranda philacek?

[6:26:56 PM]



What about Steve Johnson. Why don't you come down. You will be at the next podium. You have four minutes.

>> Thank you, city councilmembers, for the opportunity to speak to budget. I am Joyce stats a member of the parks committee and a leader of its fire wise committee. I'm also the chair of the Austin fire wise alliance and I'm coming to you representing all of those folks and myself. I come to you with three areas of personal concern, getting sufficient park resources, preventing wildfire damage and addressing homelessness. The budget needs to provide sufficient funds for these things. Pard needs more than \$100,000 to create a land management plan. But 100 K is a good start. It also needs staff to cleat and implement the plan. The plan needs to cover not only preserves, but the parks as a whole. And to help with wildfire mitigation the plan needs to create shaded fuel breaks in the green spaces next to neighborhoods so we can protect both the green spaces and the neighborhoods

[6:27:58 PM]

neighborhoods. When the observation desk in still house preserve was on fire a few years ago our neighborhood had the chance to feel feature of a nearby fire. Homeowners were warned about the fire and told they might have to evacuate. Thankfully the fire was quickly contained and no homes were evacuated. Several months later a shaded fuel break was created along the eastern edge of the preserve and that's made everybody feel a lot safer. So we need the shaded fuel breaks, 65-foot strips of land that has been cleared of dead and down material, cleared of debris and cleared of brush that can take a fire up into the canopy where it's going to be a lot more dangerous. AFD has already been doing a lot of wildfire fuel mitigation over the last five years, but it's been a tiny portion of what's needed. Of about 700 miles of wild land urban interface that we have throughout the city, some 180 of it is in city owned land so AFD can't address this. But only about 100 miles of

[6:28:59 PM]

it can only be treated because of the steep slopes on the rest of it. Thus far they're treated 11% of that over four years. So that's about three percent a year. Now, if we want it to be really safe, we would like to remove something like 15 to 20% of it a year because we have to renew, go back and deal with the additional growth about every three to five years. So that would demand something like seven or eight times as much for wildfire fuel mitigation. I'm asking for us to double that. Just go for 2x this time, and that means doubling the mitigation from one million to two million. This impacts a lot of different departments in the city, but it's primarily under the leadership of the wildfire division of the fire department. In addition the city needs to provide education and incentive for the protest hoped whores handle the -- private landers who handle the wildlife interface so they understand and they

[6:30:00 PM]

take action to establish shaded fuel breaks in their land and get rid of the fuel that's there. That's going to require additional staffing at the wildfire division so I would like you to please put in some funding for that as well. We also need policies to incent and enforce the landowners, but that's for another meeting. Maybe after we get the final report for the city's wildfire preparedness risk report. And note that wildfire fuel mitigation provides an opportunity to engage our homeless neighbors in a paid role. There's a lot of work that can be done by any strong individual under the supervision of the fuels crew. So using some existing mechanisms like we have in the watershed protection department to employ our homeless neighbors, we can use city investment in homeless reduction -- homelessness reduction to employ some of those neighbors to help mitigate our wildfire risk. It's a way to join together on several of the major focus areas of the council.

[6:31:02 PM]

As we all should be aware --

[buzzer sounds]

-- It's not a matter of if, but when we're going to see a wildfire. So the better prepared we are, the less we'll lose.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Before Mr. Johnson speaks, is ranleigh Hirsch here? What about ray Hernandez.

>> Harper-madison: Mayor, if I may, I saw a few more small children come in.

>> Mayor Adler: Sure. If parents with children are here and would like to be called early, you would still have the time designated by when you signed up. Just go on over to the clerk and let her know. So if a parent is there, just go over to the clerk. Is Rene Hernandez here? What about Erica Reyes?

>> [Inaudible].

[6:32:03 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: You did, thank you. That was number 14 donated time. Is David tod here? Mr. Todd, you will be at the other one. Mr. Johnson, you have three minutes, sir.

>> Thank you. Excuse me. My name is Steve Johnson. I'm a live -- I live in district 7. And I have been working for about two years with the northwest park adopters' group with the Austin parks foundation. I'm also a regular swimmer at northwest pool, which is my neighborhood pool as well as at deep eddy. I can tell you that the aquatics maintenance staff is both very hard working and overworked. And I have a

lot of respect for all the things they do. I can tell you that my best personal experience is in 2015 in the spring when Bartholomew was open for the first time all winter, we had to wait various links of time for the pool to be open because the chlorine levels

[6:33:03 PM]

had dropped to unsafe levels. And that happens when spring starts and the sun starts to shine, the chlorine comes out of the pool. And I wanted to touch on that for two reasons. One is that I understand one of the requests in the budget is to be able to hire a person to both manage the water and the chemistry level remotely. That would be a really good move for efficiency and for the comfort and safety of the whole swimming community. Austin is blessed with 51 aquatics facilities, of which 35 are pools. Those pools are aging. We voters approved \$40 million in the election, but as those pools get older and older, they're going to require more maintenance and hence more maintenance staff. I'd also like to tell you that I'm a little bit embarrassed that I didn't even know what Austin's preserve system was until I got here today and learned that the only person who had been working on it is dead.

[6:34:03 PM]

And it's hard to believe that in a city of this size we don't have people working on the preserve system. I also believe that that's extremely important for this city and it's been one of the greatest pleasures in my life to be able to serve and enjoy northwest park. And we need more like that. So I just wanted to say I fully support the Austin parks foundations' all of their requests for budget improvements, especially relating to aquatics and I urge you to support them as well. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. We called up the next gentleman up at this podium. Before you start, is Daniella Nunez here? You have time donated from Miranda [indiscernible]. Is she here? Okay. Come on down. You will have four minutes. I want to extend the

[6:35:05 PM]

invitation also to go to the clerk, people with children, or people who are catching transit where lines may be not as frequent later on. So transit or children. Go ahead, sir, you have three minutes.

>> Sure. My name is David Todd and I wanted to thank the council and the mayor for the chance to talk to you about the budget. And I am here to endorse Austin parks foundation's recommendations to offer a generous funding for the parks programs in the city. My angle on this, my perspective, is that I've been a volunteer in Stacy park and in Bouldin creek nature reserve for about 15 years. We have blond creek partnership and with help from creek Austin beautiful, Austin parks foundation and others, we've done

a lot of volunteer labor and contributions to try to restore those parks and make them as good as possible.

[6:36:07 PM]

And we can do a lot with private sector money and with volunteers, but we really rely on the city to be a good partner. And I think that the proposals for Austin parks foundation's recommendations will go a long way towards trying to improve our parks and particularly our preserve system. The previous speaker was talking about that and I'd like to just echo his concerns about the preserve system. It's about 15 different preserves, over 2,000 acres of what is really our heritage, our inheritance for the kind of lands and ecosystems that were once here before Austin grew to be such a vibrant city. So I think it's really essential that we try to preserve those lands in part for the ecosystems that they represent and also for the kind of opportunities to bring together our community of volunteers to work into those parks and meet and get to know one another. So again, thanks for the opportunity to talk to you. And I urge you to -- to

[6:37:11 PM]

support the Austin parks foundation's recommendations for generous park funding. Thanks very much.

>> Thank you, Mr. Todd. Is Jordan shade here? What about franny Sanchez? Is Melissa Randall here? You will have four minutes. And you have four minutes. You can begin.

>> Hello mayor and councilmembers. My name is Daniella Nunez. I live in district 4. I serve on the public safety commission and I'm president of the Georgian acres neighborhood association. I'm here to advocate for amendments to the budget to help address the urgent health and safety needs of our community members. Including people who face relationship violence, people who are homeless and people facing mental health or substance abuse issues. As a resident in the rundberg area, home to many working families and small children, our community needs are critical, but rather than continuing to put band-aids on the problem by arresting people or

[6:38:11 PM]

shoving people away, we are working to support these individuals so that they can feel safe and valued in society. In addition, I am here to Vess my support for Austin parks foundation ask for better funding. Together these amendments would make sure that people from all walks of life in the city can feel safe. First I ask city council to renew the 130,000 for safe alliances bridge to safety program. The one time funds granted during fy 90 deliberations have helped people in immediate relationship violence and getting to safety and the city should continue this funding. According to police data, economic violence

is one of the most significant drivers of violent crime in Austin. Last year the public safety commission recommended funding for programs to address relationship violence and we regularly hear from safe on how these programs are benefiting individuals and families. We need a specialized approach to this crime that can make people in

[6:39:13 PM]

relationship violence situations more safe and that starts with correcting them to trusted advocates who can represent. Safe alliance, their bridge to safety program will no longer have any funds for council does not vote to continue it. So please renew the funds. In addition, I ask that the city council approve a budget amendment to increase funding to add six additional community health paramedics at a cost of approximately 675,000. We need more public safety resources that prevent dangerous situations rather than simply responding to 911 calls after something has already occurred. One resource that does this are the city's community health paramedics who help intervene with people dealing with substance abuse, mental health, homelessness and other issues. These paramedics go out into the field before a 911 call has ever occurred and connect people to resources such as medical care, mental

[6:40:13 PM]

health care, prescription drug assistance and housing, there by increasing the safety and health of the individual and the entire community. This current team of 12 is too small to cover some of the areas that have the most urgent needs in north Austin as well as other parts of the city. Right now 12 is not enough. We need an additional six community health pair medicine Dings to do this kind of proactive work, to engage people who are on the streets, who face mental health, substance abuse or other medical needs through some supportive case work. It is my dream that one day I will be able to call a community health paramedic when I see a neighbor who is dealing with a crisis. Lastly our parks need increased funding to for trash and improved safety lighting. Living in district 4 while we are working hard to get our Georgian acres park built, we see a buildup of trash and we need support for a city parks to be able to do periodic cleanups.

[6:41:14 PM]

So it can be a safe place for kids and families to walk. In addition I believe that additional safety lighting with help increase access to our parks. To recap district 4 and the city of Austin desperately need these services to respond to homelessness and domestic violence and the expansion of the community health paramedic program and the continuation of bridge to safety are critical. Thank you.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> How much time did I have again mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: You have four minutes.

>> Thank you. Hi, I'm Franny Sanchez. I want to thank the council for the time and also for Leslie Pool. We've enjoyed having an advocate for our green spaces representing us in district 7. I was actually born and raised in south Austin within walking distance of Mabel Davis park. I now live in north Austin which is within walk distance of the grassy woods park. I have been fortunate to have lived my entire life with access to parks. I know that this is a privilege that is not

[6:42:15 PM]

afforded to all of the communities in Austin. 30 years ago my husband did not have this privilege as a child growing up in the apartments on East Oltorf. 20 years ago as a teacher I saw a gap in park access when my students' only bases for nature based play was the campus park. And today in a school where many of my son's classmates live in apartments east of 35, far from community centers and green spaces, I'm seeing gaps where some of the most vulnerable are not afforded access to parks. We all know here that when you have access to green space it increases positive measures for mental health, academic success and social skills. Our community in north Austin attends Pflugerville ISD schools and we tend to small somewhere in Austin and Pflugerville and yet not in either. So there's actually a really big need in Pflugerville ISD

[6:43:15 PM]

on Austin, within Austin limit for infrastructure and resources to support our green spaces and that would be lovely to have a school campus. Our students fall within walking distance of the park only when they are at school. So many of the Pflugerville ISD schools also are lacking transportation to these amazing rec center programs that I heard spoken of earlier. Our Pflugerville students that live here in Austin are losing availability when they go home. Pflugerville needs to improve park access for those of us in north Austin that might look like resources pass through school parks. It may look like pocket parks, but it needs to be programming for our students that fall into the gaps for park access. I see a recommendation for increasing the number of diverse and equitable distribution of programs being offered through Pflugerville as well as increasing low income access to Pflugerville programming. Pflugerville ISD needs to be

[6:44:16 PM]

included in these conversations. We have six title I pflugerville ISD elementary school campuses located in the city of Austin and our children do not have access to city of Austin programs. We need transportation to these park programs and we would love to be provided resources so that we can utilize these nature based programs. If we can't be provided park programming we would love -- prime time, we would love Pease, we would love resources for anything. I'm here with Austin parks foundation to ask the council to consider making progress on the strategic direction 2023 plan by making the full \$1.6 million in critical investments in Austin parks. I'm also here and I support the communities of color that ask for equitable park programming across the city. Especially in the eastern crescent. And please include schools of districts that are not just AISD. As a parent and as an educator, I know the impact of quality programming,

[6:45:16 PM]

especially outdoor programming. Please consider funding the futures of our Austin children. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Is Patty Sprinkle here?

>> Alter: Mayor, Ms. [Indiscernible] Has arrived.

>> Mayor Adler: We'll get there in a moment. Is Todd Moon here? You will be up next. Go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> Did you say three minutes? Thank you.

>> I'd like to read the council and the mayor, city manager, fishes I'd like to thank councilmember Renteria who has met with several of us from the parks foundation who have come in to advocate on behalf of our neighborhood parks, in particular I belong to the Dawson neighborhood association. And part of a committee that is attempting to adopt Gill List Park.

[6:46:16 PM]

Those of you have been watching the news lately may have seen a feature on the local station about the homeless situation at Gillis Park and how many of the neighbors feel the park is unsafe to go there with their families, with their children. And then a follow-up piece where the parks department sent out a team who did their best to clear out the trash and some of the dangerous things that were left in the park only to have many of the people reappear, many of the items were taken back from those who tried to clear them out. And meanwhile you have this little group of neighbors who are working with the parks foundation to adopt this park and we want to pick up trash. We want to get a grant put in a picnic table inside the pool area. We want to put in picnic tables, but as you can imagine we have this problem. People don't feel safe coming to our park. We have a lovely little

[6:47:17 PM]

swimming pool inside an enclosure at this park and we would like to be able to use it, but if there are a lot of local homeless guys hanging out outside the entrance it can be uncomfortable for many families to take their kids to this pool. It is a beautiful pool. It has been closed in Summers past and not available to us, and I have a daughter and some of our best summer memories are going to that pool, playing in the pool with some of the neighbors' kids. We had a neighbor with a houseful of kids who would stand in the pool with four kids hanging off his shoulders and screaming and my daughter went to school with this family and their kids. And it was absolutely a jewel in our neighborhood. We want to see this park maintained. We want to see this pool available to everyone.

[6:48:19 PM]

We have a developer who is preparing to build some condos very near this park who has talked to us about doing some improvements in the park, including perhaps bathrooms inside the pool enclosure. Right now there are pore Ta potties. There are bathrooms that are locked because of an ongoing problem with vandalism that has rendered them unusable. And this is not the sort of thing that's unique to our park. This is happening all over the city.

[Buzzer sounds] And I would -- this can't be fixed without money and I urge you to contribute to this. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Before you introduce yourself, is Jenni brycemister here? Why don't you come down. Sir, you have three minutes.

>> Thank you, mayor Adler. My name is Todd moon and I would like to thank the mayor and city council for your service and time a today and also for all the

[6:49:19 PM]

community leaders and concerned citizens that are here today to make Austin a better place. I'd like to additionally thank city manager cronk for including additional funding for the parks department and its proposed budget. And I'm here to reiterate what Colin Wallace and all the other apf supporters have said today. To urge city council to allocate additional parks funding beyond what is proposed in the budget. I've been volunteering at Duncan park for the past 25 years right down the street to create ninth street bmx. This has all been done with volunteer labor and we've recently become a parks foundation adopt a park group. Through Austin parks foundation and pard support we've been able to create something by hand that allows the youth in the community to really take pride in the park and provides an outlet for them. We do a lot of community outreach and encourage youth



[6:50:21 PM]

and diversity in the group. I'd like to advocate for the

following items: Funding for homeless encampment clean up. How that affects us is we've got bmx jumps that are right down the road and we have kids there all day long. When the homeless come in it's hard to communicate with them and it poses a danger to the children that are there. Also aquatic staffing, out of school programming and the preserve system. And additionally safety lighting within the parks. Thank you very much for your time. Y'all have a good day.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Before you speak, is Caroline Alexander in the room? Go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> Thank you. Good evening, mayor, mayor

[6:51:22 PM]

pro tem and council. My name is Janie Brycenighsster. I am chair of the commission on seniors. I am asking for your support for the budget items requested by the commission that were included in the city manager's budget and all of our items were addressed in some manner. I'm not going to talk about all of them, but highlight a few. First I really do want to acknowledge all that city manager wrong cronk and the budget office has done in the past two years to get boards and commissions involved in the process earlier. This is a huge thing for us to get involved in the city budget. As Mr. Van Eenoo mentioned earlier, all of the commissions that are point of joint inclusion, which includes the commission on seniors, were invited to have budget town halls earlier this year and this gave us a great opportunity to engage with the public in a more meaningful way than we can in our regular commission meetings. And will join inclusion committee has made a recommendation to continue those as part of the budget

[6:52:24 PM]

process. At our town hall with seniors, one of the things that we heard a lot about was expanding -- the need to expand access to cultural, educational and recreational programs for seniors. City that aren't near a rec center or a senior center like district 6 was mentioned, for example. And the budget does include some additional funding for library and -- libraries and paid for expanding senior programs. Of course, we'd like more, but we do appreciate what's been included and we hope that you will support that. In addition, the asian-american quality of life commission asked for money for a pilot for transportation for seniors to the asian-american resource center and that's something that we also support in our general request for expanded programming for seniors. A priority for the mayor's committee for people with disabilities is a quality of life study of the disability community in Austin. And that's something that our commission also

[6:53:26 PM]

supported. Data from Travis county shows that one in three people with a disability in Travis county is a senior. So with we'll also get a lot of valuable data out of that quality of life study. That's been included in the budget. Then finally, as I said, we're part of joint inclusion and I'm currently the chair of joint inclusion. And I'd like to close with saying that all of us in joint inclusion do understand the challenges going forward with the budget and that we're all committed to working with council and the city staff to find ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of city programs even as we also expand the equity and improve the equity of city programs. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is ranleigh Hirsch here? Why don't you come down. You will have three minutes. Go ahead, please, introduce yourself.

