



Testimony of the **Bronx Council for Environmental Quality**
to the **New York City Council Joint Committee of Finance Hearing**
on the **FY21 Mayor's Executive Budget**, *NYC DEP* May 21, 2020

BCEQ (www.bceq.org) is a not-for-profit organization formed almost 50 years ago to establish “an aesthetic, unpolluted, environment protecting a natural and historic heritage.” We are an all-volunteer organization whose members have devoted their experience, expertise, and advocacy to supporting a sound environmental policy for the Bronx.

These comments are in response to the Mayor's Executive Budget FY21 Supporting Schedules for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We bring your attention to several items found in the Supporting Schedule for the DEP's Expense Budget.

1. Under Budget Code 0236 BWS, Jerome Park Reservoir will realize an \$38,800,000 increase in OTPS spending for Contractual Services (60). However, \$23,000,000 will be eliminated from cleaning services (60.624). We call for maintaining cleaning services for the Jerome Park Reservoir and the dedication of contractual services for this purpose, which maintains the environmental quality of the surrounding neighborhoods of Bedford Park, Fort Independence, Kingsbridge Heights, and Van Cortlandt Village.

We are particularly concerned that cleaning services would be defunded in the midst of capital projects for the restoration of the Jerome Park Reservoir east wall, gatehouse deconstruction, and the historic Old Croton Aqueduct repair that have already impacted these neighborhoods. Public health hazards associated with large construction projects, including refuse and rats, will only be exacerbated without cleaning services (60.624) maintained. As Bronx neighborhoods reel from pandemic and underlying health deficits, maintaining cleaning services for a large public facility so close to dense urban neighborhoods will maintain the neighborhood's environmental quality. Finally, the two-and-a-quarter mile sidewalk/pathway on the outside perimeter of the reservoir are



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an important part of the agency's neighborly responsibilities; this should include daily litter removal, snow removal as required, and regular attention to horticultural duties.

2. Under Budget Code 3323 BWS, Green Infrastructure, we cheer the increase in expenditures for supply and maintenance but note that \$72,118,000 has been eliminated from contractual services required for design, maintaining, and consulting on these essential projects (40.400).

DEP is obligated under a revised 2012 agreement with NYS DEC to manage one (1) inch of rainfall on ten percent (10%) of the impervious surfaces within combined sewer areas by 2030. DEP has capital commitments to green infrastructure investment under its Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan, also submitted to the NYS DEC and will require additional expertise to scope and manage its growing green infrastructure installations.

DEP has reached a plateau on CSO accomplishments. That does not mean that Green Infrastructure work cannot continue in other programming. BCEQ is glad to participate with the agency in its sustainability role as green infrastructure methods costs less, is more protective, and comes in many shapes and sizes. There are green roofs, bioswales, living shorelines, rain barrels, rain gardens, daylighting, and other methods to mold and cultivate your soil to make it thirstier. All these methods involve looking at trees, native plants, and a variety of creative designs for living shorelines with oyster reefs, castles, and other natural materials to protect and restore wetlands and the waterfront's edge.

Green Infrastructure is nature-based landscaping of soils to increase infiltration rainfall rates, "in situ" where it falls, as it meanders down to the base flow toward the water body via tunnels created by ants and other soil creatures, like burrowing insects and worms, and long rooted native plants.



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All along the way filtering pollutants and thereby contributing clean water to the nearest water body; and can also reduce flooding, which damages street infrastructure causing expensive repairs, and major accidents. Finally, less storm water pollution via green infrastructure also means less air pollution. A win- win: clean air and water!

BCEQ has been an early, and leading supporter of Green Infrastructure throughout the Bronx as the most cost-effective way to reduce the volume of runoff into our waterways. Green infrastructure also adds precious green spaces to the areas of the Bronx to clean the air where there are no parks nearby, providing populations with the highest asthma rates in the United States with their benefits: cleaner air, cooler temperatures, cleaner water. Diminishing capacity and expertise obtainable through Green Infrastructure contractual service will put the city's long-term obligations and plans for a greener city in peril. Please rescind these cuts.

3. Under Budget Code: 8259 Wastewater Treatment, Wards Island Water Pollution Control Plant,

we question the apparent severe cut of \$9,607,613,000 despite maintaining the same 120 F/T headcount. Given that the previous year's overtime was \$2,059,671,000, this does not make sense.

