

Wailing Wall comments from Budget Workshop #2
Mastery Charter School
Wednesday, February 18

I am a physician at one of the city's Health Centers. My pts [patients] are the working poor: day care workers, contract cleaners (for hospitals, etc.) home health aids etc. Most have serious chronic health problems – diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol. Without the medical care and medicine that the Health Centers provide, they will have strokes, heart attacks and kidney failure. Beyond this obvious human tragedy, this medical disaster will cost the city and country much more in the long run than keeping the Health Centers open.

How can we cut back on city patronage jobs? Also – how can we slim down the glut of city union positions – for instance, 6-8 guys for a job that only requires 2?

Reduce City Council districts from 10 to 6 (shrinking population). No DROP for elected officials. 2 term limits on all City Council. Keep rec centers open – important for our children and adults too.

Don't cut services any more. If you're going to close the pools, you're going to need more police to quell the crowds. There is a lot of unnecessary spending for perks, cars, etc. City Council should have a limit on what it spends. Temple and Penn are eating up a lot of taxable land. They should have to pay taxes on that land.

Keep the Health Centers open

Please do not cut summer camps. It seems the programs for the kids are the first to go. When this happens we end up still paying for it with an increase in crime. I would rather pay more taxes than cut any program for them.

Pamela Marshall

Single mother who needs all the help I can get.

Parks. Police. SCHOOLS. HEALTH and other VITAL SERVICES must be protected. Cut City Council / Row Offices / Cars. COLLECT Eagles \$ / Sell Box / RE Taxes / Other debt. END Abatements / Perks.

Do not cut essential city services / rec centers / libraries. Cut Mayor's office staffing and all their perks. City Council needs a 30 70 reduction in their budget

We love our: city services, rec. centers, libraries. Put money in to collect revenue – Listen to Obama – Don't be the anti-Obama

Keep Health Centers open. A society is judged by how it cares for its most vulnerable populations. COLLECT taxes and bail money.

Save Recreation / Support summer camps / after school teen centers. A lot of little things turn into Big things. No holiday decorations / take down Xmas lights and snowflakes on city streets and buildings

Mayor Nutter,

Please do not cut any more funding for homeless and housing
Dignity Housing

Dear Mayor Nutter: I saw you when you appeared on WHYY-TV12 on their series “It’s Your City.” You mentioned that the city is interested in ensuring that elders and other vulnerable populations in the city were getting all of the public benefits they were eligible for. A couple of days later I sent an email to the Mayor’s office offering to volunteer for such a program. Unfortunately, I have never received a response from you or the “Mayor’s Office”, with either a “thumbs up” or a “thumbs down”. It appears that I can’t even give it away! Isn’t this a way for the city to save money – by taking people up on their offers of free time and labor???

Sincerely,

Anne Carroll

carroll_biz@earthlink.net

With the extreme amount of murders that have been committed on innocent children, left unsolved. When revising a budget for the city let’s not forget to add provision for the police department. They need more dedicated detectives that don’t just come to work but that actually solve crimes.

Please keep

It’s important to retain services in the school such as programs like Consultation and Education that support our youths. They are faced with some many dilemmas that are difficult for most adults to handle. One would wonder how a child would process the same conflict. Consultations Edu programs have been beneficial to children who need childcare, extracurricular activities and having someone to speak to. They have become an intricate part of school which facilitate some many positive interactions for the child. ~~In turn~~

Fairmount Park has been SERIOUSLY underfunded for over 30 years. It is an essential park of healthy life in Phila. Please do not further cut its budget and destroy our Park.

Restore more days to Carousel House, our only facility on recreation for persons with disabilities. If it does receive ADA funds and only allows one day for swimming, [----- ---- ---- illegible]. Please open it at least two more days. Thanks

To the Nutter Administration: Please – DO NOT DO NOT cut any more funding for after-school and summer programs for young people. We are making real progress with children and youth. We are turning lives around every day. I was there at all your inaugural forums supporting your candidacy. You continue to have my support!

Focus on efficiency, not cutting essential services.

End tax abatement

Representing houses in Fairmount Park. Please keep this historic treasures open. For the public to learn about our history of the founders of our nation. They are tourist attractions. Alma Jacobs, President, Women for Greater Phila.

Save \$/Protect C----- / Rehabilitate offenders. Let probation officers (adult, juvenile, pre-trial) supervise low risk offenders in community instead of prison. Reduce prison costs, protect community, rehabilitate offenders. Probation should work with police, district attorneys and community services to rehabilitate low risk and incarcerate high risk

Wailing Wall #2 (other #2)

The consultation & education program currently offers services to children in over 60 of Philadelphia schools. Within the past year funding concerns have been raised about the future of this program. Without this program counselors, principals, and parents will not have anywhere to turn with concerns about their child's needs. We offer individual support, group activities and mental health evaluations. Please do not cut C&E services!