>> Yes, I'm Caroline Alexander and I live in district 10. And I was thrilled to see the additional funding for

[6:54:27 PM]

parks both in the operating budget and in the capital improvement plan. But with all of the population growth in Austin in the relatively low parks spending we see a lot city's gems suffering, there's a lot of city parks overused and a lot undermaintain and just in the years I've been here I've seen a huge difference in the quality of our parks. And so I'd like to request additional funding on top of what's already been proposed. The homeless encampments, the youth summer programming and preserves. And in particular I wanted to focus on the importance of summer youth programming for our working families. The city's programs are about half to a third of the cost of usual summer camps. And getting into the camps is like a competitive sport. If you haven't logged into your computer and have your list of card ready, you -- camps ready at 10:00 on the morning registration opens,

[6:55:28 PM]

it's next to impossible to get into. Because that's such an important part of the resources that working families need to be able to survive the summer, I'd like to request additional funding in more equitable programming in the summer youth programs. So anyway, I'm also here to support all of the other -- the other funding requests that Austin parks foundation made and thank you all for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is -- why don't you go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> Thank you for allowing me opportunity to speak to you about our park system today. I live on the border between district 7 and district 10 and I very much respect our council people from those districts

and their focus on helping us with our green spaces. And thank you for all you do for your districts, for the citizens of Austin and for

[6:56:28 PM]

our visitors because for our visitors our park system is critical. You make us proud. I ask that you support councilmember councilmember pool's amendments where they're associated with the park system. She has made several amendments that are critical to support our parks, and as you know our parks are aging and they need our help. We volunteer, we fundraise, but we also need support from the city on making park more active in our parks. You are faced with difficult decisions on this budget and I do not want to be in your seat, but I respect the decisions you must make. Our parks, trails and green spaces are the connective tissue of everything that makes Austin a compelling place to live, work, play

[6:57:28 PM]

and visit. Our parks drive our community, they are the link to our cultural heritage from July 4th to Juneteenth. Our parks are comic drivers and host a majority of our Austin survivors, south-by and a/c are just a few of those items. But mostly our parks, trails and green spaces provide shelter and habitat for native Texas flora and fauna, from endangered birds and the twisted leaf bracket flower and salamanders to our common cardinals in our backyard. Our parks, trails and green spaces touch everyone's lives. They are the lungs of our city. We need your help to take this critical first step in addressing the backlog of more than \$700 million in our park system. What is near and dear to me

[6:58:28 PM]

personally is our park system. I volunteer there, I volunteer weekly for park, but our preserve systems really need management plans. They don't have them right now. We want to get ahead of the ball so we know how to protect our preserves. We have over 2500 acres of preserves that are loved to death. Let's make a considerable step forward on that. And when you make these decisions on our budget, especially since the legislature has tied everybody's hands, I really look for you to make --

[buzzer sounds]

-- The right choice in funding our parks. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is -- just doubling back, is Jordan shade here? Why don't you come on up.

[6:59:29 PM]

Ted sif, I think is on deck. Go ahead.

>> Hi. Thanks for having me. I'm Jordan shade. I live in district 1. Thank you, city manager, and everyone for being here and doing this work. I've been a parks organizer for about two years for a very small pocket park we're trying to build in Windsor park so I've come to learn first hand all the money, funding and time and community input and energy and alignment that goes into working on these parks to moving anything in them forward, and those things aren't easy to achieve. They're not trivial but you all right now here today have the power to effect one of them very directly, right? That's the funding and money part. I was really moved a couple months ago when I was here in -- watching all the testimony happening about the camping ban and population of Austin that doesn't have homes, and I think we've all seen the impact that's happened since those laws have changed. Personally for me that's a lot in our park space,

[7:00:35 PM]

Bartholomew where I like to take my son early in the morning before it gets to be a hundred degrees, and now that space has become a different community space, a place where people are able to access water staying in the park who don't get to do that all the time. The last time I was there was kind of of a laundromat type of vibe, wash ago their sleeping bags and cooling down. I think you can appreciate the tension you feel as a mom by herself with a young child walking up to that scenario, but I think it's important to note you should also appreciate just the total respect and understanding and space that all the people there in that moment made for each other to make it work, to be willing to make that space for each other. I moved someone's suitcase out of the splash pad so it could keep drying. Folks came over and took their items out of the way so my son could play there and it totally just worked for a second but it felt

[7:01:36 PM]

very delicate so I just want to make sure that we continue to understand this ecosystem now that it's gotten maybe more complex and treat it with sort of the nuance and care that it deserves. So that everybody can enjoy the space, because we all live here and all deserve to enjoy it. But at the same time we're protecting it, we're protecting the environment and the people there and making sure that everyone feels like the infrastructure that we've worked so hard with this funding and effort and community and I want labor up until this point to build continues to exist, right? So I urge council today to allocate additional funding to parks beyond what's in the proposed budget right now. You have the power to help pard address this very complex set of problems right now in a really nuanced way, again, that addresses the community as a whole and we just can't do that without the funding to do so. So, yeah I guess in summary, parks are really a priority to me. They're a priority to people in my neighborhood.

[Buzzer sounding]

[7:02:36 PM]

So support the apf initiative that's here around funding. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Harper-madison: Mayor, may I ask a question? What was the name of the pocket park?

>> Pomeraleu.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you.

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Karen Crawford mishi here? Why don't you come on down. Carrie Roberts is on deck after that. Mr. Sif.

>> Thank you, mayor, council for the opportunity to speak. My name is Ted sif, I'm here as an individual and as president of the board of the shoal creek conservancy, individually and the conservancy supports the Austin parks foundation and ask for additional fudged to the park's budget as presented by the city manager but also thank the staff and particularly the manager's office and finance office for the additional funding that is already embedded in not only this

[7:03:36 PM]

year's park's budget but the last two years' parks budget. It's headed in the right direction. Nevertheless, Austin scores in the mid to high 40s out of the hundred cities in the trust for public lands objective assessment of city parks around the country. And while that's -- while the city of Austin has many first place scores on all sorts of other measures, to score in the mid40s, lower than many cities we think we're better than, speaks to the needs that so many other people tonight have articulated for additional summer programming, for additional funding for homeless encampment cleanups and all the rest. I won't take more time to articulate what others have already spoken to so

[7:04:38 PM]

effectively but I emphasize that this additional ask will be money well spent. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Mr. Roberts, you're on deck. Is Cole conaf here? Got you. Thank you. Is trey Salinas here? You'll have five minutes, Mr. Crawford, which you come up?

>> Do I have three minutes? Excellent, thank you. I am the chair of the commission on immigrant affairs and I'm also the commissions representative to the joint inclusion committee. I'm here tonight to express my support and our commission's support on the creation of the immigrant affairs position. Our commission, the joint inclusion commission and the asian-american quality of life commission all submitted proposals to include this position in the budget. Other major cities in Texas including Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, have similar positions. In a city where one in five

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people are foreign born it's simply untenable for this role to be filled by a volunteer commission that meets monthly even though we do our best. Our request is that you vote in favor of adding this position. Our commission passed a recommendation on August 5 that this position be funded at a higher salary rate so in a range of similar positions in other cities. That may not impact this year's budget as we assume the person would not start at the beginning of the fiscal year but our certain kern is the position should attract a well qualified candidate to coordinate among departments and also knowledgeable about the intricacies of immigration policy. Our recommendation also noted the position should be housed in the city manager's office. When we passed the recommendation we have not yet seen the city manager's very thoughtful report on this question, serving Austin's immigrant community report, and we do appreciate the -- what is presented in the report and would support that as well. Whether the position is

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housed in the city manager's or equity office our commission's main concern is that the person in this position be able to respond quickly to policy and other concerns and have the authority to make some decisions and move things around. An example is in the 2019 federal legislative agenda it was noted that the public charge role was very important to the city of Austin. And when we have the opportunity to have the city present to the office of management and budget about how this rule would impact the city our commission could not get in touch with anybody in the city to quickly move and make a statement on behalf of our city. We lost out on that opportunity. We've lost out on grants and other opportunities which would have helped us serve or immigrant community better because we're relying on a commission that meets monthly and has to vote on things. We are thrilled to see that this budget includes the creation of this position, and we really hope that you will be able to vote in its favor. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[7:07:41 PM]

Is Rene Hernandez here? You'll be at this podium. You have five minutes.

>> Thank you. Good evening, mayor, council, I'm Carrie Roberts, resident of district 8. I'm joined tonight by Lewis Grainger, who is a second generation board member on the crime commission who just moved into district 9 and the grandson of the late mayor Roy Butler and we're pleased to be here tonight for more than two decades the crime commission has supported central Texas' first responders in public safety planning, and every summer we show up to do our three minutes because it's important and because we all have to live here together. And we almost always ask for more, but sometimes, like this year, we're here to say thank you. Because budget decisions are difficult and rapid growth and state lawmakers don't make it any easier. So we're asking you to

[7:08:42 PM]

support the city manager's proposed public safety budget this year. Now, I'll be followed tonight by a lot of people who will ask you not to fund the police positions for a lot of reasons. And although I may disagree with those friends that we've made over the years here, I do so respectfully because we're at least partially responsible for where we are in that I regret that every summer this discussion is reduced to this. Three minutes back and forth about whether to use the budget as punishment or reward when talking about public safety. Last summer we spent 13 two-hour meetings talking about the office police oversight and what would that look like for our city. I will tell you those meetings were very rewarding for me personally and to my organization to understand the diverse lives that are

[7:09:43 PM]

lived in this city. You know, I'm not sure I've ever heard anybody propose cutting firefighters or paramedics, but we also adjust for them in the budgets based on growth. You know, it's always just police. But that discussion is what makes our community safer and it's better. It makes it better. So I'm not afraid of that discussion. But as somebody who spent many years working on public safety issues, growth alone often makes the case. You'll hear tonight violent crime is down, we're one of America's safest largest cities. The truth is, you know, part one index crimes were up last year. And that's burglary, homicide and property crimes. We have response times that are slower for the eighth consecutive year. And for a city that values community policing, the time officers have to build

[7:10:44 PM]

relationships and trust many in the communities they serve is below, again, even the minimum recommended national standards and it's projected to worsen again this year. And so I don't come here every summer just to make this up. Because if there's a better way to do this just tell me. Do we

deserve per in 2006? That wasn't an appropriate measure for police staffing. Do we discount the university of Texas study that my organization commissioned in 2015 that made the same recommendations? Do we discount matrix in 2016? You tell me if we're not approaching this the right way in order to determine appropriate levels of police staffing for the city we live in. Just because these positions are vacant doesn't mean they're not needed. As I understand it the department fills those patrol gaps using overtime and that's a very costly solution. The Austin police department has had recruiting and retention challenges in the

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past, and they've caught up. But you know what? I think it's reasonable for all of us, though, to ask them how they will do that and for that plan to be actionable. Again, this is an important discussion that's worth having, and we welcome it. The multi-year staffing plan is about building capacity to improve community policing. To lower response times. And to reduce crime. So we often hear about how, as I said, Austin is one of America's safest major cities, but are we settling for safe enough? Because that's an essential community conversation that we need to be having year-round, not just during the budget session. Because public safety and social justice aren't mutually exclusive. And in fact public safety is an equity issue because there are parts of our city that feel safer than others, and we know that. So, again, I thank you for

[7:12:47 PM]

your commitment to adding new fire stations.

[Buzzer sounding] To multi-year police staffing plan and your public service. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Is Jay Williamson here? Why don't you come on down, Mr. Williamson. You have three minutes.

>> My name is ray Hernandez and I've been living in Austin southeast community district 2 for a long time, and not too long ago I adopted a park in my neighborhood, and a lot of the time -- it says leader, they come up to us with concerns, you know, and not solutions, which we all want solutions to. I'm going to tell you about solutions that we've made in our community to deal with homeless encampment, you know, parks, funding is very low in the park department, and we appreciate all the

[7:13:49 PM]



extra additional funding in the department that you propose in your budget and we can't thank you enough. This is very drill for people who use the park for physical and mental situations. We can develop tomorrow's leader, and the world just by ten minutes, 20 minutes in a park. The infrastructure can be fixed. There's other ways to deal with it. You know, we can't just spend all the money. We can find different ways of infrastructure. The preserves is a big thing as well because, I mean, I have people asking me on my job about my neighbor, he passed away, and we can come up with a solution, more funding, we can provide the people, we can provide the volunteers. Austin is a very great city and we have a lot of great people that volunteer every day. I mean, there's moms with strollers that go out to my events. There's no excuse for anybody to pitch in.

[7:14:49 PM]

I work with the homeless in their -- there was a -- there's a program that works with the homeless. We did the homeless clean-up in the park. We're tackling the issues in the ground but, you know, if everybody is underfunded -- I'm starting with the basics, trash cans, stuff like that, safety. Safety is a big issue. And we need to start with lighting. Lighting up these places so we can get the proper pavilions, proper basketball courts, without lighting we can't really do anything. We're fighting for the basics and we need every coin we can get to piece this thing up together. I think if we work as a team with the parks department, police, aid, the kids, community, it can be accomplished. It doesn't matter about caps or legislative things. There's other ways that we can work and figure out this thing as a community, as Austin is a great city.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you,

[7:15:49 PM]

Mr. Hernandez. Before Mr. Williamson speaks is Emily Kaiser here? Why don't you come on down. You have time donated from Jordan Kaiser. Is Jordan Kaiser sneer.

>> Yeah.

>> Mayor Adler: Come on down. You'll have four minutes to speak and you're our last three-minute speaker. You have three minutes, sir.

>> Good evening, mayor, council. I'm Jay Williamson, sophomore business student at the university of Texas and resident of district 9. I'd like encourage to you please support the public safety recommendations in the city manager's proposed budget. I want to come speak on this as someone who takes an interest in public safety as well as one of 50,000 students at the university of Texas. A year August moved from a small town in northeast Texas to Austin, and let's say adulting in a large city was quite the adjustment for my town in northeast Texas. I quickly realized public safety was something I took for granted and more than 10,000 new college freshmen just arrived at UT are having the same experience I had. As councilmember tovo knows,

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a more vulnerable population on west campus such as unique health and safety challenges. Sometimes we do just need more help. Austin is home for four years or some of us longer and a few of us grow to love it so much we never end up leaving. No matter how long we're here students want to contribute and work with city officials and first responders to keep our neighborhoods safe. We are thankful for what the Austin city council does for us, even if we don't show up much to really say it. Again, on behalf of many students like me that take public safety for granted thank you for supporting the city manager's budget recommendations.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Chaz Moore here? You have time donated by Lauren hortel. What about Collin Clark. You'll have three minutes, Mr. Moore, in a second. Go ahead, you have four minutes.

>> Okay. Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor. Hello, everybody.

[7:17:51 PM]

My name is Emily Kaiser. I'm a member of district 1. And I'd like to speak on the budget amendment put forth by councilmembers Garza and Casar, excuse me, that would allocate up to \$150,000 to support abortion access. I identify as a sis gender women and I believe that all women and people with uterus deserve better than abortion. I know this is controversial, but hear me out. I want to talk about why women seek out abortive services. I have with me a 2005 study entitled reasons U.S. Women have abortions, quantitative and qualitative perspectives, which is unfortunately the most recent study. And for context the institute was the research arm of planned parenthood until it became independent in 2007. According to this study, 73% of women who received an

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abortion did so at least partially because of financial pressures. The bulk of these women cited reasons like wanting to start or finish their college education, wanting to have a chance at a good career or fearing that they couldn't support the basic needs of a human life. Abortion doesn't change the fact that women, especially those of us who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, are systematically oppressed and could not yet have equal status with men. My male colleagues will almost never be pressured to choose between a child and a career. Between a child and an education. It is normal and status quo for them to have it all. And we women deserve that too. So where is the support for pregnant and parenting students? Where's the support for young or low-income women such as myself who want a career and a family? This budget amendment though noble in its intentions to cyst women in desperate need

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would unfortunately only perpetuate this harmful cycle. Just as a band-aid doesn't fix a broken leg, abortion doesn't solve gender inequality. When women are given support for an abortion but not support to have a child and a career and a degree, we normalize that disempowerment and that inequality. I implore councilmembers Garza and Casar to reconsider their support of this amendment and instead consider allocating these funds towards programs that truly empower the women in our city. I challenge you along with all the other esteemed members of Austin city council to be more proactive in funding and fighting for free and affordable child care for low-income parents, paid family leave, equal pay for equal work, affordable housing for parents who are students, and the testing of the thousands of untouched rape kits in our city. Bring us justice and hopefully then we will feel as empowered as our male counterparts. Thank you so much for your

[7:20:55 PM]

time.

