

PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL  
BUDGET HEARINGS  
RM.400 4.23.13

Good Evening ...

To Council President , Darrell Clark...All Associate Councilpersons, especially our own District 9 Councilperson , Marian B. Tasco...Thank you for ALL your continued support .

My name is Walter Marlin . I come to you today as a Retired Administrator from the Philadelphia Prison System , a 31 year volunteer of the Department of Parks and Recreation , and a Board Member of the Philadelphia Parks Alliance . I am one of the 30, 377 individual volunteers ( 1 ) of the Department of Parks and Recreation , who believe in “ giving back “ our time and energies in order for our children and grandchildren to have a “ safe and clean “ environment in which to “ recreate , “ and play .

Our Prison system , unfortunately experiences the end result of a system that leaves our children and young people with few options , except to “ get out of the house and find something to get into “ ,,usually , without supervision , something illegal . If there were more adult - supervised and organized activities within our Parks and Recreation system...just MAYBE ...so many of our young people would not be locked-up in our County Prisons and Youth Studies Center , which diverts tax -payer dollars from our Parks and Recreation .

Thanks to Mayor Nutter and City Council , the new Department of Parks and Recreation has a visionary leader with a highly effective staff , that get the most out of EVERY MUNICIPAL DOLLAR while leveraging private investment and volunteer sweat equity .

But Parks and Recreation STILL struggles to provide adequate , clean and safe facilities in “ YOUR COUNCILMANIC DISTRICTS .” Continued budget cuts , have , and are still taking it’s toll on DERRERED MAINTENANCE and INADEQUATE STAFFING in ALL neighborhoods . It becomes a question of “ PAY IT NOW “, to Parks and Recreation , or , “ PAY IT LATER “ to our Prison System . Many , Many programs are now run by volunteers...some cleaning and maintenance are now being done by volunteers ...some facilities are literally trying to keep the doors open and the lights on !!!

In a recent article from THE PHILADELPHIA TRIBUNE (2) dated 4.12.13 , City Controller, Alan Butkovitz’ report , “ Department of Parks and Recreation Review 2013 “ , “ which provided follow-up to similar reports commissioned in 2004 and 2008 “ ...found major maintenance inadequacies in 28 visited sites .

...damaged fences at McCreesh Recreation Center,

...Blocked fire exit at Athletic Recreation Center ,

...Water Damage at Lawncrest Recreation Center ,

...Damaged safety surface at Stokley Recreation Center .

The entire article is available from [dwilliams@phillytrib.com](mailto:dwilliams@phillytrib.com) .

**Parks and Recreation is still \$ 5 million Short of Mayor Nutter’s First Promise and What Council approved for FY 2009 . We Thank Council And The Mayor For Partial Restoration of Funding in FY 2013 and Call on Them To Close The Gap By Restoring The Remaining \$5 Million .**

**“ Parks and Recreation...” kid tested , mother approved .”**

**Thank you for Time.**

(1) Park Facts by the Numbers 2013 ...Source: PPR & Philadelphia Green  
philaparks.org 2013

(2) [dwilliams@phillytrib.com](mailto:dwilliams@phillytrib.com), 2013