OFFER CITY WORKERS FURLOUGH OPTION WITHOUT PENSION implications. 4-days work week, I would take it in a heartbeat if it did not mean 20% pension loss. Let's do it for a year and see how it goes.

Please save prevention programs. Consultation & Education – school based case management. / After-school programs / Beacon programs / EPIC stakeholders. The children & families need supportive service to assist with basic needs such as, food bank, medical insurance, utilities, school uniforms

PLEASE SAVE Consultation & Education Programs!!

Just like Christ, “I am the stone that the builders refused.” On a daily basis I'm subjected to belittling remarks, negative and aggressive attitudes, from the very people placed in my life to help me. Somedays I hate and despise the wealthy as well as the poor. The wealthy because they talk as if I'm not a person, with dreams and goals of my own. The poor because it seems as if they've been so beaten down, they no longer desire more. But I ask myself What Would Jesus Do? I am number 77 and I'm HOMELESS and WHO CARES?

Eliminate DROP. Drop employees are receiving double pay for 4 years. Explain how this can possibly benefit the city? If the city cannot demonstrate a financial or other significant benefit they must stop the junket.

PHASE OUT RE TAX ABATEMENT. I've heard arguments for why this has spurred economic development but I worry that we'll have a glut of expensive property when it's over. Limit this benefit to real redevelopment of depressed/abandoned property.

Funding needs to be kept in the anti-violence programs. In tough economic times people turn to violence. Look internally / Cut poor performers in City government offices.

Contract out Human Resources (Personnel) for city hiring services. Current system is hopelessly inefficient and wasteful and guarantees a mediocre work force.

DON'T CUT THE FAIRMOUNT PARK BUDGET TWICE! The park has already seen a 75% decline in real dollars since 1970, and the reservoir [?] of its first increase in 30 years within the 20% cut in late 2008. Further cuts won't save much (it has a tiny budget), and will dramatically undermine property values & quality of life for years to come. Think of our future tax revenues & don't cut parks!

If we forget those in need first, what will our future be like. Mothers & Children need your help. Face it

Jane Addams Place

Support affordable housing and home repair

Public libraries are used even more in tough economic times – by people out of work, by school kids, by folks looking for cost effective ways to get information, educational support, recreational reasons (books, movies, etc.) Free Library has already been cut 20%

Please protect funds for early care (child care centers) & early ed. (Facilities & Programs!) Add'l funding must be allocated to these priorities. They are investments our children need now – and ones that we will continue to benefit from well into the future.

Protect community & improve quality of life. Let probation officers supervise the 50,000 offenders on county probation in the community instead of the office. Who do the leaders think are committing all the unsolved crimes? Unsupervised probationers

I am writing on the WAILING WALL to preserve our city walls and keep our budget @ Mural Arts / to keep our walls beautiful / Mural Arts Program!

Our parks are important in ways many people don't understand. Please do not reduce the Fairmount Park budget.

Raise BPT & exempt first \$500,000 in gross revenue

1. Don't cut Fairmount Park (there's nothing left already) 2. Please do something about city healthcare benefits. I pay \$25 for co-pay – 3½ minutes at the foot doctor. Everyone should pay something and inflated pension costs. The city is way out of line on these issues. 3. Before “we” pay for trash make businesses “pay up”. Trucks collect non-household trash regularly. Maybe the sanitation workers get “cash” for the service, but we pay.

Collect the taxes that are owed! The “little people” pay!

COMPLAINT – Wilson Goode, Jr.’s secretary makes \$90,000 for ten months work. This seems a bit on the high side for public employment as a secretary who “gets beer.”

Kevin Garson

#2

Please continue to maintain vacant lots. Ongoing trash pickup is important to keeping these clean and preventing short dumping. Unmaintained lots have the potential to bring a neighborhood down, reduce spending on affected commercial corridors and decrease future property tax roles.

Please invest in long-term solutions as much as possible. Unsustainable, short-term approaches will only need to be redone in a generation’s time. We cannot afford those approaches any longer

PARKS and kids / PARKS and adults / PARKS and EVERYONE / They’re free / They’re good / KEEP THEM (funded)

Amend the DROP program! Do something about the bail system! Get rid of city cars we pay for!

Do not cut public health services! These save lives and support a capable workforce.