[ Applause ]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. After Chaz speaks, let's see here. It's is Mandy blot here? Is Olivia Ott here? What about Scott butke. All right. You'll have three minutes. Mr. Moore, you have three minutes.

>> All right. Thank you. I guess first of all, hey, it's been a while. I haven't seen y'all in a while. I like Carrie a lot. I really do. I think Carrie and I have formed a pretty relationship over the years working with police contract and police oversight, things of this nature. And I guess I'm feeling this way because even in this room, even in this building, this entire city -- maybe because I just go through

[7:21:57 PM]

watching Dave Chappelle who reminds me to speak my truth no matter what. In a city that's 7% black where the black quality after life is often constantly pushed aside for whatever reason, whether intentional or not, I just think it's important to realize -- and Carrie wants to talk about studies. I think it's important to note the study that just came out that, you know, notices that, you know, cops are a leading cause of death for black men. One in 1,000 black men will die at the hands of a cop. You have better odds of getting shop by a cop than buying a scratch-off lottery ticket and winning. Too often in the city, especially right now what's going on in a city when it comes to homelessness and everything, this is not -- even the Austin -- I realize

[7:22:57 PM]

like we have lost our minds, we have lost our moral compass, we lost everything that made it place once what it was. I just want to thank you all and encourage y'all to stay aligned when it comes to the homelessness issue. For the people afraid of these people on the street, that's because we have taken every bit of dignity and humanity from people of that nowhere else to go.

[ Applause ] So I didn't even come up here to talk about that but to hear some of these things is amazing to me. With that being said I'm here to support anything we can do to stop the fact that people that are experiencing mental health crises, they make one mistake, either they do it or a friend does it, they call 911. Couple weeks ago Mr. Civil was at the condominiums, had a knife to his own neck. Somebody called said he needed help, he's no longer

[7:23:59 PM]

with us. Sophia king, who everybody in the neighborhood knew she had issues but the cops didn't, but they showed up they shot her and left her body on the grounds for four hours. I personally don't have anything against the cops. We have to [indiscernible] Is inherently racist and flawed. Officers are not equipped to deal with people who experience mental health so let's let people that actually go to school and studied this for year be the people that do that.

[Buzzer sounding] So if you don't want to get rid of cops because you don't believe you have the political cover to do so I can somewhat get that. I'll be one of the only people on the left among all my colleagues to admit that. But we have to fund \$2 million somewhere, 1.75, to make this issue a non-issue. Last thing, and then I'll leave, I think it's very admirable that we want to be a vision zero city when it comes to car collision deaths. I think we should also try to make Austin a vision zero

[7:25:01 PM]

city when it comes to people experiencing mental health crises and they call 911. It has to be a better way, and the answer is not cops.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[ Applause ] I would suggest -- we have kind of a custom in the room, to applaud is like jazz hands or snapping fingers. I promise you that with the over hundred speakers we still have left to call, everybody will get a better chance to be heard if we could do that. So we'll have Mandy speak and Kathy Mitchell, is Kathy here? Kathy and then you have time donated from grant west. Is grant west here? No? Here? Got it. And then what about Kaitlin McClune.

[7:26:01 PM]

>> My name is Mandy blot, live in district 1 and a clinical psychology. Community wants want you to take the money allocated in the budget and shift that money in mental health first response reforms endorsed by the human rights commission and public safety commission. We're not making this request because we're anti-police but because we're being logical about where those dollars have the greatest positive impact on public safety. It's dangerous to continue asking officers to handle mental health crises because they simply don't have the skills to manage them effectively. And too often this results in people with mental illness being killed by deadly force. Chief Manley -- which is a good thing but, look, 40 hours is essentially one full-time week of training. In order to become a licensed clinical psychologist I had to complete seven years of full-time training after undergrad. We must face the fact dealing with mental health Christ is a specialty that requires a level of training

[7:27:02 PM]

the police department can never come close to matching. When we ignore this fact consequences are no less than tragic. As I'm sure you remember it's less than one month since a suicidal man was shot and killed by Austin police officers. As a mental health provider one of the most tragic aspects of that story is that the officers shot him when he started walking toward them, which he did in response to the officer's issuing commands. When I -- read that I felt my heart drop. Issuing commands. I understand interacting with a person holding a knife would make anyone feel scared but a mental health provider would never have begun by issuing commands because they would realize doing so would likely agitate him more and more importantly if they could help him feel understood and cared for and why his life is worth living. Imagine what a different outcome we may have had if he had had that opportunity. What if the female emanagerring from the elevator had included instead of four officers, two officers and ems team

[7:28:03 PM]

composed of a paramedic and mental health clinician. What if the officers had remained silent allowing their physical presence to convey their commitment to security while allowing the mental health clinician to engage him verbally, to at least give him a chance to receive a mental health intervention before commands were issued? As someone who has dealt with many individuals in suicidal crisis I can tell you these tragedies are preventable. You paid for the meadows process because you understood deaths like these are unacceptable and we need to do better. It's time to follow through to your commitment. Instead of writing a symbolic check to A.P.D. That isn't based on current needs shift those funds to ems so mental health christs can be met with the appropriate kind of first response, health care response.

[ Snapping ]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Pamela silva here? Pamela silva, why don't you come. I'll continue the practice

[7:29:03 PM]

of calling parents with children so we can get them on. Kathy, go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> Hi, Kathy Mitchell with just liberty and a volunteer with the Austin justice coalition and I'm here in support of additional funding for the mental health first response proposal. We also support the neighborhood association Daniella here asking for additional community health paramedics. And we think that those two requests are -- fit together, not coming up with the right words. I want to step back. Because I think something that the public safety -- the commissioner said is relevant here. He reminded you that nobody comes forward and says we don't need anymore ems and we don't need anymore firemen, so why is it we're all here asking for no more police officers? And I'd like to say that there's a number of answers to that. But the one that I think is

[7:30:05 PM]

most salient in this moment is that as crime has dropped, crime has also changed. Our definitions of what constitute crime have changed. When you listen to another speaker talk about the need for a way to address families that are in crisis and family violence and relationship violence and relationships that are in crisis and then you add to that homeless people who are in crisis and then you add to that people in -- with mental illness who are in crisis, a significant portion of public safety has become about addressing personal and intimate crises that people have that the criminal justice system as a whole was never designed for. You all have been here as the community of victims of sexual assault have come to you and said we're not

[7:31:06 PM]

heard, we're not part of the process, we don't know what's going on, our cases aren't taken seriously. And they are just a small wedge of this larger set of instances where the solution we have is like the hammer that you give someone and tell them to go shovel gravel. It just doesn't match the problem. There's been an emerging set of new ideas. I call it criminal justice reform because I've been working in the criminal justice environment for a long time. Meadows calls it mental health reform because they're working in the mental health environment. At the end of the day it's about redefining what constitutes crime, what constitutes public safety, and what the right response to the right emergency is, how you match the response with the emergency. Yes, we have had a lot of

[7:32:08 PM]

studies of police staffing.

[Buzzer sounding] But none of them have actually stepped back, looked at the range of public safety issues we are now addressing as a city, and said, is it really about more or less police? That's something we should probably start thinking about.

>> Mayor Adler: Kathy, thank you. You want to finish your thought?

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Pamela brew baker, was I next?

>> Mayor Adler: I'm going to call up the parents with children here. Not the whole group. Because we have people that have signed up earlier in line but I'm going to call the parents with children first and then we'll go back to where we were. If there are parents in this group with children so that you can leave early, I'll call those people now. You can self-identify and just come up to the podium. Does anyone with children want to testify now?

[7:33:21 PM]

Okay. There's a parent with children? And you have children here?

>> Yes.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, good. What's your name, please?

>> My name is Amanda Lewis.

>> Mayor Adler: You have one minute.

>> Thank you. So I'm the cofounder of survivor justice project and d4 appointee to the women's commission and I'm speaking here as an individual and in support with communities of color united. I think it's so important that we invest in projects and programs that uplift communities in lieu of public safety because we know that uplift is going to prevent crisis and that's really important. I also think it's important that, you know, when we first came to you about issues of sexual assault survivors within the criminal justice process you were responsive and now we're going to get that transparency, going to fix those systems. It's also important that that response is appropriate and people that are trained in mental health response are able to take a larger

[7:34:24 PM]

share of the responsibility within A.P.D. So it's so important that we fund three additional on top of the two that are in the budget, victim crisis, the mobile response.

[Buzzer sounding] Counselors. And everything you've heard about appropriate mental health responses.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Are there any other parents in this group with children that would like to -- okay. I'm going to let these folks go because they get ready for school. Go ahead. What's your name, please.

>> N.

>> My name is Pamela Silva. My family resides in district 7 and we're members of workers defense. My sister Tanya was diagnosed with bipolar when she was 16. With the help of medicine she's able to be healthy, functional and happy. A year ago, she suffered a mental crisis after

[indiscernible] She wandered around the city until a

[7:35:25 PM]

woman found her early morning the next day and noticed that her mental state was not well. At the time my sister was not aware of her name or her own age. The woman called for an ambulance to help my sister because she knew something was not okay when the ambulance came, however, the police also arrived and sent the ambulance away, saying they will take charge of the situation. Instead things escalated. My sister was carrying a dog at the time and when one of the police officers attempted to move the dog away, in her mental state she thought she was protect being the dog.

>> Mayor Adler: Finish your thought. Go ahead.

>> So she believed that she was right because she was trying to defend the dog. The police held my sister in a hog tie on the ground, left her body filled with

[7:36:25 PM]

bruises, and if she was bleeding -- if she was -- if she was considered to have a mental health -- if she had another ems -- if she didn't have these mental

[indiscernible] She would have been admitted to a hospital right away. Instead because it is mental it is not visible sometimes but mental trained people knows it and they are the ones that can be able to treat this incidence in a better way. Instead she was in jail and after her felony was dismissed she spent in three different hospitals with five months of treatment until she healed. Usually for her it takes one month, so as you can see, this really affected her life. And health overall performance. I think this also happens to other mental people, to other people with mental problems. I'm sorry.



[7:37:26 PM]

As we see police officers are not trained to treat mental illnesses. They are there for the community but they are not there for EMS. So my request -- and I beg you all -- to take -- to be conscious of this but people are ill and people need help and health professionals should be the ones attending health emergencies, mental crisis and it will really save a lot of people suffering and overall help the community. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

[ Applause ] Thank you. Good job. Thank you. Are there other parents in this group who have children who want to speak? Ma'am, please go ahead and introduce yourself, please.

>> My name is Carmen

[7:38:30 PM]

[ saying name ] [Speaking non-english language]

>> [Off mic]

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sorry?

>> Get the interpreter.

>> Mayor Adler: If the interpreter could come on down here so we can have you next to a microphone as well sir. Come on down. Thank you. Can you adjust that microphone.

>> My name is

[indiscernible] I'm going to do this in Spanish.

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sorry.

>> My name is Carmen

[indiscernible], I am going to do this in Spanish.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Can we raise that microphone so we can -- either hold it or we can raise it for you, whichever you prefer. Okay.

>> Okay. So [speaking non-english language]

>> I'm part of the

[7:39:32 PM]

[indiscernible]

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> I'm a volunteer. I've been a part of that for many years.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> [Indiscernible] The rights of immigrants and the rights of people of color.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> And I hope you can see this child right here. The same way that my children at one point --

>> Can you give her the moment to speak, please. We have someone who can interpret alongside.

>> [Indiscernible]

>> We understand but you actually threatened to call the cops on our kids so we'd prefer --

>> Okay.

>> He's cutting her off.

>> Mayor Adler: So we're extending her time so she gets to speak and when she's

[7:40:34 PM]

done then you can come back. Please go ahead.

>> [Speaking non-en Glish language]

>> This child that is here was left motherless yesterday thanks to the cooperation that our honorable police has with ice.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> When she was going to the school to perform as a volunteer after having dropped the other children off at school, she was arrested.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> That's part of being complicit with this, because it's our own taxes that are paying for breaking up

[7:41:35 PM]

families.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> Who is going to tend to their wounds and their traumas and their mental health?

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Keep going.

>> [Speaking non

-English language]

>> I hope you listen to oust and that you really pay attention because we also pay taxes and we also have rights.

[ Applause ]

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> And we really hope that you actually protect the interests of this community and of this future.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Thank you.

[ Applause ] Marge do you want to

>> Mayor adler:ma'am, doyou want to introduce

[7:42:39 PM]

yourself, please?

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sorry. Hold on.

>> Misname Mary Lou --

>> Mayor Adler: Hang on one second. If you all brought your own interpreter, I think we should allow them to use the interpreter they brought. They had practiced in advance. The interpreter may be more aware of what they're going to say next. I think it would be better.

>> Mayor Adler: I wasn't following that but certainly that would be true. Thank you.

>> Flannigan: Yeah.

>> Mayor Adler: If you have an interpreter you'd rather use, absolutely you can do that. I apologize. I didn't understand that earlier. Sir, thank you for being here. If you can stay here. We may have a situation with other folks.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> My name is [ saying name ] And I'm a member of ice out of Austin.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

[7:43:45 PM]

>> I am here because I want to oppose a contract against the police as a community, as an immigrant community, we feel terrorized.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> We live with fear only to see them and to know that there is gonna be more brings us more fear.

>> [Speaking non-english language] They are only stopping us and detaining us because of discrimination and racism.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> We don't want anymore police because in reality they aren't doing what they're supposed to be doing.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

[7:44:47 PM]

>> Can we say it's for a safe community? In reality it's for a community that is sick, that is anxious and has mental health issues.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> We would feel safer as immigrants of different -- sorry -- of different ethnic backgrounds and races if you could support us with a better form of investment.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> How can you invest \$3.2 million in programs to represent immigrants? Because every single day you hurt us more.

[7:45:49 PM]

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> Thank you for listening to us and to these mothers who need your support.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[ Snapping ]

>> [Speaking non-e english language]

>> Hello, my name is Maria.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> The police department of Austin wants to spend 3.2 million contracting new officers.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> Even though they think that is the best way to invest money for the community, that is not true.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

[7:46:53 PM]

>> The system is broken. The racism against people of color, and especially immigrants, is higher than ever.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> It's more intelligent and logical to use the money to make programs for the community.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> More workshops, more informational workshops for people to know their rights.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> To give funding to organizations that are pro-immigrant.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> So that those organizations can have funds for personal defense.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> We are a vulnerable community.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> The arrests and

[7:47:53 PM]

deportations of the same migratory policies that are in this country right now.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> But at the same time, we are an immigrant community that works day after day.

>> Contributing to the development of this city and at the same time of this state.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> [Speaking non- English language]

>> If we give funding to these organizations we are contributing to so that people like me or other members of the community, if we are arrested, we would have the opportunity --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Go ahead and [indiscernible] She needs to go ahead and

[7:49:00 PM]

conclude.

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> To struggle and have hope for our case.

>> Mayor Adler: Gracias. Thank you.

>> And I ask you, what would happen with our children that at the same time they are born here, who have the right to have a family unit --

>> Mayor Adler: All right, thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. So when the buzzer goes off, you have to conclude because we have a lot of people that are waiting to speak. And a lot of people still to speak. So I'm ready to call --

>> Si.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> She's going to give a closing statement.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

[7:50:03 PM]

>> [Speaking non-english language]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> So to give the money to create a system where people are not being treated differently based on how they look or the color of their skin. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[ Applause ]

>> Mayor Adler: Next next speaker? Is there someone else here with children that would like to speak? Would you please -- okay. Would you please explain to her that when the buzzer goes off she has to finish her thought?

>> I speak English. I understand.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, great. Makes it easier for me. All right.

>> I really -- I mean -- sorry. Do identify three minutes, by the way? I know two people donated. I wanted to confirm.

[7:51:05 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: What's your name.

>> Jasmine Patel.

>> Mayor Adler: Out of two people who donated time. Do you know their names? Priscilla hale and Nicole bureaus are they both here? You have three minutes.

>> Good evening, mayor Adler, councilmembers, and city manager cronk. My name is Jasmine Patel and I reside in district 9. Councilmember tovo, I'm your constituent. Tonight I'm here to talk about the -- talk about Dr. Maurice Desilva, south Asian man who exactly four weeks ago from today was shot and killed by three A.P.D. Officers, two of whom fired their guns and one who fired a taser. All three fired at one individual who was experiencing a critical mental health crisis. Dr. Maurice Desilva passed away wednesday, July 31, 2019, at age 46. He was a loving son and brother to his family. He is survived by his mother and father, his sister, his brother, brother-in-law Conrad, niece and nephew.

