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Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner
Single Member District 1E06

Testimony before the Committee on Facilities and Family Services
Oversight Hearing on the Department of General Services
February 26, 2024

Chair Lewis-George, councilmembers, and staff members, thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Josh Jacobson, and I am the ANC representing SMD 1E06, located in Pleasant Plains. I am here today to talk about swings and increasing transparency at DGS.

For those unaware, the area around Banneker has many families that love to play at Banneker. Neighbors tell me that the swings are one of the most popular pieces of equipment and that they love that we have an amenity as great as Banneker in the neighborhood. However, the length of time it takes to replace a broken or missing swing is a constant source of frustration in our community.

For background:

- In April 2022, a neighbor submitted a request asking that the then missing swings at Banneker get replaced.
- In February 2023, I testified on this same subject asking for the missing swings at Banneker to be replaced.
- In June 2023, I visited Banneker with Councilmembers Nadeau and Lewis-George, along with DGS and DPR representatives, where we all voiced to DGS the need to replace missing swings faster.
- In August 2023, 14 months after the initial request I will note - DGS finally replaced the swings at Banneker.

I sent countless emails to DGS during the first 8 months of my term trying to get resolution to these missing swings, and I received many emails from neighbors asking for updates. Neighbors started discussing just replacing the swings ourselves if DGS was not going to act. It should not take 14 months to replace swings.

Additionally, one of the toddler swings at Banneker is broken again, and I do not want the community to have to wait until next year to have this swingset replaced. This is documented in 311 request 24-00066267.

DGS received over 100 requests for new swings in FY 2023, and it seems that these requests are fairly frequent. I ask this committee to confirm whether or not DGS has to go through procurement for each swing request. If these are not already in stock in a warehouse, what is the reason why these are not stocked?

On transparency, and as I mentioned in my testimony last year, it would be helpful as an ANC and a community if DGS published all work orders (excluding security sensitive ones) to a

publicly accessible database on OpenDataDC. The dashboard for DC Public Schools is a good start, but is insufficient as it is not possible to download the dataset nor is it possible to see work orders outside of schools.

Lastly, DGS has shared that they plan to add in a new diving board at Banneker for this summer season after the previous one was removed before Summer 2023. I would like to note that the community is excited (and is also expecting) to see the diving board implemented before the pool opens. I hope that DGS can keep this promise to the community.

Thank you for your time, and I will stick around in case there are any questions.

Josh Jacobson