Give continued support to programs for youth – youth employment, college & career readiness. I’ll pay \$5/week for trash pick up. Look into the waste of the city processes & workers first.

PARKS

The park budget has effectively been cut over the past 30 years to 25% of what it was in the 1970s. It is currently such a small item that a 10%, 20%, or 30% cut gets little benefit particularly when compared to the catastrophic reduction in services that would result.

Children need C&E program / C&Es are essential in the Philadelphia schools. Children learn skills that allow them to cope better with everyday life. Northern Home C&E have a 80% success rate and it’s only getting better. C&E are a great resource in schools and in the community. Save C&Es

Consolidation of parks & rec w/FPC – great opportunities for synergies and saving \$ in a few years – COMBINATION will allow for some efficiencies AND opportunities for income production but first we need time + \$1 \$1 to establish parkland + system guidelines * Spend a little now = big savings later!

Get rid of Clerk of Sessions & collect \$1 billion in Bail \$

Focus on efficiency & revenue generation (collecting taxes, fees, fines, etc.) In the quest for cuts, do not compromise quality, core capacity & innovation. Workforce still need training, programs still need quality improvement & new ways of delivering services still need to be tried, maybe more than ever!

Do not cut Mural Arts. They put so much into my hood and take so little out of the budget. They inspire my neighbors and I to take care of our area, it has value now.

NORTHERN HOME FOR CHILDREN. FAMILIES NEED C&Es.

Chastity Anderson

Northern Home

C&Es work in our neighborhood schools to provide interventions to families in need. C&Es are the link and key to a healthy relationship between parents and school staff. There are not enough programs in the school alone to service and attend to the needs of each child. YOU NEED C&E!!!! HELP SAVE OUR PROGRAM!!

More bull! You cannot make a decision without all the info!

PARKS – NO BUDGET CUTS / NO WAGE TAX INCREASE / FIRE – NO CUTS / REDUCE CITY ADMINISTRATIONS / REDUCE LAWYERS / KEEP PARKS ALIVE!

We need a closer look at how and where cuts are made. For example: city car fleets – legislators do not need cars for personal use. However vehicles & maintenance for fieldwork (DHS, LCI), should not be cut.

Raise property tax & exempt a certain amount of property value to protect low-income people

Convert wage tax to income tax

Air pollution control is an urgent necessity in the city – car pollution, bus pollution – noise pollution are all related factors in our city – for the health of all our citizens –

Although partially funded by the E PA and the PA Dep certainly the most of our money comes from the city how will the budget cuts affect this p--- --?

Raise wage tax & exempt low wage workers

Reduce city workforce by attrition / City has a lot of dead weight employees. Solution is NOT to keep low pay and reduce benefits. We need a quality workforce and will not recruit/retain them if current trend continues. Let's not move to lowest common denominator. Mayor's office – you get to pick your people from all over the county but city agencies are hamstrung.

#2

In order to preserve essential services, the city should enact a Land Value Tax. This single reform has enough potential to provide for the entire amount of the revenue shortfall. Research has been done to demonstrate the tax's impact and is being considered in City Hall right now. www.ourcommonwealth.org

Recreation centers / If hours are to change / make open from 1pm-9pm or 12 noon-8pm / so evening activities can continue

Child welfare is not just about foster care and protection. It is also about prevention of abuse, neglect and placement. It is better for children/families to get support and cheaper for the city.

The current administration's practice within city departments remains that of "pay to play" and jobs for family and friends

For once, stop cutting parks!!

PROVIDE MOBILE HEALTH UNITS

MAKE THE EAGLES PAY!!!

Manage the resources / human + capital / do not cut s-----s

How much of our children's services is going towards the redecoration of the office and conference rooms of the Managing Director. How many times did she have the sofa reupholstered? Wasteful spending

1. No cuts homeless budget – use \$12 million to 20 million of homeless dollars from stimulus package

SUPPORT HOPE AND PROGRAMS THAT WORK! Mr. Mayor, you need to fight the tough issues such as the City Councillors' expensive pension grab, health care costs, etc., rather than attacking programs like Mural Arts that put ~~people~~ artists to work, give jobs to re-entering ex-offenders, and give poor communities a voice and hope for the future. Parks, swimming pools and libraries are key to helping people cope in our tough city. I cannot tell you how impressed I am with the Mural Arts program's prison program, in particular. I taught a drawing & painting class at a women's prison. I was told the recidivism rate for released prisoners is 85%. It is much lower for MAP programs, because MAP actually provides skills and jobs for re-entering ex-offenders. A prison official said MAP is the BEST recidivism program they have! Several have told me our murals remind them of the importance of what they do: prepare people to be productive members of society! MAP has inspired a worldwide art movement & attracts people to a newly beautiful, vibrant city

What about decreasing the City Council's discretionary funds?