Wards Island treats the Harlem River Watershed from both the Bronx and Manhattan Counties. The Harlem River has the largest number of combine sewer outfalls, is the center of the mixed-use building expansion along its waterfront, encompasses some of the city's most densely populated environmental justice areas. BCEQ has always been concern with the need to clean the Harlem River and create an asset to our health rather than an impediment. This facility needs to be maintained at the highest level of excellence. We need an explanation as to this change in the budget.



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4. Lastly, BCEQ asks for clarification and explanation for the \$532,250,000 for Professional Services under Budget Code: 0246 Croton Filtration Plant Golf Range Maintenance. What are these professional services for? Are they necessary to maintain the Golf Range? What part will DEP play in the maintenance of the Golf Range? BCEQ notes that current plans for the DPR Golf Range at this location incorporate facilities for water management, required by the siting of the Croton Filtration Plant in Van Cortlandt Park.

BCEQ believes calls for restoring important budget items to the DEP budget 2021 because they contribute to a healthy environment. We hope that the City Council heeds the call to strategically devote the city's diminished fiscal resources to public health and remind those here today: public health spending is environmental health spending.

Backup screen shots are from the file found at this link:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/ss4-20.pdf>

~Prepared by Robert Fanuzzi (BCEQ President) and

Karen Argenti (BCEQ Secretary)

May 18, 2020



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JEROME PARK RESERVOIR

BUDGET CODE: 0236 BWS Jerome Park Reservoir (In-City) OTPS			
10 SUPPLYS&MATL	100 SUPPLIES + MATERIALS - GENERAL	29,000	25,000
	169 MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES	15,000	40,000
	SUBTOTAL FOR SUPPLYS&MATL	44,000	65,000
30 PROPTY&EQUIP	300 EQUIPMENT GENERAL	10,000	10,000
	SUBTOTAL FOR PROPTY&EQUIP	10,000	10,000
		3174	

EXECUTIVE BUDGET - FY21
OPERATING BUDGET
AGENCY: 826 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECT.
UNIT OF APPROPRIATION: 004 UTILITY - OTPS

OBJECT CLASS	IC REF	OBJ DESCRIPTION	MODIFIED FY20-04/10/20		EXECUTIVE BUDGET FY21		INC/DEC
			# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		600 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES GENERAL				36,000	36,000
		608 MAINT & REP GENERAL		1,000			1,000-
		624 CLEANING SERVICES		23,200			23,200-
		676 MAINT & OPER OF INFRASTRUCTURE		1,000			1,000-
		686 PROF SERV OTHER		3,000		20,000	17,000
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		28,200		56,000	27,800
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0236		82,200		121,000	38,800

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

EXECUTIVE BUDGET - FY21
OPERATING BUDGET
AGENCY: 826 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECT.
UNIT OF APPROPRIATION: 004 UTILITY - OTPS

OBJECT CLASS	IC REF	OBJ DESCRIPTION	MODIFIED FY20-04/10/20		EXECUTIVE BUDGET FY21		INC/DEC
			# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	
		612 OFFICE EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	1	29,150	1	86,150	57,000
		615 PRINTING CONTRACTS		5,000		5,000	
		624 CLEANING SERVICES	1	13,795	1	13,795	
		671 TRAINING PRGM CITY EMPLOYEES	1	25,000	1	16,500	8,500-
		686 PROF SERV OTHER	2	90,001	2	69,839	20,162-
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS	6	164,500	6	237,584	73,084
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0614	6	1,472,662	6	1,260,051	212,611-
BUDGET CODE: 3119 Security - Water							
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		619 SECURITY SERVICES		298,430		298,430	
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		298,430		298,430	
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 3119		298,430		298,430	
BUDGET CODE: 3332 BWSO Green Infrastructure							
10 SUPPLYS&MATL		100 SUPPLIES + MATERIALS - GENERAL		90,469		238,901	148,432
		169 MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES		12,500			12,500-
		SUBTOTAL FOR SUPPLYS&MATL		102,969		238,901	135,932
30 PROPTY&EQUIP		302 TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT		62,472			62,472-
		305 MOTOR VEHICLES		150,000		150,000	
		SUBTOTAL FOR PROPTY&EQUIP		212,472		150,000	62,472-
40 OTHR SER&CHR		400 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES-GENERAL		550,368			550,368-
		403 OFFICE SERVICES		450			450-
		412 RENTALS OF MISC.EQUIP		21,300			21,300-
		499 OTHER EXPENSES - GENERAL				500,000	500,000
		SUBTOTAL FOR OTHR SER&CHR		572,118		500,000	72,118-
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		608 MAINT & REP GENERAL		5,000		5,000	
		624 CLEANING SERVICES		83,446		105,000	21,554
		671 TRAINING PRGM CITY EMPLOYEES		15,000			15,000-
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		103,446		110,000	6,554
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 3332		991,005		998,901	7,896
BUDGET CODE: 3334 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE							