[7:52:07 PM]

By chief Manley's own reports when the 911 call was made to request a mental health officer the victim held only a knife and yet he was executed by two officers. The mental health crisis responders arrived 30

minutes too late. The obvious question for me is why does such a violent entity exist? The more lukewarm question, why aren't the officers trained better, trained to deescalate, stop violence rather than multiplying it into tragedy? I've often been told by those who are pro-police I don't understand what it's like, I don't understand what it means to put myself in the line of fire, I don't understand what it means to serve, that there isn't enough time. Sure, I don't know, but what I do know is how to read. And at a recent equity action team meeting we reviewed one of the police officer trainings, cat module one for those curious and in this training it says, I quote on page 14, today we are dealing with a more defiant, non-compliant

[7:53:11 PM]

and even disrespectful public. This is how the police force views us, views us especially people of color, given historical racial biases so I ask A.P.D. When you shot and killed the victim what did you see? Did you see a man who was in desperate need of mental health care, man who had been failed by local and state, national governments in terms of access to mental health care or a brown brown defiant, non-compliant and disrespectful. I'm asking again when you murdered him did you see a man in need of help, in need of care, or did you see a defiant, non-compliant, and even disrespectful brown man as your training tells you to? I can tell you what I see. As a south Asian woman I say the things black folks have been saying for others. I see the death of important south asian-american my life, of my cousin, brother-in-law, of my brother, of my dad and the death of my roommate and best friend who is here with us today.

[7:54:11 PM]

As members of city council and in the role of city manager, you all have immense power. We know that, and that's why we continue to show up.

[Buzzer sounding] Year after year. You all have the power to impact lives, change lives and part of that is that you have the power to take lives. Through your decisions you have the power to take lives. Such as the life much Dr. Maurice Desilva and David [ saying names ]. As others highlighted in their testimony, mental health crisis should be met with a hedge response. One last thing is that Dr. Desilva was from Minneapolis originally, rather remained a mentor to the university, and city manager cronk I know you're familiar with Minneapolis and I say that not to be creepy but to make you understand that what happens here in this city has repercussions beyond Austin.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. We have a room full of people that are going to be trying to speak now.

[7:55:13 PM]



>> And our tax dollars are still paying for their administrative leave of the officers.

>> Mayor Adler: Is there someone else that would like to speak now? Go ahead.

>> I also have time donated from two people, Sandra mulinari and Daniel.

>> Mayor Adler: What is your name, please.

>> Denise Moya.

>> Mayor Adler: Denise last name, I'm sorry?

>> Loia.

>> Mayor Adler: I have Sandra mulinari and who else gave you time? Daniel.

>> Mayor Adler: Daniel. Do you have that name? Go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> I'm here to speak in favor of the people's budget created by communities of color united. The vision they have set forth for working toward attaining equity and removing institutional barriers for black and brown communities in Austin most directly impacted by our policies. Austin city council took an important first step in 2016 by establishing the equity

[7:56:14 PM]

office. The office has steadily grown in size and reach, it still remains vastly underresourced. The proposed increase would be another step in prioritizing equity not just in words but in action for our city. The office has a small but mighty staff of six people responsible for implementing the equity tool across all departments and as we can see from the testimonies we have just heard it's a vital importance that the equity office is able to actually evaluate what's happening across the city's departments and to make sure that they're implementing equity action plans. The office must be adequately funded in order for the vital work to continue. With currently limited resources they have only been able to evaluate roughly one quarter of all city's departments and implement those equity and action plans. The increased budget would allow for much needed additional staff and amplify needed resources through means of increased microgrants to further support and seek community based programs focused on eliminating structural and institutional barriers that the black and brown

[7:57:14 PM]

communities in the city of Austin continually face. Another important aspect that would also be allowed if the budget were to be increased is implementing processes to equitably distribute resources, access and opportunity. It is of vital importance for our equity office to be fully incorporated into the budget

process in an intentional and sustainable way rather than only asking departments one question on equity and requiring no further due diligence. As, again, is seen in what Jasmine Patel said earlier in reviewing what was happening in training for A.P.D. As you can see if Austin wants to be about equity and do the work of equity rather than just talk the talk, it's about time we step up and start adequately funding the equity office. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you

>> Hi. I'm the journey Coleman. I'm sure you guys have seen or

[7:58:15 PM]

know of me.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. You have one minute. Go ahead. You have a minute. Go ahead.

>> Oh. I think I have two speakers.

>> Mayor Adler: Who donated you time?

>> Angela and -- who else?

>> I'll donate my time.

>> Nicholas sawyer and --

>> Mayor Adler: Nicholas sawyer and who? Okay. Go ahead. You have three minutes.

>> Okay. So I'm here to speak on behalf of ccu and as part of ccu and I'm just going to read to you some notes from division that we want for this budget hearing for Austin and for our community. Our vision. A local government guided by the gold equity and removing constitutionalized barriers, a home for all existing residents and affordable housing options for everyone. A diverse network of community-based health services providing accessible, affordable,

[7:59:16 PM]

responsive, and high quality health care options. A well maintained system of parks and recreation options throughout the city with diverse programming that meets the needs of each community. And a safe and welcoming city for all that prioritizes the root causes of public safety. I was born and raised here in Austin. I tenant lasa, one of the most segregated schools in the state. Upstairs are all the magnet program children and downstairs is lbj, the most black school in Austin. This isn't something that I want for my city to be more policed and more segregated because it's something that I see on a daily basis already, and the things that it does to people, how dehumanizing it is, like earlier, a man in the BAC

corner, they were calling the police on my littlebrokers nine years old, probably one of the sweetest people I will

[8:00:16 PM]

ever know. I don't want that for my community. I love Austin. It's where I'm from. It's a great place and I hope you guys don't want that as your brand. I hope people don't come here knowing Austin is a very white people, they don't care about people of color, they don't care about equity and inclusion. So I beg that you hear us and that you -- I know that at this point, we can be kind of annoying because we have been nagging but it's something we care about and I hope that by the end of this it's something that you all care about too. So thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you Sunday

>> I'd on like to donate my time to the next speaker.

>> Casar: Before she goes, I just wanted to thank you, it's not annoying, it's an important part of this. I'm sorry that that happened to your little brother and we appreciate everybody from all perspectives coming and testifying and sharing some very difficult stories today.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. So you have one minute, ma'am.

>> I'm sue Gabriel.

>> Hold on.

[8:01:16 PM]

There's donated time.

>> Mayor Adler: Who's donating time to her? Okay. You have two minutes.

>> I'm sue Gabriel --

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sorry?

>> [Off mic]

>> Mayor Adler: Three minutes.

>> I'm sue Gabriel with ccu. It's past time for the city to reduce the use of tax breaks and corporate incentives that lure more big businesses into Austin. The overwhelming research shows the tax breaks and incentives are an ineffective waste of taxpayer money. To name a few, Austin has given \$77 million to Samsung, 1,400,000 to apple, 14,700,000 to the domain, and 250,000 to Visa. This practice takes so much money away from the Austin city public health, the lower income housing,

[8:02:17 PM]

the equity office, mental health first response, and abortion access grants. Corporate welfare does not trickle down to the masses. That's why Austin has gentrification and homelessness. Have these rich corporations pay what they want before they come to Austin and pay their fair share in taxes when they get here. You should also reduce the taxes of the Austin citizens. We do not need 30 more police officers. We are praying for police who should not be on the crisis intervention teams because they do not have the first responder dispositions. They show up like infantry men, prepared to attack the enemy. More often than not, the enemy is an unarmed person who poses little or no threat to fully armed academy-trained police, for

[8:03:18 PM]

the many challenges facing our communities, we do not need more police. We need more trained alternatives. We are tired of you turning your blind eye to our needs year after year. I stand with ccu and you should too.

[Cheers and applause]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Greetings. My name is Carol Lee. I am the director of strategic initiatives, university of Texas at Austin.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. You have one minute.

>> Thank you.

>> Do you need more time?

>> Probably. One more minute.

>> One more minute?

>> Mayor Adler: Please give your name to the clerk. Go ahead. You have two minutes.

>> If you can pass those out. I'm here to speak on the notion of having a diverse network of

[8:04:22 PM]

community-based -- excuse me -- well-maintained system of parks & recreation options throughout the city with diverse programming that meets the needs of each community. I've been in Austin about eight

years, and my helpers here are passing out some photos of Tillery park, which is in district 2. This park is where my son and -- Camino, right there, attend lone star club soccer Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M., as well as many hours on Saturday and Sunday. And it's predominantly made up of Latino kids, plus our two kids here, and the field is in a sad state of affairs. So you'll see on this first page, the team has erected a sign, east Austin soccer club, aglimmer of a -- a glimmer of hope in a field of dreams. Unfortunately, you can see here in the photo, there's old vines

[8:05:25 PM]

that have been unkept for weeks and one trash can. You'll see rub-ish on the side of the park all alongside the street. And you know the players and their families come, they're very committed. The coach makes them come on time. Otherwise, they have to run extra extra -- laps. Everyone keeps the park very clean and tidy. They throw all their trash away. But it doesn't get empty very often. You'll see, too, there are many ant hills. In the last practice the kids had ants all over their water bottles. And an unkept fence, there's holes on the bottom.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Do you want to conclude your thought?

>> Finally many cracks in the ground just from disrepair, lack

[8:06:26 PM]

of water where a grandfather recently tripped. So thank you for considering funds for our parks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Thank you for coming.

>> I'm faola Rojas, I think I have a couple of donated minutes as well. Cat Lopez is the second one.

>> Mayor Adler: Hang on a second. I have Jennifer caridas. And who is the second one that you have?

>> [Off mic]

>> Mayor Adler: Would you give your name to the clerk, please. Would you come down and give your name to the clerk? She's in this corner here. Thank you. Three minutes then.

>> Now?

>> Mayor Adler: Now.

>> Okay. Hi.

[8:07:27 PM]

My name is V Viola Rojas. I've met some of you, not all of you. I'm a midwife. I'm a mom. This is Camino, my son. He's been here since -- it's been about five years that he's come around with us here as part of communities of color united for racial justice. He's spoken multiple times. I think the first time he wasn't tall enough to reach the microphone when he gave a bilingual speech, and today -- well, actually, this whole last month we've been talking about, you know, are we going to go, are you going to speak? And Camino told me, hey, mortgages this time I'm not going to do it. I've decided I don't want to do it. And obviously I encourage him because I think it's really important. But what he told me was, I feel like we do this every single year, over and over and over. We come, we bring -- we bring pizzas, we get rides, we help each other, we're late to school the next day, we don't get our

[8:08:28 PM]

homework done, which happens. My daughter has a test tomorrow. And -- you know. But we keep doing it, and I don't really see the change. I wanted to share that with you, and he said he'd be willing to stand with me, but he said I'm not going to talk this time. I urge you to really take this seriously and think about where we're at in this historic moment in this country. We're out of time, we're on a national level, we have -- we're under attack, our communities are under attack, and we don't have levers to make change that we should. We're in Texas at a state level. You know how difficult it is right now. So what we have is our local city government as a place where we can actually participate and make impacts on the living conditions of our families. This is -- this is the space for us to participate. To get to the point by ten years

[8:09:29 PM]

old to say I don't want to speak, mommy, he's like me, he loves to speak. Okay? We are not introverts. To get to the point of saying that is important. In addition, you heard what happened -- what journey mentioned, that well, in order to be here, had to bring a lot of kids and cards et cetera, who were playing in the back corner, and there's a person who was the interpreter who told them multiple times to shut up, and then said, "I'm going to call the police. If you don't shut up, I'm going to call the police." Right? This just happened. So think about what that means for communities in terms of whether or not people will want to participate and be part of this city. You talk about -- we talk about being a welcoming city, a healthy city, et cetera. But who is that for and what are we doing if our children are already being told that we're going to call the cops on them

[8:10:31 PM]

for being here?

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Last thing, there's so many more people that want to speak, we decided to narrow it down out of respect to other people not with ccu, your families and your time, so we are going to cut ourselves short. But I just want to take a second. Who is here with ccu tonight? Raise your hands.

>> Whoo!

>> Some people already left. We had many people ready to speak. You know where we stand. We have hundreds and hundreds of signatures on our petition that we are not going to give you tonight, but we're going to deliver them to you next week, so besides all of us here, there are hundreds more who stand with our recommendations, and we urge you to take them seriously. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. All right. We're going to continue back on. Thank you all for coming. Let's go back in.

[8:11:32 PM]

Pamela Brubaker. Thank you for your patience and indulgence while we called the folks that had the kids. Is crystal Erickson Collins here? Ms. Collins? Ms. Collins?

>> Here she is.

>> Mayor Adler: Ms. Brubaker, you have a minute.

>> Hi. I'm a resident and homeowner in district 5, and I am here to strongly support the budget items for homelessness services and housing, and I'm very grateful to councilmember kitchen from my district for the leadership she's provided. I see an act with homeless neighbors at intersections, especially manchaca and Ben white, and at the arch when who I am downtown at events. Sometimes I might be a little

[8:12:33 PM]

uncomfortable, but I've never been afraid. I am a person of faith, and I recognized that we are all human beings, worthy of compassion and care. Homelessness is a race and class issue in Austin. 77% of the population is black, but as we heard, there are 43% of the homelessness population. There are people who may be victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, mental illness, substance abuse.

[Buzzer sounding] These people need these services, and it will help us meet our understanding of Austin as a caring and compassionate community. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Shane Johnson here?

>> Here.

>> Mayor Adler: Why don't you come on down. You have time donated from John Rooney. Is John Rooney here? You'll have two minutes. Please go ahead. You have one minute.

>> Hi. My name is crystal Erickson

[8:13:33 PM]

Collins. I'd like to encourage you to adopt the request from multiple community groups here tonight to fund health care workers to address health care issues. Others will speak about the economic issues regarding this issue. I am speaking tonight from the perspective of a person who has been a therapist working with people who have chronic mental health issues. The needs of a person experiencing a mental health crisis are inconsistent with the skills and perspective of law enforcement officers. It is inconceivable that an argument can be made that officers could better handle a health issue than professionals who have trained for years to do so. Equally important, no amount of training will change the fact that the role of law enforcement officers is an adversarial one. They're accustomed to a perspective of containment and control which is diametrically opposed to the needs of this population. If an officer presents to a person in crisis in a compassionate manner, the uniform

[8:14:34 PM]

and protocol can easily result in a negative response from the person. To suggest that law enforcement are the best professionals to handle these crises is to suggest that mental illness is a crime. It is not. People who struggle courageously every day to live with mental illness are our family members, our community, and we must meet their needs with a humane and adjust response. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Beverly Lazar here? Come on down. You have donated I'm from Sarah Nugent. Go ahead, sir.

>> Thank you. Shane Johnson. I live in district 3 now. So last week when I was here, I spoke about the mental health first response, I'm a volunteer with ajc, also a board member, and I'd like to humanize the issue like so many speakers did

[8:15:35 PM]

before me today. In particular, right now, I'm here to respond to a question from mayor pro tem Garza last time, and she essentially asked, well, back in our firefighting days, not too long ago, A.P.D. Had to be



there first to clear the scene so how are we going to get there -- how are we going to address that and sort of transition with mental health first response. So from ajc's perspective -- first of all, some context, there are about 10,000 total mental health calls per year and very, very few of those are somebody who has a weapon with them or could use one. So ajc, we agree that in some situations it might make sense for police to be a part of the mental health first response, so if, in dispatch, they get information that the call -- in the call that the person is armed, then police can be informed at the same time as ems so that they would be able to get

[8:16:37 PM]

their -- if they are there table, police would like to get there slightly earlier, but ems would be there very quickly, and they could adequately address the situation and clear it. Otherwise, ems absolutely should be the first responder and if they end up needing police later on they can always call them. So that's the main thing I wanted to say. If you have any questions, feel free to ask. And I'll close by reiterating what Mandy and Kathie and Chad said. We're given about 37 1/2% of the general revenue to the police department. It's absolutely absurd we would increase the funding by \$2.1 million and give 30 new cops -

[buzzer sounding]

-- When we could fund mental health first response with \$1.5 million, and \$2.1 million to more cops would be an investment in a system that would literally have killed me a couple years ago when I was in a mental health crisis. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: So is James Templeton here?

[8:17:39 PM]

Mr. Templeton, why don't you come on down. Is Andrew Templeton here? Okay. Is Brian here? Mcgivern? You'll have three minutes in just a second. You have two.

>> Two minutes?

>> Mayor Adler: Two minutes.

>> My name is Beverly Lazar, I'm representing district 8 and the Austin justice coalition, and I'd like to give a shout-out to councilwoman Ann Kitchen for leading the charge. I'm here speaking about funding for mental health first response reforms. To begin with, mental health crises should be met with a health response. The Austin police department is not equipped to respond to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Last year I heard a recording of a mother to 911, in a different part of the U.S., who reported that her son was having a severe mental health crisis and was suffering from schizophrenia and

[8:18:40 PM]

bipolar disorder. She begged the person on the phone to instruct the police to not hurt her son. The police shot him within 30 seconds of arriving at the scene and he died. I believe that it is time to shift police officers' duties in response to mental health calls to the more appropriate first responder ems. By providing a high quality held-based rapid response to mental health crises, ems will reduce jail admissions, involuntary detentions, and use of force incidents. Almost 50 years ago, I was teaching fifth grade in the bronx in a portable building with no communication access to the main building. A situation escalated to a child throwing a heavy metal chair in my direction. No harm was done but that evening I scoured my mind to how such a serious situation had escalated so quit. I realized that I had pushed this student too far. Perhaps even backing him figuratively into a corner. That day I learned how to

[8:19:41 PM]

deescalate a situation in about 30 seconds because I had to use my brain and my wits because I did not have a gun. Lesson learned. I believe our entire community is safer when individuals experiencing a mental health crisis receive a health response followed by the treatment they need.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: You can finish your thought.