Decrease MDO employees.

Recreation gives kids an outlet! Don't take it away from all.

Feb 18, 2009

Ready, Willing, and Able

1211 Bainbridge Street

Philadelphia PA 19147

My name is Robert B----- Pepin, and I was homeless as of Dec. 31, 2008, because I was trying to learn how to overcome my situation of homelessness, and return to my children, I was trying to find a program in my hometown of Philadelphia. I was directed to R.W.A. and I was accepted into their program. At RWA I have been taught how to budget my finances, and have become a

more responsible parent, with skills that I have been taught at RWA such as vocational training, interview skills, computer classes, and also very importantly the program of Narcotics Anonymous. Without RWA I would not be a productive Black Man in this society, so please keep these doors of RWA open for other men who are willing to change.

Please tax and ---- vacant properties and nuisance property owners! Implement land value tax!

START TAXING NONPROFIT ORG. AND SELL CITY ASSET. There are 21 taxes in the city still not enough money the city has no more business due to city taxes we are the next Camden

Eliminate 1-2 exempt positions per dept.

Do not allow those elected officials to complete the drop plan + then return to work

Stop the Law Dept. from contracting to outside lawyers (that's what they're there for)

Make tax delinquents pay or seize property + sell it

Keep the historic mansions open. These wonderful homes help to educate students in the Phila. School District. They give them a "hands on" experience to the past. Laurel Hill Mansion is involved in a literacy program where students can reflect on what they've learned through written language. The mansions help to educate our future citizens and help them to learn to respect the past.

Drop DROP

In these tough times we need city services especially for homeless people

Do not cut shelter services or supportive housing

Do not cut up our safety net

Health centers are my #1 priority. Philadelphia needs health care and the centers are already overcrowded and underfunded.

Philadelphians need our health centers now more than ever. Too many people with no health insurance have nowhere else to go. Please do not cut health centers

Is anyone deserving of a cut? NO!! (Over "NO CUTS! Essential Services are Essential!" sticker)
We are all important! Before considering cuts consider: An end to PATRONAGE! Make those who can afford to pay their fair share. Don't step on those with no voice!

I will like to see nonviolent ex-offenders have the change to apply for a job that they have skills doing and not be discriminated against from their former offense. Example: offense DUI can apply for painter job without being discriminated against

Please don't let the city become a "police state" only focused on public safety (police, fire, & prisons). To make a city liveable we need libraries, rec centers, + art + culture. You are paid to figure this out; SO FIGURE IT OUT!

Do not cut essential services like libraries, health centers / We need a city that is livable!! / I would rather have fair tax increases + make corporations, like insurance co., Comcast, pay their fair share.

Why does the mayor secretary has a car.
Cut the fat from the top mayor's office, council
Stop using city funds to redecorate

Homelessness hurts all of us. Our children are our future, they need affordable education and libraries to study / No work, crime rate goes up / Tell us what we need before you decide to make cuts / Bail out people too!

My complaint – (source of revenue –) SPEEDERS! FINE THEM. Ken Garson

Let's start cutting the fat from the top. Too many chiefs not enough Indians

If you charge for the trash pick up people will just dump it on the parks or vacant lots.

I would be remiss to not take advantage of an opportunity to express I dire concern of the possibility of eliminating the preventive services available to our families in our communities. As a servant to these families, I have seen, first hand, how helpful preventive services have been; as well as seen the level of trust present when families know you're here to help before DHS intervention is needed.

City employees' health/retirement benefits are out of control!
The private sector and working person cannot dream of such benefits.
Shift retirement to 403b/401k package and eliminate pensions

PARKS & REC. Concerned that with the merger of Parks & Rec that Park land will be sold to raise funds – if not in this administration then the next. Protect Park & Rec land. Purchase more land for open space.

2-18-09

Dear Mayor,

Please ----- the Financial Community & Bankers to risk their bottom lines to save our city and the economy by giving credit to B----- & Consumer to save jobs & enable homeowners to pay their mortgages & taxes [illegible]

Suggestion for cuts – cars for anyone who is not a social worker or police/fire – No more cars to take your kids to work.

Cut the Mayor's cabinet

Cut the size & budget of city council

Don't let council in the DROP

Get rid of all this unnecessary FAT before you cut services.

Camille Barnett is spending too much time redecorating – not to mention money.