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WARDS ISLAND WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT

EXECUTIVE BUDGET - FY21							
OPERATING BUDGET							
AGENCY: 826 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECT.							
UNIT OF APPROPRIATION: 008 WASTEWATER TREATMENT							
MODIFIED FY20-04/10/20				EXECUTIVE BUDGET FY21			
OBJECT CLASS	IC REF	OBJ DESCRIPTION	# POS	AMOUNT	# POS	AMOUNT	INC/DEC AMOUNT
04 ADD GRS PAY		041 ASSIGNMENT DIFFERENTIAL		428,576		428,576	
		042 LONGEVITY DIFFERENTIAL		600		600	
		043 SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL		29,835		29,835	
		045 HOLIDAY PAY		47,738		47,738	
		047 OVERTIME		35,803		35,803	
		SUBTOTAL FOR ADD GRS PAY		542,552		542,552	
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 8258	60	6,714,863	60	6,834,628	119,765
BUDGET CODE: 8259 WARDS ISL WAT POLL CONT PLANT							
01 F/T SALARIED		001 FULL YEAR POSITIONS	120	22,420,449	120	12,812,836	9,607,613-
		SUBTOTAL FOR F/T SALARIED	120	22,420,449	120	12,812,836	9,607,613-
04 ADD GRS PAY		041 ASSIGNMENT DIFFERENTIAL		237,606		237,606	
		042 LONGEVITY DIFFERENTIAL		600		600	
		043 SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL		380,838		380,838	
		045 HOLIDAY PAY		134,671		134,671	
		047 OVERTIME		2,059,671		59,671	2,000,000-
		SUBTOTAL FOR ADD GRS PAY		2,813,386		813,386	2,000,000-
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 8259	120	25,233,835	120	13,626,222	11,607,613-

CROTON FILTER PLANT GOLF RANGE MAINTENANCE

EXECUTIVE BUDGET - FY21							
OPERATING BUDGET							
AGENCY: 826 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECT.							
UNIT OF APPROPRIATION: 004 UTILITY - OTPS							
MODIFIED FY20-04/10/20				EXECUTIVE BUDGET FY21			
OBJECT CLASS	IC REF	OBJ DESCRIPTION	# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	# CNTRCT	AMOUNT	INC/DEC AMOUNT
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		600 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES GENERAL		398,919			398,919-
		608 MAINT & REP GENERAL	4	2,129	4	3,500	1,371
		671 TRAINING PRGM CITY EMPLOYEES	2	102,267	2	403,288	301,021
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS	6	503,315	6	406,788	96,527-
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0244	6	1,107,332	6	1,077,761	29,571-
BUDGET CODE: 0245 BEDC Downstate Water Quality Studies							
40 OTHR SER&CHR		400 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES-GENERAL		1,278,964		245,286	1,033,678-
		SUBTOTAL FOR OTHR SER&CHR		1,278,964		245,286	1,033,678-
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0245		1,278,964		245,286	1,033,678-
BUDGET CODE: 0246 Croton FP Golf Range Maintenance							
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		686 PROF SERV OTHER		532,250		545,250	13,000
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		532,250		545,250	13,000
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0246		532,250		545,250	13,000
		TOTAL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING	6	2,918,546	6	1,868,297	1,050,249-
RESPONSIBILITY CENTER: 0031 WASTEWATER POLLUTION CONTROL							
BUDGET CODE: 0252 DEP Emergency Funding							
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		600 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES GENERAL		1,600,000			1,600,000-
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		1,600,000			1,600,000-
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0252		1,600,000			1,600,000-
BUDGET CODE: 0253 Office of Chief Engineer OTPS							
60 CNTRCTL SVCS		600 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES GENERAL		1,191,766		1,304,814	113,048
		SUBTOTAL FOR CNTRCTL SVCS		1,191,766		1,304,814	113,048
		SUBTOTAL FOR BUDGET CODE 0253		1,191,766		1,304,814	113,048
3187							