>> Okay. We all know the definition of insanity. Throwing more money into police positions is insane and it is time to find a new response.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Monica Guzman here? You have time donated from Ellen Friedman. Is Ms. Friedman here? Is Ms. Hoffman here?

>> [Off mic]

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Have her come down and tell the clerk. You have two minutes until she shows up. Go ahead, sir.

>> It is my turn?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. And you have three minutes.

>> I think you know that in 2018 the city audit revealed that out

[8:20:42 PM]

of the top 15 metro areas in this country, Austin police department has the highest rate of police-involved shootings during a mental health call. However, in addition to these homicides, A.P.D. Has severely injured other people as well that were not shot or killed. I am one of those victims of A.P.D. Violence. And I want to tell everybody in this room, this is not about people experiencing a mental health crisis. This is also about somebody who is not experiencing mental health crisis, who is attacked by the police. Based on a false report, A.P.D. Dispatched multiple police officers to my home for a mental welfare check. Other than suffering from a cardiac problem, there is nothing wrong with me. When I arrived home from work, the officers jumped out of my bushes and attacked me at gunpoint. I was completely passive and

[8:21:47 PM]

compliant. The officers forced me to my knees and violently ripped my arm from my shoulder socket. They tore my bicep tendon. They tore another tendon and rotator cuff. The damage was so severe, it required major surgery and I now have metal in my shoulder. For two hours they humiliated me and kept me handcuffed, in my driveway, as I cried in pain, in full view of my neighbors. They stated we had to wait for a mental health officer to evaluate me and decide what to do with me. When she arrived, but before she even exited her car, she said -- and this is a quote; I have it on audiotape -- I don't need to see him. You've been here for hours. Everyone is crazy tonight.

[8:22:49 PM]

And without even looking at me, without ever speaking a single word to me, she signed an order to have me involuntary detained for 48 hours, which turned into 61 hours. Once again, five officers pounced on me. They applied pressure points and threw me in the back of a police car. I didn't receive any medical attention for my shoulder. In fact, at one point my knees collapsed in shock, and the officers grabbed me by the wrist while still handcuffed and lifted me up by my wrist and shoulders, causing further damage to the shoulder. I was assaulted by A.P.D. They violated my constitutional rights.

[Buzzer sounding] They violated the state mental health code and they violated their own policy. These officers must be held

[8:23:49 PM]

accountable. Therefore, tomorrow, my attorney Brian McGivern is filing a lawsuit in federal court against the officers who are guilty of these crimes. It is up to you to prevent this from happening further to people who are or are not experiencing a mental health crisis. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for coming down, sir. Is Michael Briones here? You'll have one minute. Ms. Guzman, you have three minutes.

>> I believe a total of three people have donated time. I'm not sure what the limit is. They're all three here.

>> Mayor Adler: You can donate two people, you have three minutes.

>> Good evening. I'm a district 4 resident. As you work through the proposed budget, you must do so with an equity lens, ensure you address needs versus wants. You made the right decision to identify homelessness as the top priority. I ask you to invest in Austin's eastern crescent as another

[8:24:50 PM]

priority. You must address the needs of pedestrian safety for beacons in crosswalks for Cramer lane, north Lamar boulevard and east St. John's avenue. Work for signage and enforcement, median and speed cushions, work with capmetro for transportation mobility, removal of what I believe was route 240 negatively impacted rundberg residents, creating challenges in getting to work and/or medical appointments at the north Austin medical center. Roll out circulators. I've requested circulators for the rundberg area for the past four to five years. I'm tired of doing that. I requested it for dove springs for more than two years. I support pard's request of funding for additional lighting in Austin parks. I ask you, ensure a minimum of four lights per park in districts 1 through 4, as well as raised

[8:25:51 PM]

tree canopies and trimmed grass and hedges, which are a natural deterrent making parks safer and more welcoming. Address the urban heat island effect in rundberg and other areas due to lack of vegetation. I support councilmember Casar's proposal to fund six additional community paramedics and safety for safe alliance. Prioritizing the homeless and improving resources for victims and their families is critical. Since I've been afforded some additional time I'm going to add, a few weeks ago I was at a neighborhood association meeting where an officer was talking about the -- was it love it -- he also talked about crime prevention through environmental design. I find it interesting that the slides show a person's home, not renters and not public property. If you're going to have you've made officers talking about cpted, it applies to the property that you are responsible for. The parks.

[8:26:52 PM]

The streets. The sidewalks. That is how you do crime prevention. Up at the front end. That way, you don't have to worry about scrambling for more officers. There's money there for them because it's adequately invested where it should have been in the beginning. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Glenn O'Neal here? Come on down. You'll have one minute. Mr. Briones.

>> I have a video I'll be presenting from my testimony.

>> Mayor Adler: A one-minute video?

>> It is a one-minute video. Will I be able to translate that after? It's in Spanish.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay.

[ Video ]

[8:27:57 PM]

>> I'm sorry?

>> [Off mic]

[8:29:35 PM]

>> All right. That doesn't do her statement justice, we would like that to be a little bigger and louder. She says hello, good afternoon, my name is

[ saying name ], I live in district 4 in the 78785 zip code. My community is lacking so much light, specifically in quail creek park. We need more light for the kids for times we are together as a family or when we're alone. We need more programming in our communities because we have a lot of kids in the neighborhood. I've seen lots of people drugged up in the park, people have sexual relations which I have unfortunately had to see. I just see a lot of people doing things and there are a lot of kids seeing these things and they are very young kids who can be easily influenced. We in the community don't use our park because of the severe lack of security and I'd like to say as I was headed over she sent me a message, I used to be a teacher in the 78785 zip code. They sent a letter stating there was a gentleman in

[8:30:35 PM]

this exact area she was speaking about that drove by and flashing young children and so these children luckily were not hurt physically but mentally I'm sure they are going to suffer some scars. That was a letter I just received on my way here.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Thanks.

>> Is Josephina Castro here? You'll be at the other podium. You have one minute.

>> Thank you, my name is Glen Ann o'Neill, director of lone star victim's advocacy project. Our mission is to educate, advocate for and provide free legal services to empower abused immigrants living in underserved areas in Texas. Most of our clients live in rural areas but in emergency situations we do take cases here in Austin. Most of our clients are children, especially clients out of the Austin area. I'm here tonight to ask you for emergency funding or help keeping our doors open. Our funding was cut by our major funder for an administrative change within

[8:31:36 PM]

their agency. We met and exceeded all programmatic expectations, had a complimentary audit -- and how often does that happen? We served 1600 people in the past two years with a staff of five. All of our clients are victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and trafficking. One of the clients I worked with here in Austin personally --

[buzzer sounding]

>> -- Is somebody that Josephina can tell you about.

>> Mayor Adler: You have one minute. And while she's getting ready to speak, is Perla -- you'll be up next with a minute. Go ahead.

>> Hi, good evening, Josephina and I work at lone star victims advocacy project, I was a bilingual intake specialist, the first person of contact for all of our clients. I want to talk to you about a case of family separation of a client that lives here in Austin. She has a complex history of domestic violence, having suffered that, but one of her abusers got her

[8:32:38 PM]

deported, planted drugs on her. She had to flee the country because she has three U.S. Citizen children and one that needs special care and medical attention. They came to us because she not only needed immigration legal services but also needed counseling, she needed to know her kids would be supported, she needed to -- she needed education because we know that at lone star that education is

empowerment. We gave her materials to read about how to protect yourself and give yourself language whenever she impacts with ice or police but I want to let you know how important our services are. We work very hard to meet our clients where. There are so many immigration legal services providers here in Austin but there are wait lists.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: You can finish your thought.

>> The demand is greater than the availability for services especially for low-income families. Our services are free and we just hope that you can support us with equity.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you next speaker, Amy huntedder. Is Amy Amy hunter here?

[8:33:42 PM]

You have time donated by Rebecca tribiane. You'll have two minutes and you have one minute. Go ahead.

>> Hi, my name is [ saying name ], I work as a central Texas coordinator for lone star victims advocacy project, I work directly with the clients and we help keep families together. We help keep mothers alongside their children and that's why we're here to help, ask for help so you can continue support so that we can continue doing our work. I wanted to talk about one of my clients, one of our clients. She met her abuser in her home country, fell in love with him, she has two little girls and she thought he could provide warmth and support she needed. However things changed when they immigrated to the United States to live with him. He threatened her with getting her deported, he isolated her, broke her phone, slapped one of her little girls and all of a sudden abandoned her, left her without any wi-fi signal and she did the best she could to get in contact with help. Because she was in an

[8:34:43 PM]

isolated area in Texas the police said they weren't going to take to get her shelter. She flagged someone down who doesn't speak Spanish and --

[buzzer sounding] With that help she was able to get resources to our organization. So I wanted to ask y'all to help us continuing to keep immigrant women with their children.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Casar: Mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Casar: I wanted to ask -- thank you all for coming. You said you've had funding cuts. Generally what is your emergency need, especially serving particularly austinites since that's generally where our health and human services dollars go to.

>> Here in Austin our past year the child victims of sexual assault have come out to about \$25,000. Our funding cut was over 50% of our budget and we were given less than two weeks notice from when it became effective. With a staff of five serving about 800 clients per year,

[8:35:44 PM]

there's nobody who isn't essential. So right now we're looking at trying to keep the doors open and keep our services where they are. We already can't take every call that comes in out of Austin in particular.

>> Casar: Considering how -- we have put a lot of money into immigrant legal services and deportation defense funding and family reunification funding and there's an increase in this year's budget in this line item we might connect with you folks in human services to figure out since that's a relatively small amount whether or not this is something we can have discussions about off-line outside of the budget hearings. We appreciate you coming and talking.

>> Thank you so much. That would make a world of difference for our clients.

>> Mayor Adler: Clerk, I'm sorry. I'm looking down here.

>> If I may, I have a question.

>> Mayor Adler: 30 and 32 have spoken. Go ahead.

>> I just wanted to ask, I'm endlessly curious, when you say that most of your clients are in rural areas or outside of the city of Austin, I'm assuming some of those are in Travis county.

[8:36:45 PM]

Have you guys talked to the county about financial assistance?

>> We're trying to speak with the county acceptance. As soon as possible. I got to tell you this was really recent news, maybe 17 years ago. We're doing everything we can. Frankly we're swing being as every pitch to try to find funding to keep our doors open.

>> Harper-madison: My office would be happy to help facilitate that introduction and conversation.

>> Thank you. That would help us so much.

>> Harper-madison: You're welcome.



>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Norris Easton here? Mr. Easton, you have some time donated by Elizabeth Wilson. Is Elizabeth Wilson here? No. What about gabby Pineda. You'll have two minutes, sir, in just a second. I think you had two minutes.

>> Thank you, Spencer cronk and the council for the opportunity to speak. I'm Amy hunter, I have

[8:37:46 PM]

worked for the city of Austin for six and a half years. I'm a trustee at coerce. The foundation of an excellent city budget is based upon providing essential services such as trash pickup, quality roads, water, wait removal and energy. There are unsung heroes who put on wet suits willing to jump into a septic pool to remove debris which would otherwise spread disease. We are in the field every day working to ensure our city is clean for business to be conducted without interruption. The true cost of business is not fully recognized by the city council when they offer 2.5% increase to employees, which will be further limited in the future when the property tax go into effect. If the experienced dedicated employees leave the city the city will investment to bear the burden of contracting out these services and thus costing taxpayers even more, perhaps even twice.

[8:38:47 PM]

I strongly recommend a 3% increase for all employees who provide these essential services to your city to keep us running, to keep us cool and risk their lives potentially.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[ Snapping ]

>> Mayor Adler: So there are some people that have asked to speak together as groups and I'm fine with that. We would call them with the lowest number in the group if that group all wanted to speak together. I think that's fairer than letting somebody move up in line just because someone in their group is earlier in that line. So I have some people that wanted to speak together from afscme, which is fine, the lowest ranked person is misrodriguez at 85 so I would call then afscme speaker Patrick Jones at that number as well. Sir, you have two minutes. Mr. Easton, why don't you go ahead. Is bridon Mcneeley here?

[8:39:49 PM]

Do you want to wait for afscme or speak now?

>> I'm with afscme so I'll wait.

>> We'll come back and get you at that point. Make sure when I call afscme you're ready to do that. Because I may not notice here. Got it. All right. Marguerite Jones. What about [ saying name ] Klein do you want to wait for the rest of afscme group? Okay. Is Christopher harden here? Christopher harden? What about rilianiccorona. Do you want to wait for the rest of the afscme group or speak now?

>> I'll go now.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Come on down. You have time donated to you

[8:40:49 PM]

by Terry Arciga.

>> Did not know.

>> Mayor Adler: Not here? Is here. So you have two minutes.

>> Awesome. Thank you so much -- whoa, sorry about that.

>> Mayor Adler: Wait a second. Ms. Easton goes first -- Mr. Easton.

>> Oh, yes, I'm Norris Easton, a distribution electrolytic crew leader for Austin energy, line worker, aka lineman. I don't play football but --

[ laughter ] I did take a picture with chief Spencer cronk. Do you remember me a little bit? Kind of sort of?

[ Laughter ] I did -- I'm a pastor too and I did speak when you were campaigning. You came to my church, tickled pink to be here. I notice a lot of people talk. Lineman, people don't really know who we are until the lights go out. I tell people all the time god said let there be light.

[ Laughter ] And, yeah. And whether you believe in

[8:41:50 PM]

god or not we all believe that's important. A lot of us were out when the streets are iced, the weather is bad, and it's dark. I had -- we don't get treated like first responders do. I don't believe we are first responders but when we show up people want to know when the lights will be back on. They don't like when we have to get in their backyards so they turn their dogs on us. I had a lady say to me she's scared of me and I said I'm scared of you too maple. What I wanted to say is that a lot of my coworkers live outside of town. They don't get vehicles to drive in in these storms. They put their lives on the line with 12,500 volts, and we're just asking for 5.5% more so they can at least service the cars and I believe they'll buy a soda now and then and put money back in the city. They can't afford to live in

[8:42:50 PM]

the city. I came in my clothes because I'm on call and I live outside of the city so I've been here waiting to talk to you and ask for .5%. God bless.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[ Snapping ]

>> Mayor Adler: State your name and I think you had two minutes.

>> My name is [ saying name ], I work for Austin in the csm department, better known as the escalations department. I've been with the city for almost nine years. What we -- our department is kind of special. We handle basically those more delicate disputes as far as the electric, water. We do the hearing schedule for departments in the city and handle our own hearings for energy. We're a knight tight knit group and we've just gotten nine more people which helps kind of take that morale up, that we have more help. We were kind of functioning on a smaller level.

[8:43:51 PM]

And 2015, 2015, the call volume coming in and those escalated issues that we addressed, we addressed at a service level with that small group. We're able to do that now because of the morale that we have within the city, and at 2.5 raise I think is lacking in a sense simply because we do what we do because we love what we do. You go home everyday a little bit tired but much more resolved as far as how you affect somebody else. Again, it's not a private business. We do this as a government job because we know we're helping the citizens of Austin. I simply ask that, again, before this tax revenue cap goes into effect we're all going to have to tighten our budgets at that point, but the 2.5 instead of just a .5

[8:44:53 PM]

increase is what we're requesting, that 3%. I love what I do. I honestly do. It's extremely extensive research that we do and we touch every little part of the city, working a lot with Austin water, with all the other services.

[Buzzer sounding] Whoops. The other services. Is that the timer?

>> Mayor Adler: That is the time.

>> Oh, my gosh. That is such a weird noise.

[ Laughter ]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for being with us.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Yvonne flores here? What about John umfers? What about chrisy o'brien? Greg Jenkins? So you have time donated

[8:45:53 PM]

from a couple people. Jose Garza.

>> One person had to live.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Jose Garza here? What about David turnquest. You have two minutes.

>> Mayor, I think we don't want to put off the members that you called earlier like bridon, I think people want to go as they're called.

>> Mayor Adler: I'll double back.

>> Thank you. Appreciate that. All right. Good evening. My name is chrisy, I'm an organizer with the American federation of municipal employees. Mayor and council, thank you so much for having us tonight. First I want to recognize Spencer cronk, thank you so much for putting the 2.5% in the proposed budget. We definitely appreciate it. You've practiced showing investment in the employees, and we thank you for that. We're here to highlight public service. The folks behind me -- and you'll hear from more -- had talked about the work they

[8:46:53 PM]

put into this community every day to make the city happen. Those services are essential, they're vital, and I think with knowing that tax revenue caps are coming, we know this is the reality, we know -- we've been out -- I've been out at work sites talking to the employees talking about the revenue caps, preparing them for some tough years ahead. You know, I think that's a service because we don't want the employees to be blindsided by tough years where we may not be able to secure a wage increase, and tighten belts for services. I mean, this is the reality. We just came from the county yesterday where we were able to secure at least 3% for Travis county employees, so every employee will receive at least 3% at Travis county. And so we're here today asking that we do everything we can to make sure employees are reflected in

[8:47:53 PM]

this budget. This budget that they worked to make happen. The revenue generation is from the services they're providing in this community and they are the community. They are also struggling to make ends meet and live in the city in which they work. So, as always, afscme will be there at the forefront, making sure services get funded and making sure these employees are prioritized because they are the backbone of this organization. Thank you all so much for your time tonight.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Brian Mcneeley here? Why don't you come on down. You had time donated from Chris Blanton. You have 2002 minutes, Mr. Mcneeley. Then Marguerite Jones. Is she here? What about zurisa cline? Why don't you come on down. You had time donated from Terry arciaga else? No? Yes, I see.