Where are the cuts from City Council? i.e. Blondell Reynolds Brown's use of city car to transport children outside of city? – or – Wilson Goode Jr.'s \$90,000 girlfriend?

Every year 1 million people visit the Wissahickon. It is loved to death! PLEASE INCREASE FUNDING FOR THIS & OTHER CITY PARKS! Volunteer groups cannot do it alone.

No cuts to essential city services. We need to find ways to use citizens to help. People out of work and even some in work will volunteer. And we need to do whatever it takes (I know there [illegible]) to temporarily raise wage tax.

Why does the Mayor secretary have a car
If you recreation what are the children going to do
Dr. Camille is spending too much on redecoration for the upper floor of MSB

If you charge for trash pickup – try to charge by weight! Good way to cut down WASTE! Install wind turbines on ridge along Henry Ave – in Roxboro –

Please continue to support arts, culture & heritage. These organizations are vital to our communities and provide impt. educational services. For instance, the 14 organizations that comprise historic Germantown pump more than \$2.5 million into the local community, serve more than 60,000 visitors, and provide education programming for upwards of 20,000 schoolchildren annually.

“The way we manage is the problem, not the size of the workforce.” Ed Rendell, 1992 campaign papers running for mayor. Nothing changes

Don't cut services for children + other vulnerable populations. / Freeze property tax abatement / Move to income stead of wage tax / Make sure all corporations in Phila. are paying their fair share / Commit to reducing the number of non-violent inmates in city prison system by 50% over 5 years / Increase wage tax by the amount that it costs to buy one cup of coffee a week / Take your pick – Dunkin Donuts or Starbucks!

Let's get creative and come up with new sources of revenue. We cannot afford to cut essential services to those who need them most! Make the Eagles pay. Let us be goaded by our hopes and dreams, not our fears and low expectations. Listen up!

You need to concentrate on the people and not on the dead wood, cronism and favoritism of gov.

Play – with children, dogs, people

Active – events, students, & animals

Run – with a ball, a smile, free

Kids – take pride in clean green space

Stimulate – the mind & body & soul

Please don't cut our funding / We need our SMAs for maintenance / We need our grant opportunities / We need to educate children & adults on the positives of green space
PARKS = People, Health (human & K-9), fun, appreciation, events, relaxation, exercise

Get rid of exempt employees in all departments (even 1 or 2) would save money
Does every exempt person that walks in the door feel the need to have new furniture in the office
b/c he/she does not like it?
Do not allow employees to come back after “DROP”!
Get rid of the 10yr. tax abatement.
Getting rid of the “doers” will only increase crime and chaos

[Sticker] “NO CUTS! Essential Services are Essential!” Essential Services should not be cut during difficult times. They are essential. Raise revenue and support the citizens of Philadelphia.
- Katrina

Housing. We cannot afford to reduce emergency shelter resources. Families, parents and children must have a safety net – housing, employment, food, health care – to sustain themselves.

Lower or eliminate the business tax. It is so high that I can no longer afford to employ myself!

To help fix the budget

Enforce

Enforce

Enforce

L&I complaints

[contd. from previous page]

SWEEP FINES

* Double or triple all fines

Collect all fines

Rental licenses

Safety violations

Health violations

Please support

1. HIV/AIDS prevention
2. Public health centers
3. Children Youth and Family Prevention programs under Department of Human Services

Cut pay of all city employees across the board by 5%

Please do not close the public health clinics because they are a safety net for low income people, uninsured, senior citizens, unemployed, and many other people who may not be able to afford health insurance (the employed poor)

It is imperative that the parenting collaborative programs continue to be funded for parenting education. These groups are sometimes the only support the clients receive. I[t] would also be beneficial for more social services programs to be based in the health centers especially for pregnant and parenting women.

Jacquelyn Reed for Healthy Start/Parenting supervisor, Intercultural Family Services

I hope whatever cuts are made are not “encased in cement”. This is an unfortunate but unusual economic time. I’d hate to see permanent cuts.

Amend state constitution to create progressive taxation. Cut out uniformity clause.

I do not want to see cuts in the Health Department. In addition to basic health services, the Health Department enforces our quality laws through Air Mgt Services. A \$1 cut in city funding means an additional \$2 to \$3 cut in federal & state matching funds for air quality enforcement.

This is a diversion meant to make us feel as if we are making the decisions, where the city has [illegible] none so, and wants us to think we did. [Sticker] “NO CUTS! Essential Services are Essential!”

More jobs and housing for homeless. Less overtime. Higher sales tax

Property taxes should be paid by nonprofits: schools, museums, churches, etc.