[8:48:54 PM]

You'll have two minutes and you have two minutes.

>> All right. Thanks for having this hearing. It's not lost on me the opportunity to speak to city council on the budget as a city employee. I'm fortunate enough to live in the city, I'm an afscme member. Since I've worked for the city I've worked for two departments, I've been fortunate enough to work with people through all sorts of different departments throughout the city. I find a very impressive workforce, dedicated people, folks that have advanced degrees from prestigious universities and we obviously want to keep them help you want you to task them to write a new land development code. Admonish importantly the people I want to talk about are really the hardest working people in the city of Austin, the folks I worked with are the court clerk assistants, those folks that have to deal with people of that tickets and are frustrated with them all day, the people at development service who's do plan review intake who have to take plans from developers and talk to them about things they're missing or folks in the severance center is that talk with

[8:49:54 PM]

homeowners or contractors who are frustrated about their permits. The folks that spend the time every day dealing with customers, those are the folks that deserve the .5% increase on the 2.5% that we appreciate has been offered. A lot of those folks when I talked with them they don't live within the city of Austin. They think that homeownership is not attainable to them. This isn't going to solve that but it's going to make things better, easier for us. When I first got to the city we talked about being the most livable city, best managed city. There's lots of slogans and mission statements but it really comes down to the same thing, we want to provide great services, we want to be friendly, we want to do that for our community. So I'm just asking to you recommit to that tonight and get us that 3% raise. Thank you.

[ Snapping ]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Christopher harden here? Okay. Is Yvonne flores? Yvonne florinvest John Humphries? Greg Jenkins?

[8:50:57 PM]

What about martin nevron? Kristin Carlton? Roy Rivera? Tanya silva? Lindsey Philips?

>> Here.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Why don't you come on down. You'll have a minute. Go ahead, you have two minutes. Go ahead.

>> Thank you. Good evening. Thank you for listening, mayor Adler, council, and city manager cronk. I'm zurisa cline, live in district 9, I'm a member of afscme. I've worked for the city eight years, worked through the system and now a referenced librarian at the central library down the street. This is my career and this is the city that I live in and work in and play it in. Along with all of my fellow staff members. At the libraries around this city we help everyone who comes in everyday. We answer questions, teach

[8:51:59 PM]

people from babies, children, tweens, teens, young adults, mature adults, senior adults, we help everyone. We train to increase equity diversity inclusiveness of our services as a team that works mostly on the front lines, connecting with our communities and providing services that improve literacy and assist families, individuals, local groups, businesses, nonprofits, people come in tired, frustrated and stressed and we provide the customer service with a smile to help give free gd practice tests, resume classes, job application help. We help people apply for housing and child care. We connect them to esl classes, resources to become U.S. Citizens through naturalization. We connect people to free legal services and local programs, many of them city programs that people don't know about whether they come in. We connect them in the

[8:53:01 PM]

system, as well as create staff and provide hundreds of programs and events across the entire city all year. These are connecting dozens of businesses, artists, entrepreneurs and citizens. We create a library for all. I know that the general fund and library are vulnerable with the upcoming revenue cut.

[Buzzer sounding] I'm here today to ask to increase to 3% to help us keep working in this city and serving everyone. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> I would like to donate my name to Kayla Hartman.

>> Mayor Adler: Give your name to the clerk, would you, please.

>> My name is Lindsey.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Hi, I'm Gail Hartman. I think I have a couple people donating time.

>> Mayor Adler: Let me see if I can find you. You can have two people donate you time. Is Molly English here? You have three minutes.

>> My name is Kayla Hartman, I'm a social worker, I work with people experiencing

[8:54:01 PM]

serious mental illness, especially young people. I'm here to say no new cops. Public health is public safety and for many with mental health conditions safety seems antithetical to police involvement. An increase to 39% 9% of the budget -- there's simply no way for a cop no matter how nice to deescalate a mental health crisis for folks especially who have police and prison trauma. Many people I speak with have police or prison-related trauma and talking to a person with a gun on their hip poses a latent threat of imprisonment or death no matter how nice. I personally know of at least one recent case in which a family was instructed to call a mental health officer, call and ask for a mental health officer in case of a crisis recurrence. That's exactly what a family member did. When police arrived on the scene I was glad to hear they weren't physically harmed too badly but were arrested and jailed for what we know is characteristic of

[8:55:02 PM]

their symptoms. That most mental health professionals would -- they now have to deal with jail time, court fees, all the problems that come with it because their family wanted to get them help and probably never trust the mental health system again and honestly shouldn't in its current state in Austin. Their family members still haven't forgiven themselves. You need 40 hours of training. That's one workweek. No increase in funding for training is going to come close to a mental health professional. I heard it from the mouth of a A.P.D. Officer most don't want to deal with the mental health stuff. They don't want to do it and shouldn't have to. We agree. We have the opportunity to give the reins to people with years of experience, with therapeutic engagement, case management and crisis counseling. One recommendation we take issue with is telehealth from the meadows report. There's no way to accurately assess for a crisis without being in person.

[8:56:02 PM]

Critical components of a intentional status examination cannot be expected to being accurately understood such as behavior, observation and environment, is not even eye contact. I'm not allowed to bill for assessments that don't occur face-to-face. It's not appropriate in sued cycled or impulse problems. I'm not comfortable screening for those in an office held by someone trying to hold the tablet stable outside. The way the emcot it's structured to fail consumers. Someone calls 911, the closest available officer can decide really quick to request emcot -- emcot is able to cover 22% of mental health related calls during weekdays and if they do they get a nonemergency vehicle and get on I-35 and I think we all know how that goes. Mental health second response right now, eliminating the cit stipend freeze up 500,000.

[8:57:05 PM]

Imagine the outcomes if these funds were diverted to the health paramedic program and mental health dispatch staff. There's no reason Maurice Desilva shouldn't be alive today.

>> Mayor Adler: Finish your thought.

>> We can prevent the next murder.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Let

>> Mayor Adler: Let me check here, is Leana potrusi here? Paula Kirby? Come on down. Is Amanda Williams here? What about Preston Ioffton? You have two minutes.

>> Thanks. Good evening, mayor and council. My name is holly Kirby. I work at grass roots leadership, I'm a member of district 1. I'm here tonight to oppose the funding of 30 new police officers and voice support for two community proposals, mental health first response and

[8:58:05 PM]

abortion access grants, both of which had to be powerful health investments and have life-altering impacts for so many austinites, particularly communities of color. We all know abortion carries under attack nationally in Texas. Accessing abortion can be extremely difficult, especially for low income folks. Not only does someone have to pay out of pocket for their procedure, they have to take off work, sometimes travel long distances, find child care and this is where funding, you know, practical support can truly make abortion access a reality. I urge you all like our local leaders to take this bold step to protect and ensure abortion access while the state seeks to make it more difficult to access and even



criminalize it. Secondly, I'm urging you all to find a poem to change the way we address mental health crises in our community. First and foremost, we have to stop relying on police officers to respond to mental health crisis because when we do, the person in crisis is brutalized,

[8:59:06 PM]

arrested, deported, killed, we've seen it happen. You've heard all the stories tonight. We need to fund a three-prong approach, adding a fourth option to mental health, identifying mental health calls and dispatching that right first responder. Clinical staff at ems to be those first responders, and expansion of ems community health paramedics in the field. We should not continue to spend over 40% of our general fund on police, especially because they're not equipped to address public health issues, homelessness, substance bureaucracy mental health disorders. We decriminalize homelessness, pass policies, these are bold steps forward to make me proud to live here. Let's continue to reduce our alliance on policing, jailing, and invest in true health and safety for our community. Thank you thank you.

--

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Donna Hoffman here? What about Jay Lynn? Jay Lind? What about Rachel manning?

[9:00:08 PM]

And then you have time donated from Christina cupple, and also James Casey. Is James Casey here? Okay, sir. So, Ms. Manning, you'll have three minutes. Is Rebecca Sanchez here?

>> No.

>> Mayor Adler: Rebecca Sanchez? No, not Rebecca Sanchez? What about jesu Guillen? What about -- sarube --

>> They're all part of ccu.

>> Mayor Adler: Just checking. What about Rebecca white? Jackie Goodwin, you'll be up next. Go ahead, Yo have three minutes.

>> Good evening. We are members of undoing white supremacy Austin here in support of the people's budget proposed by communities of color united

[9:01:09 PM]

for racial justice. After ccu and other community members, city council formed the equity office to address the vast historical injustices to people of color in Austin. They've taken on the critical work of reviewing the city budget and city budgets through an equity lens, identifying places we need to work harder to address racism, as demonstrated earlier with our police training. We are excited about the work that the office has been able to do, even though it has a small budget. However, with the office's current funding level, it will only with be able to take on limited reform. It needs full funding in line with peer cities to take on transformation work of advancing citywide racial equity. Creating equity takes long-term, sustained commitment. In Austin we must steer clear of limited efforts that are window dressing, make us feel good but really don't have much impact. We should aim for not being short of full and complete funding for the equity office and its

[9:02:11 PM]

efforts. We're strongly proposed to the proposal to add an additional 30 officers to the Austin then police department. As your constituents, we are here to tell you that more police do not make the city safer for all of us. We continue to rely too heavily to police to address issues they are not equipped to respond to. This overreliance also resorts? Discriminatory policing based on race and poverty. We are here to uplift the wisdom from Austin's communities of color who are sharing what will work to make us safer. More money for health care. More money for parks, more money for housing. These are the foundations of community safety. The city we're striving for is one where all families, not just some, have affordable housing, health care, including reproductive and mental health health care, excellent schools, beautiful parks, and where we can protect and nurture the most vulnerable among our communities. There are better ways to increase community safety and help communities thrive than adding police. For example, we strongly support the proposed increase in funding

[9:03:12 PM]

for mental health first responders program, which has already had positive results. We also support the proposed expansion of the equity office mini grants, the housing trust funds and the people's plan, by knowingly support increased funding for Austin public health, access grants, more funding for parks & recreation, that has to be distributed in equitable ways across the city. These proposals will truly help our community thrive by helping austinites find and stay in housing, as well as keeping our community healthy, mentally and physically. A.P.D. Is asking for 30 more officers but it hasn't been able to fill its current 100 vacant positions and it's not prepared to train staff already on deck to be hired. It also hasn't grappled with the pension short fall. What we have presented isn't the cost of true policing in the community's budget.

[Buzzer sounding] As those before me have said,

[speaking Spanish] The city budget is a moral document and should reflect equity, health,

[9:04:12 PM]

mental and physical, and housing for our neighbors. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Before Ms. Goodman talks, is Cynthia Vasquez here? Ms. Goodman, you'll have one minute.

>> One minute is not enough.

>> Mayor Adler: I know.

>> I'm Jackie Goodman, here with gave to support our equity spending and budget and supporting, of course, in particular, the lights that the Austin parks foundation also brought to you. We had a larger contingent sum. Some have left because it's school night. Some were intimidated by public speaking. Some were intimidated by the one-minute time frame. Six had conflicts. And the mayor pro tem has graciously said that she will read their testimony for us.

[9:05:13 PM]

Speaking truth to power cannot happen in one minute.

>> Uh-huh.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Ms. Vasquez.

>> Over here.

>> Mayor Adler: Got Ya. And then is Adrian Shelly here? No? What about --

>> Yes, I'm here.

>> Mayor Adler: Why don't you come on up to this podium.

>> Sure.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead, Ms. Vasquez. You have a minute.

>> Hello. My name is Cynthia Vasquez. I'm a 78702 Austin native. I've been displaced. I am currently in front of you today gentrified af. I'm moving to 78744. And I really wish my district 3 rep would look over here for me, please. I'm really here to talk to you about investing in equity, and I have two questions for you. By a show of hands, how many of you have participated in undoing

[9:06:14 PM]

racism that our wonderful equity office is hosting right now? My second question is, how many of you have access to half a million dollars right now? Please join me in investing in equity and putting your money where our priorities are. Because right now, all I hear is displacement, displacement, displacement, when we should be talking about neighborhood preservation.

[Buzzer sounding] That's all I have to say with my one minute.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Garza: Can I quickly read this? People from 78744? And I believe possibly district 4 as well, it's saying gave is requesting prioritized funding these areas, park safety lighting in ten parks in 78744 and 45 investment and equitable funding, gava has worked with residents and identified immediate traffic safety issues in the 44, 45, rundberg, and St. John's projects

[9:07:15 PM]

that need funding, sidewalks, speed mitigation, school zone science, sidewalk repair and more. The -- I can't read these but I think it's magdalena, Louis Maldonado, Chris M. Smith, Christina fisher and Miguel Garcia.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Zenobia Joseph here? No? There she is. Okay. Go ahead. You have one minute.

>> Thank you, Adrian Shelly with public citizen, I'm here to speak in support of the solar budget, specifically requesting an increase from the proposed 5.5 million to 7.5 million. We have some excellent solar projects here in Austin already, 8300 single-family homes have solar, 670 multifamily units and 500 businesses, but the potential

[9:08:15 PM]

is much greater than that. There's 189,000 buildings in the city with potential for solar. The last two fiscal years we had a \$7.5 million budget for solar incentives that was underspent by 1.6 million in 2018 and it's estimated we underspent by 2 million in 2019. The demand is there. We are -- the city is about to enter into a program with rocky mountain institute to look into low income incentives especially, so we are hopeful that there will be opportunity for investment in low-income communities, in particular.

[Buzzer sounding] And the demand is there, and we need the funding. So thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. After Ms. Joseph would be Ann Teich. Is she here? Trust? What about Michael Floyd?

>> Here.

[9:09:16 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Mr. Floyd, are you here?

>> Here.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. You have time donated from David Guarino. Is David here? What about Isabel Guerrero? You have three minutes after Ms. Teich. Go ahead.

>> Thank you, mayor, councilmembers. I'm Zenobia Joseph. My comments are in the contents of title VI of the civil rights act of 1964 as it relates to the federal highway administration. I want you to recognize that there is no longer east-west connectivity, there's no longer any service to St. David's and there's no longer service to the women's, infants and children's clinic so I oppose the \$150,000, the amendment by councilmember Garza and the other sponsors. If you look at the sheet of paper that I gave you, and I appreciate the previous speakers, north Lamar, north of north Lamar transit center, may 9th, 2019, you postponed that item indefinitely to look at the corridor, and I would ask you, mayor to recognize that not only do they need pedestrian beacons,

[9:10:16 PM]

but we also need traffic lights. I want those stops that are blocked to be closed, Fairfield station is a mid block stop, as well as chinatown. What I want you to recognize is there has been studies, there have been studies, 2009 there was a study by Texas transportation institute, lastly, I'll just tell you on the green sheet of paper you'll see a copy of the certified federal highway administration title VI complaint, so I would ask the city manager to do more for the people in that area, and if you have any questions, I'll gladly answer them at this time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Thank you very much. Yes.

>> Casar: Ms. Joseph -- I'd like to thank you for continuing to advocate about north Lamar, and there's -- after years of -- lots of people's advocacy, there will, in this coming years, it's already set money for there to be a signal crossing to the transit center at Powell, a signalized crossing at cooper and a signalized crossing just south of the chinatown center so more folks don't have to die crossing that street, so we appreciate you

[9:11:16 PM]

continuing to bring that up.

>> And thank you, councilmember Casar. I would just ask you to recognize those mid block crossings and I also gave you a picture on the front, if you'll work with councilmember pool, since it's 4 and 7, and it actually impacts the district 1, 4, 6, and 7 in that area so if you look at the picture on the front, you'll see where my name is. There's an area by chinatown on the northbound side, that's not ADA compliant. And so while councilmember kitchen helped us to get the sidewalks in 2017, it stopped short of the area that's north of chinatown. And that area erodes and there's drainage issues, as you're probably aware, that goes back decades. So I would just ask if I may, councilmember tovo has gone to that area back in 2012, 2014, previous councils looked at this area as well. I'd ask you to recognize while that was the comment for Rainey district, we should honor the

[9:12:17 PM]

previous councils related to north Lamar as well. The other thing to recognize, it's actually loop 275, which you're probably familiar with, that is why I've gone to the federal highway administration is because that's a highway, as well as fm 734, which is Parmer lane and fm 1325, which is burnet road. So I would ask the council to recognize the seriousness of what happened with cap Rema'am. Unfortunately, the constituents in your area, the people that live north of highway 183, have infrequent and reliable and disconnected service. I don't mean to be long winded. I respect that other people have to speak. But I think it's important to recognize those frequent buses are southwest and central, and if you look at that picture on highway 71, unfortunately the women who were trying to get to the wick clinic now have to walk 1.8 to 1.9 miles to get to the services. So I think we need to take care of that or else we'll have fatalities in district 8 as well. So that's pretty unfortunate. I'm not here to tell women what to do with their bodies but there

[9:13:18 PM]

are women, infants, children having to walk 1.8 miles and it's just not right.

>> Mayor Adler: Thanks for coming. Ms. Teich, had thank you for your service. You have one minute.

>> Thank you, mayor, mayor pro tem and councilmembers. I'm Ann Teich, I'm a trustee with the Austin independent school district. Tonight I'm here as a member of the restore rundberg revitalization team and a resident of district 4 to support requests made by one of my neighbors, Daniella non-yeses Dan -- Nunez earlier in the meeting, to help with the safety and health of members of the rundberg area and many other places in town. That first request would be for increasing the amount -- the number of community health paramedics to. Community held paramedics, if you're not familiar with that, help connect some of the most vulnerable people in our city to resources and many of those vulnerable people are my homeless neighbors in the rundberg area. Actually, when they are connected to services, they are less likely

[9:14:19 PM]

to access a lot of emergency services and that actually reduces costs. It's the humanitarian thing to be proactive, other than to always react.

[Buzzer sounding] The second request is funding for \$130,000 which would help a number of families, students that I represent who are suffering from domestic violence. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. So Mr. Floyd, there were two other people with capital idea, Charlotte [indiscernible] And Melissa cool. They're not going to be called until later. If you want to be recognized as a group, I can call everybody later or you can go ahead and speak now and I'll call them when their numbers come up. Just because it's not fair to move people up 25 spots.

>> Should I go ahead or wait? Sorry. I'll go ahead now then.

[9:15:19 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: That sounds good. You have three minutes.

>> Mr. Mayor and city council, my name is Michael Floyd. I'm a leader with Austin interfaith and member of episcopal church. I'd like to address workforce in general as it pertains to capital idea in particular. Austin interfaith is a coalition of over 30 churches and synagogues, schools and ngos from all parts of the city. We're expanding into 50 member institutions as the central Texas area. We work together for common good and for benefit of families in our area. In 1998, Austin interfaith brought together city and business leaders to found capital idea. They acted in response to the realization that most of the good new jobs in the city weren't going to those who needed them the most because they didn't have the right kind of post-secondary training. Because the program they devised has been so spectacularly successful in moving families out

[9:16:19 PM]

of poverty, Austin interfaith has strenuously advocated continued funding for capital idea by the city and other stakeholders. The stated goal of the Austin's master community workforce plan is to move 10,000 residents out of poverty through training and placement in middle skill jobs. Capital idea has an enviable track record enabling folks to make just this kind of transition. In 2018 the program provided over 1,000 students with the kind of training and support services that can move someone from a dead-end job paying \$11,000 to a job that pays over \$45,000 and has a career advancement plan with it. Knowing the positive impact of this program on graduates, their families and the community as a whole, we call on the city to invest two and a half million dollars in funding for this type of long-term job training, for living wage jobs in order for the city to meet its workforce development goals. We commend the mayor and city council members for committing to

[9:17:20 PM]

this level of funding during our accountability sessions last fall. Our understanding is that the proposed budget contains a proposed 2.1 million of ongoing funding for long-term job training and another 319,000 one-time funding for long-term job training. We would ask that the council make this an even two and a half million and make all the funding ongoing so as to ensure stability and recruitment and planning for programs like capital idea. This amount should be thought of as an investment rather than expenditure. Studies have documented that the taxes spent on capital idea graduates are fully recouped after eight and a half years. Within ten years, taxpayers get back 1.65 for each dollar invested in capital idea at a return rate of 9% per year. Within 20 years, taxpayers get back \$5 for each dollar invested in capital idea, a return of 17% per year.

[9:18:21 PM]

More over, a nine-year study of capital idea San Antonio sister program showed spectacular earnings gains for the participants that was just last week written up in the New York times saying these are the largest sustained earnings impacts we've ever seen in a workforce development program. There's no question about whether a long-term job training is worth the --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> \$2.5 million that we are asking for. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, sir. Is Marissa Perales here? You have time donated from Maria Reza. Is Maria re, sir, z -- resa here? You'll have one minute. Go ahead.

>> Go ahead. Good evening, my name is Marisa

[9:19:24 PM]

Perales. I'm a resident of district 3, and I'm a member of communities of color united, and I'm here to support all of the comments and proposals that you heard earlier tonight. But I'd like to focus my comments on housing. Obviously we support the increase to the housing trust fund but we all know we need much more than this one-time bump in the funding and we need more than just the bond funding. We need -- we need a commitment to sustainable funding for anti-displacement measures and for affordable low-income housing. We -- you heard us chant earlier how a budget is a moral document. When you hear people like Cynthia Vasquez earlier talk about how she's been displaced from the home that she's lived in her entire life, that's -- that's a reflection of how we're failing in that moral document.



So I encourage you to create sustainable funding, sustainable measures to put some staff on board to implement that funding and those measures, put it in the equity office.

[Buzzer sounding]

[9:20:24 PM]

Because housing is an equity issue. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ms. Sanchez, you have time donated from -- from two people. Are they still here?

>> Probably not. I'm not sure.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. So you have one minute.

>> Okay. Wonderful. I guess I'll make this fast. Rebecca Sanchez, resident of district 3. I have the privilege of working with those three women that you heard speak earlier. I have the -- I don't know if the word is terror or the -- whatever the opposite of privilege is, of answering those calls that you heard the woman Carmen talk about earlier. I actually met with that family yesterday, and I think I've probably -- the sheriff's office enough to think there's 60 to 80 folks that are being deported out of our jail on a monthly basis. So we are here to say safety might mean a lot of different things, but most important, safety means that our families can stay together, not to reecho that, I think the women that spoke earlier did a lot of great

[9:21:25 PM]

work and a lot of great courage, especially the young man that you all got to see in his real life interactions. And I'm the one that answers those calls and I'm the one that has to figure out, what are we going to do next? Because there's only \$300,000 in legal services --

[buzzer sounding] That's 30 cases, 30 interactions, 30 consultations. That's not a lot for anyone.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> So I'm here to say if you want safety, we want people to remain here.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Angela Richter.

>> She's not here.

>> Mayor Adler: Clark Hancock. Come on down, sir. Is Ellen Richards here? What about Patrick Jones? Pat balstrea? What about Vince cobales? Keith lafton?

[9:22:25 PM]

Come on down, sir. You have one minute, sir.

>> Thank you very much. Thank you all. One minute, we'll do this quickly, try to. My name is Clark Hancock, I'm the president of save Barton creek association. We're here in support of the proposed budget from the city manager. We want to thank him for the additional funds for the parks department, but we also support the Austin parks foundation's proposal for further funding. On top of that, we also have a few little requests. First off, that full funding be given to fixing the upper dam at Barton springs. That's a low hanging fruit. Y'all can do that. A more fundamental one has something to do with the loss of Renee Barrera this year. When we lost Renee, we lost a legacy to something that started over 30 years ago. And that was the creation of the east central and eastern preserves, lands that were set aside specifically because they were examples of the rich biodiversity that makes up the fundamental foundation for

[9:23:26 PM]

Austin. These weren't just general lands. They were there -- they were picked for specific purposes.

[Buzzer sounding] We are asking that you fund two ftes to fill Renee's -- the loss of Renee.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Plus all racial expenses. Thank you all very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ellen Richard, you want to come on down? Sir, you're up next. Go ahead. You have one minute.

>> Excuse me. Hi, I'm Vince cabales, chair of the Asian American quality of life commission. I want to thank council for their setting direction for the budget and for the city manager for including the commissions in development of the budget, most of what we requested was included to some extent, but we had a new item that came up this month, which was funding for the 2020 census outreach to Asian and other minority communities. We have a request that we just passed this month, I'll pass it

[9:24:29 PM]

to the clerk -- to the clerk, but we can get matching funds from a private foundation to -- towards this effort, and I know that the mayor and the county has been looking at the 2020 census efforts. So hopefully this will help reach the hard to reach communities. Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Alter: Excuse me, mayor. I just wanted to ask the city manager if it would be possible for you to provide more detail on what funding we've put into the census, something we've been wondering about but haven't found in the document yet.

>> Will do.

>> Alter: Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Before Ms. Richards speaks, is Keith Lofton here? What about Sid Rodriguez? Why don't you come on down. You have time donated from two people, Patricia Niecewander. Is she here? No? What about Lee Craigmont?

[9:25:31 PM]

You'll have two minutes, Mr. Rodriguez. You have a minute.

>> Good evening, mayor, city council, city manager Cronk, Ellen Richards, I'm chief strategy officer with Integral Care and I'm also a resident of district 9. Integral Care supports individuals living with mental illness, substance abuse disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities to ensure they have the services they need to meet their full potential. I want to thank the city staff and all of you for your strong commitment to make Austin a city that creates opportunity for all people. Integral Care partners across many city departments to address the needs of people we serve. Our partnerships through the analytical agreement ensure that we draw down the required funds -- that your funds help us draw down city, state, and federal dollars to our community. So thank you for that investment. Your commitment last year, we worked this year with city staff in the Meadows Institute to identify ways to strengthen mental health crisis response. Meadows recommended continuing funding for the mobile crisis

[9:26:31 PM]

outreach team which diverts people from emergency rooms, jails, and involuntary commitments, for psychiatric hospitalizations.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: You can finish your thought.

>> Can I have a few more --

>> Mayor Adler: You can't have -- no, finish your thought.

>> Okay. We work with A.P.D. And EMS and we are currently implementing the TeleHeadlight pilot recommended in embedding mental health conditions in the 911 call center. I hope we can count on

your support for these efforts and we look forward to working with you to improve the response across the city.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Emily Derrick here? Why don't you come on down. You have time donated fill Glenn Washburn. You'll have two minutes, Ms. Gerrick. You'll have

>> Three minutes for me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Again, thank you, staff, city manager cronk, mayor. My name is Isidro Rodriguez,

[9:27:33 PM]

I've been in front of y'all before. I'm district 1, excuse me, and I want to thank Ann kitchen for the work she's done with me and my family with the floods. And so I'm here today, again, as a city employee. I echo the words of the best run city in the country. I'm asking that you continue to provide affordable living wages for city employees and city staff. So I'm recommending the 3%. I'm born and raised here in Austin, Texas. Been here for over 50 years. I just celebrated 20 years August 7 this year as a city employee as a proud city employee.

[ Snapping ] I'm glad you've given me this opportunity to provide this income to my

[9:28:35 PM]

family. The opportunity to support your mentoring and tutoring program for over 12 years. And to provide case management through your most vulnerable customers in this city. That may have mental health challenges. I stand here before you as a mental health first aid certified individual that may have dealt with your family members, your friends, your brothers, your sisters, your grandmother, your grandfather. For the last 20 years. Mr. Cronk, I appreciate you for coming on board and putting up that 2.5%. But I ask for the five -- the three, excuse me, 3%. Because I was near 2008 when we didn't get anything for three years. I went and they were asked by city staff to take a cut in pay, 32 hours to save

[9:29:36 PM]

someone else's job. I did that. Where do you think this comes from? I come to y'all because I'm proud of what I do. I'm proud to be born and raised in Austin, Texas. I don't want to see any of my employees, any of my staff, any of my coworkers sitting behind me working eight years has to move out to San Marcos to care for her kids because she can't afford day care. Y'all are better than this.

[indiscernible]sky that y'all come and make it happen.

[Buzzer sounding] The 3% is what we need. Thank you.

[9:30:39 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Is Mary castle here? What about Nicole Huggins. Ms. Garic, you have two minutes.

>> I'm a senior staff attorney. I'm here to talk about two things I think are related, one is 30 new officers and I don't think we need and two is possession of marijuana cases in Austin and Travis county. So the reason you've heard lots of reasons why we don't need 30 more officers and I want to focus on one of them, which is that they're already wasting so much resources, pursuing marijuana cases they know will automatically be dismissed by the county attorney and district attorney. After hb1325 passed this legislative session which legalized hemp and made marijuana effectively legalized because they have to be tested to prove there's enough thc content

[9:31:39 PM]

and there's only one lab that can do that testing, private lab that can't possibly do it for everybody, the county attorney and district attorney have both said they're not going to be pursuing any new cases and dismiss anything that's brought to them that doesn't have the testing. A.P.D. Is still both citing people even though they know everything is automatically going to be dismissed, which is a terrible waste of resources they already have been given and they have been arresting people for possession of marijuana which goes against the city's freedom policy. If she stop pursuing these cases we already know don't have any public safety risk factor, and in Texas, Texas as a whole, not Austin, 84% of Texans think marijuana should be decriminalized and there are terrible consequences for possession of marijuana. People are getting arrested on the old warrants possession of marijuana, getting deported due to them, we've seen ice holds for possession of marijuana for old cases. Not only that there are -- for everybody with a

[9:32:39 PM]

possession of marijuana conviction there are consequences on housing, on their employment and they are no longer eligible for many public benefits. And so -- also of course there's racial discrimination, disparate impact. 6.5 African-American residents are 6.5 times as likely to be convicted for possession of marijuana offenses so we just think that with such logical waste of resources already we don't need more police.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Casar: Mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Flannigan: I don't know if she knows this we will be debating that on the next judicial committee meeting and thanks to councilmember Casar and mayor pro tem for adding that to the next judicial committee meeting.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Mary castle here? Nicole -- you have one discipline good evening, Mary Elizabeth castle, policy advisor for Texas values. I'm here to ask the council to abandon their plans --

[9:33:41 PM]

using taxpayer dollars to do so. This action to have this budget proposal is nothing but political posturing in response and retaliation to a bill passed this past legislative session sb-22 that forbids contracts, government contracts with abortion providers. Let's think about whether or not this is really helping women who you say that this will help who are economically disadvantaged. They're economically disadvantaged, terminating a life won't solve all their problems. They'll still go back to a low-paying job, still won't be able to afford health care and be living on a side of town where there's not economic opportunity for them. Use that money to actually fund things that actually help women get ahead in life, to get education, pay their bills, pay for child care if they already have children and not \$150,000 to abortion access. Thank you.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ms. Higgins and after you will be Debra kern.

[9:34:42 PM]

You have one minute.

>> Thank you all for being so attentive tonight. I'm the policy director for Texas values, largest statewide organization focusing on faith, family and freedom and I'm also a resident of east Austin. I'm speaking in opposition to the \$150,000 going towards supporting abortion. Not 1 cent of taxpayer dollars should be used to support the killing of an unborn child, which is why the Texas legislature passed sb22, prohibiting taxpayer dollars from being donated towards abortion providers or affiliates. This proposal is political positioning attempting to bypass state law. What kind of message does it send to a little girl being babysat with taxpayer funds while her sister or brother is being killed in an abortion clinic if you want to help the women in east Austin lower our property taxes so we can pay for rent or school loans but don't use the funds to kill us. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Perry Lorenz here?

[9:35:46 PM]

What about Lucy McCoy? What about Shu Lee Rojas teng. Javier [indiscernible]. You have time donated from Amanda. She is. You have two minutes -- you have one minute. Go ahead.

>> Thank you for your attention to all of us tonight. My name is Debra Kern, health scientist, I live in district 5. I'm here in support of the budget proposed by the communities of color tonight. Specifically I want to talk about parks and recreation. I've seen first hand with my own son and his friends how having access to a clean, safe, well equipped swimming pool can really change a life. These kids, it's not just a frivolous thing. It gives them not only exercise but keeps them out of trouble. My son swam from ten years old and his friends he ended up swimming in high school which gave them

[9:36:46 PM]

opportunities, gave him a scholarship in college. He's now punched his ticket to swim in the olympic trials and it made a difference in life just to have a clean pool, I want that for all kids in Austin so they have the same opportunity my son had. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Congratulations.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Is Lorena Perez here? What about Brandie sad letter? What about Annette price? What about Irene ciama? What about lornes caman.

[ Saying name ] What about

[9:37:50 PM]

Mary Lou fractioso? Alicia torres? Chris Harris? You have donated time from Warren Berkeley. Is Warren Berkeley here? Thank you. What about Sarah wambowl. Mr. Harris, you have two minutes.

>> Thank you. You all are listening to a lot of people. I'm a prefarmers senior at UT Austin and also a member of the Dell medical school apprenticeship program. Our mission is to collaborate with the community in order to improve health in Austin. My work specifically I help implement interpretation services at local clinics but we need these interpretation services because these interpreters are certified to communicate health care terminology from patient to the health care professional, which is vastly different from standard everyday language

[9:38:52 PM]

that someone who is bilingual might know very well. And as we saw earlier, an interpreter can play a vast role from getting a message across to y'all or can create a slight conflict and break that trust. So if we can improve these interpretation services the communication across health care settings increases. These non-english speaking people could return to the clinic less and the patient outcomes improve and there's overall healthier lifestyles here in Austin. This is only with the help of increased funding for public health services as well as the interpretation services. And that way people who do not speak English well or not at all could still have what I believe is a basic right, which is to have equal health care access and adequate health care for everyone. Thank you.

[9:39:53 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is -- after Mr. Harris speaks, is Brett bigert here? What about shirlet hogie? Sir, come on up. Mr. Harris, you have three minutes.

>> Thank you, mayor, council, city manager. I guess I want to start by saying thank you for the many great things that are funded in this budget. I think, you know, there's new investments above and beyond the increase to the tax Iraq raised to public health, to the equity office, to the housing trust fund. A big onetime payment there. Also for your leadership, it appears that you all are on track to become the first city to fund common sense

[9:40:53 PM]

support for abortion access. It's very important as well, and so I do appreciate all of these things that are in this budget document. We still have a long way to go. You know, we talked a lot about the budget as a moral document and there was something said during the announcement of the budget at life works this year. And I think that is the ideal, that is the goal. But that's not reality. And what I would really love for y'all to do is to imagine with me for a minute that you didn't have anymore campaigns to win and you didn't have anymore donations to raise, didn't have anymore fancy parties that you wanted to get invited to. And what this budget would look like if all those things were true. Where would you actually put the money? Based on what you know about -- about what our city is doing and has done and

[9:41:53 PM]

what you learned tonight from people in our community affected, particularly by policing and by its collaboration with ice, where would this money go? That would be a moral document. Because we still



have all those other things to worry about, this is still a political document. And I know that because funding those 30 officers just in addition to what you heard from community tonight just doesn't make sense. Based on what we know about and the information I provided to you all earlier this week about the vacancies they have, the expected retirements over the next year, their ability to recruit people that meet the standards of our community and diversity goals of our community and their ability to train people in a year span, they simply cannot fill these positions. In addition to the fact that they would be harmful and set us back from meeting the responses in the community that we actually need. We have public health needs

[9:42:53 PM]

we can't meet today and part of it because of the investments we make in police instead. In adding those police officers when they do not make sense, when they cannot be filled at the expense of things that will meet our needs better and make us safer, it just doesn't make sense. So there's a mental health first response proposal. Unfortunately it was not included in the city manager proposed budget.

[Buzzer sounding] I urge you to find the money tonight. It's so important. And, again, urge you to think about what this budget would look like if it truly were a moral document. Thank you so much for the time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Mr. Barrett.

>> Yes.

>> Mayor Adler: Before you begin is shirlet rocky here?

[Off mic]

>> Mayor Adler: I apologize for that. You have two people donating you time, Michelle and huberto. You'll have three minutes in a moment.

[9:43:55 PM]

>> Thank you. My name is rob Barrett, I'm the CEO of freedom solar, we employ about 200 people here in Austin. I'm here to talk a little bit about the proposition in the budget to reduce the solar some of the by \$2 million. I know it's a proposition being considered, just here to talk in opposition to that. The solar market to provide quick context, Austin has been the leader in all the markets in Texas. Austin remains by far the most Progressive and best market for solar here on the residential commercial side. The small incentive available helps on the commercial side to reduce the payback by a couple years on the residential as well reduce it back to a single digit. I've seen it happen in other markets and I think it would definitely happen if you were to pull back the budget for that. Austin has been a leader in the solar market. I'd like to see it continue to be a leader. If we can keep the budget as

[9:44:56 PM]

it's been I think we'll continue that success. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Melissa Cote here? No. What about James Casey? Is James Casey here? What about Joe Ridell? Mr. Ridell, why don't you come on down. You have three minutes, ma'am.

>> Hello, Mayor, Steve Adler and councilmembers, I appreciate your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Pull the microphone towards you a little bit.

>> Thank you. I'm a proud graduate of Capital Idea. I'm a native East Austin night as well. I will never forget riding in the back southeast my then single mother's car. I was five years old when I told her I wanted to be a nurse or teacher. After long discussion we decided that a teacher was a more lucrative career. As time went on and financial constraints occurred, I decided to take

[9:45:57 PM]

other positions at jobs that never paid me more than a thousand dollars per month in compensation. Then one day I decided to listen to my pastor and take one class at a time. After taking one class at a time, I came upon a flyer at ACC where they talked about an organization called Capital Idea. Initially I was focused on the funding, but I soon found out Capital Idea was so much more. I instantly found out that the organization was not only rooted for me, they also were rooted in me. I was surrounded by supportive individuals with the foresight and knowledge of what college required. I received tutoring and so much more. I can name so much more -- so much more that I can name but most importantly I received a high sense of accountability. Fortunately after completing all the requirements of Capital Idea I was accepted into the LVN program. Today I come with fellow

[9:46:57 PM]

alumni, first is an early graduate [saying name], his family came here to pick peppers in the field of Florida. With Capital Idea he learned English and in 2003 became an electronic technician. Since 2005 he worked for the city in the electric substation so he truly keeps the lights on. I also have with me Michelle Tukia. In 2016 she graduated from the LVN program. She, too, has started by taking one class at a time. She never gave up on her dreams and Capital Idea never gave up on her. Two and a half weeks ago she completed her RN program with ACC. Today I want to express my sincere gratitude for the city of Austin helping start Capital Idea 20 years ago. And to urge you to continue making dreams come true. I went on to get my RN degree and I currently hold a master's degree in nursing. I work as a director of

[9:47:59 PM]

nursing for a home health agency. And as for the 5-year-old girl that wanted to be a teacher, too, that came to fruition as well. I'm also an adjunct professor in the lvn program at ACC, the same program I graduated from in 2001. I also would like to express that tonight there was an additional business partner here, cooper consulting.

[Buzzer sounding] Cooper is a pilot employer of the capital idea I.T. Program. They employed an individual by the name after Anthony, father of five children, and he wanted to support his children with a new I.T. Career. He was able to work for the employer and solve a problem that even the chief financial officer couldn't solve. So we wanted to thank them. They do regret they weren't able to stay but we want to ask for continued funding.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Thank you so much for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Mr. Ridell is going to

[9:49:00 PM]

speak in just a moment. Is Todd moon sneer what about markly Dixon? Why don't you come on down. Colleagues, it's about 9:48. Best as I can tell there are about 20 names we have yet to call. Mr. Ridell.

>> Good evening, mayor, council, my name is Joe Ridell. This is a picture of a girl that went intertubing on Barton creek. At the end of the trip she drown on a grate. Shears a close-up of it, about halfway up where the rock is she drowned. That melt intake grate was put in about six years ago, when this new one went in it's a more dangerous design than what was there. Nobody drowned on the old one there for over 30 years.

[9:50:00 PM]

To reduce the chances of another drowning I have three proposals, redesign the intake grate, make -- create a safe visible take-out 200 feet start-up stream and post warning signs telling people where to take out safely and where to avoid. I've taken these ideas to the parks board and environmental commission. Environmental commission made a recommendation that the city council.

[Buzzer sounding] Initiate a study to fix the problems. I'm here today to ask you to tell the departments to make these improvements a priority in their budget. They've got the money. We just want to make them a priority. And any questions, look at my email I sent you at 3:00 yesterday. Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Go ahead, sir.

>> My name is Markly Dixon, I'm from Longview, Texas, director with rights of life east Texas, the one who

[9:51:00 PM]

spearheaded the initiative outlawing abortion in was com, Texas. Guys every single one of us as different as our beliefs are all have something in common. Everyone in this room including those of you who sit in that high position are -- our mothers chose life. At one time, we were like this 12 week old fetal model. They were this size. What happened is we grew up. We're all former fetuses in here and we grew up. The idea of helping women end the life of their child, helping women murder their children, that's insanity. What you ought to do is help women be a good mother to their children.

[Buzzer sounding] Guys, I plead with you, this is a heartbeat of a child we

[9:52:03 PM]

saved and helped their mother. We gave them a place to live. We helped them all the way. This is that heartbeat.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> I bleed plead with you, please, do not partake in the shedding of innocent life.

>> Mayor Adler: What about Alisa Hinely. Come on down. Dominique Salvera? What about Anneliese Lotman. You have time donated from two people. Garrett, Jeanine? What about Daniel? You'll have three minutes, Ms. Lotman, when you come down. And you had -- one minute. Introduce yourself, please.

>> I live in the north part of district 4. And you heard from some of our folks already here tonight. What we've been working on this year is ways to reduce

[9:53:04 PM]

the crime before it happens. So not about how fast can A.P.D. Get there after the bad thing happened but how does it not ever happen? We've got one solution we've been chunking off different pieces. Good news is they're not all city-funded pieces. There's lots of other entities and a lot of them around health and mental health and various parts of the county. But just to reemphasize the things y'all have heard I'm hopeful that y'all will continue funding for domestic crisis intervention. It's 130,000, which is

kind of couch chair change compared to the overall safety budget. It's in there now. They've been in operation since April, and have been able to work with 100 households so that's, I think, something over 300 people.

[Buzzer sounding] Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is Edward Hanagan here?

[9:54:05 PM]

No? What about Hannah frankle? Okay. You'll be up next and you have one minute to speak. You have three minutes.

>> Thank you, my name is Anneliese lotman and I'm here to talk about the impact of allocating \$75,000 to fund worker-owned cooperative development here in Austin. I'm here representing the Austin cooperative business association, and we're a member organization. We have 19 member co-ops in Austin. About half of those are worker-owned co-ops and they in turn represent about 25,000 individual people. Worker-owned co-ops are businesses that are owned and governed by the people who work there. They are inherently empowering, and they can create small and mid-sized businesses that are more resilient, pay higher wages, retain workers learning and build higher level skills than their conventionally

[9:55:06 PM]

owned counterparts. Investing in worker-owned co-ops is an investment in Austin and they're inherently anchored in their communities. They don't leave. They stay because they're owned by people that live here. I don't really have to tell you all all the great things about worker co-ops, you, city council, has supported worker co-ops for years continually. I want to especially thank councilmember pool, who is -- has identified this funding as a priority for this budget year. But you also identified -- you commissioned a report on co-op economic impacts in 2015. You asked economic development to create recommendations, which they did. That's where that \$75,000 number comes from. This February, the economic development department put on an excellent co-op development workshop intrusion people to the co-op model, and city

[9:56:07 PM]

manager cronk included a similar workshop in this year's budget. It was so successful and we're really at the point where we've gone as far as we can without further funding. And so we hope that when people come to that workshop and hear about the great opportunities that worker co-ops present, the \$75,000

for worker co-op development will create a system and a framework so that those people have some place to turn to create the co-op of their dreams, to take the next step, and make an incredible, resilient, economically vibrant business for Austin. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Ms. Frankle, you had some time donated from Ryan Crowley. You'll have two minutes. Is Ryan Nell here? Come on over. You have time donated from two people. Is Doug Addison here?

>> He left.

>> What about Carol Lily.

[9:57:09 PM]

>> She also left.

>> Mayor Adler: You'll have one minute. Two minutes and one minute. Go ahead, please.

>> Hello, council, good evening. Thank you for being here, mayor, mayor pro tem, city manager, all y'all. My name is Hannah Frankle. I'm a resident of district 7. I'd like to echo what Anneliese said, that we've done a lot in the cooperative community with very little. Very have been a pretty DIY community and made amazing things happen for small businesses and cooperative housing. I myself am a ten-year resident of cooperative housing. Because I was a beneficiary of the cooperative community's ability to give me some economic stability early on and pay rents that are much less than most people do, I was able to become a small business owner by the time I was 30, which I don't think would have been possible had I lived somewhere that did not

[9:58:10 PM]

help me help myself. I'm a member of the acba, as is my housing co-op. I'm of course here to speak in support of the proposal to allocate 75,000 to help other people help themselves with the creation of -- with more worker-owned co-ops in Austin. I'd especially like to thank councilmember Pool, who is my representative for including this on her priority list. Cooperative businesses are owned and managed -- they have bakeries, software development, taxicab drivers, website creation, breweries, small scale agriculture. This will allow the city's small business program conduct had you been outreach, provide technical assistance and development services, making the option of cooperative conversions available for new and existing local businesses. The option of cooperative conversion is -- actually offers

[9:59:11 PM]

small business owners who are ready to retire the opportunity to sell businesses to their workers, which can help a lot of iconic and long-term businesses stay in Austin.

[Buzzer sounding] Other cities including Madison, Wisconsin and New York have added to worker cooperatives, so this is not an unprecedented motion. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Ryan, you have one minute, then after you, Rosie Sanchez. Is Rosie Sanchez here? Julia Alexander? Bethany Carson? Come on down, Ms. Carson. You'll have one minute when you come down. Go ahead. You have one minute, sir.

>> Hello. My name is Ryan Knoll. I'm a resident of district 7 and I've been working in a worker cooperative for two years now. It's the key figures cooperative, we're tax prep and financial management bookkeeping co-op and we were founded by four

[10:00:13 PM]

experienced co-ops. One of them had worked and founded a nonprofit that did worker co-op development. The other one was part of the failed Beacon Bakery here in town. If you ever had a wheatfield donate, she developed that donate. Another was founder of Black Star location, she raised their capital. Of course I've been living in housing co-ops for ten years. We were able to make it a successful business because we had amongst us probably 20 years of cooperative experience. Not everyone has had that background. We need something like \$75,000 for worker co-op education to make it accessible for people who have not spent a lifetime doing this unique business model. I hope you can support that business model. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. You have one minute, Mr. Carson. Is Benjamin Bradley here? You want to speak? You have time donated by math

[10:01:18 PM]

Dytrickson. He left? You have one minute.

>> My name is Bethany Carson. I'm here because of my job at grass roots leadership. I work with men seeking asylum, some just getting released, they've experienced trauma in their countries and their first experiences with people in uniform in the United States, are often extremely traumatic themselves. People experience verbal abuse, physical bureaucracy sexual abuse at the hands of officers, private prison guards, I.C.E. Officers. These are the kind of situations they're coming out of but still with a lot of really acute PTSD and mental health needs when they enter our communities. So I can attest to multiple different experiences where interactions with police have been extremely retraumatizing and

[10:02:18 PM]

sent people back in their recovery.

[Buzzer sounding] So I'd just ask that the mental health first response plan is funded.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Sir, you have one minute. Is Andrea black here? Okay. You're fine then. What about Maria Lopez? What about Carmen zuvieta? Jen youngcha ensure you'll have one minute. Three things, it is 10:02. We need a motion to go past 10:00. I think there are about three people we haven't called. Any objection to extending past 10:00? Seeing mornings we're going to go ahead. Go ahead. You have one minute.

>> Thank you, mayor Adler and councilmembers. My family and I live in district 7. I'm here today to speak in support of funding for the creation of worker-owned cooperatives in Austin. I'm co-owner of a tech

[10:03:19 PM]

cooperative. I co-own an IT company with five other people. We make decisions together on how to run our business on a day-to-day basis. We share profits equally at the end of the year and as we scale up we're bringing on co-owners rather than employees. One important aspect of my business is its resilience. IT work is inherently lumpy. Sometimes we have busy months, sometimes slow months, and in those slow times where a traditional company might fire employees, we instead can choose to come together and take a pay cut or defer payment so that we can ride out the storm instead of losing our jobs. In addition, we cultivate leadership among our team by coaching each other as entrepreneurs, trying to be the best boss we can for each other. In summation, worker cooperatives provide stable businesses and opportunities for leadership, hoping to train the next generation of entrepreneurs. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. After Ms. Chau speaks, is Catherine Lopez here?

[10:04:19 PM]

What about Leslie Libby? Why don't you come on down. You'll have a minute. Is there anyone else here who signed up to speak that I have not called yet? Then you are our two last speakers.

>> Cool. I kind of wanted to be one of the last ones. I was trying to figure out what I wanted to say. I've been a volunteer for Austin parks for about 15 years. I focus mainly on peace work and blind creek nature preserve. The reason why I like those two the most, peace park I see as the central park of Austin. Because it's long and skinny, it has, like, the splash pad, the trails, the bike, the kick ball area but it has all these trails and super dense nature. You get a taste of all the different things the park has to offer. And I see that as the gateway to nature. And what I see with parks is I want people to have a taste of what that is and then look for more. And you can find that in nature



[10:05:21 PM]

preserves. We haven't had a lot of coverage in nature preserves but they're really special because you get to see what's really wild. We see nature as something that is abstract, we see it in books or on TV, but when you see it in real life, you engage it and have this intimate connection with it. You have a sense of humility which is important. I've noticed tonight there's a pattern in what people are seeing with you, the desire to be permitted to continue to serve in their paid positions for the city of Austin, but also nonprofits, and as volunteers, there's an invisible labor force that you don't have to pay them anything, you just have to give them symbol symbolic support of giving minimum founding for parks so nonprofits can be enhanced through that program.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Our last speaker is Leslie Libby. You have one minute.

>> I'm lexilibby, I'm a board member of solar Austin and I'm here to request from all of you to reconsider Austin energy's proposal to reduce the solar

[10:06:21 PM]

budget this year. You've heard from other speakers that have talked about the jobs that have been created through the solar rebate program. Just as a homeowner myself that's looking to put solar on my house, there's no financing that's available. I think people would be really excited about because you cannot only -- you can finance solar as well as your electric vehicle charging station, your electric vehicle all through the clean energy credit union. I do think that with this new financing option, you'll see a big uptake in the rebate program. So just consider that the rebate program doesn't just provide solar. When people go solar, they do a variety of things beyond solar. They want to reduce their carbon footprint as much as possible and solar is the stimulus for that. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> You get to go home now.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Colleagues, that concludes the public comment portion of the

[10:07:22 PM]

budget hearing required by the Texas local government code. We're going to vote to adopt the budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 on September 10th, 2019. If we don't adopt the budget on the 10th, we'll continue the hearing till the 11th and 12th. The meetings will be here at city hall, 301 west second street, Austin, Texas, and will begin at 10:00 A.M. Is there a motion to close the public comment portion

of the hearing and schedule adoption of the budget for September 10th, 2019, to be continued to September 11th and 12th if necessary? Moved by councilmember Renteria, seconded by councilmember Ellis. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, please raise your hand. Those opposed? It's unanimous on the dais. That's all the work we needed to do today. It's 10:07, and we are adjourned.