

*(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).*

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, March 15, 2012 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman Paul H. Archetto, Chair  
Councilman Steven A. Stycos, Vice-Chair  
Councilman James E. Donahue  
Councilwoman Maria A. Bucci  
Councilman Michael W. Favicchio  
Council President Anthony J. Lupino

Absent: Councilman Emilio L. Navarro

Also Present: Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.  
Gerald Cordy, Director of Administration  
Mark Capuano, Deputy Director of Administration  
Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor  
Robert Strom, Director of Finance  
Carlos Lopez, Director of Constituent and Government Affairs  
Patrick Quinlan, City Council Legal Counsel  
Steve Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor  
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk  
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees  
Jane Cormier, Stenographer

### **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:**

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Favicchio, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Mr. Woerner** stated that there was a miscommunication with the City Clerk and indicated that the Audit Committee made a recommendation in the selection of the Auditors for the next three years. The Audit Committee unanimously voted to continue the existing contract with our Auditor. This item should have been listed on this Committee's agenda and it was not. This will be addressed by the full City Council at its March meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Resolution** in support of reinstating the 50/50 sidewalk repair program. [\[click here to view\]](#)  
Referred from 2/16/2012 Public Works Committee.

**Chair** asked that this Resolution be withdrawn.

**Report from Administration** on the results of the experience study and the cost conducted by Buck Consultant regarding Pension System. (2/16/2012 Committee).

**Mr. Strom** stated that we are scheduled for a draft response from the consultants tomorrow, at the latest, Monday, for us to review. The plan is due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, which is State mandated.

**Presentation by Berkshire Group** on cost saving strategies in developing the 2012-2013 Budget. Cont. from 2/16/2012.

**Robert Horowitz**, founder of Berkshire Group, appeared to speak regarding services his company provides. He stated that they work on a contingency basis, 30% of the savings realized up to 24 months.

**Council President Lupino** asked Mr. Horowitz if he or his company have ever been sued for non-performance. Mr. Horowitz stated, no, never. He stated that he is also an attorney and never been disbarred nor has ever had any ethics complaints filed against him

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

**Abel Collins** appeared to speak in favor of "Resolution requesting the General Assembly provide adequate funding for Rhode Island Public Transit Authority".

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THE CITY OF CRANSTON

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL**  
**IN SUPPORT OF REINSTATING THE 50/50 SIDEWALK REPAIR PROGRAM**

*Passed:*

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*Anthony J. Lupino, Council President*

*Resolved that,*

**WHEREAS**, the City of Cranston and all other Cities and Towns in Rhode Island have experienced severe financial constraints and cutbacks.

**WHEREAS**, the City of Cranston has been financially constrained and has been working diligently to responsibly solve the fiscal problems.

**WHEREAS**, the City of Cranston has an ordinance on record which supports a 50/50 Sidewalk Program

**WHEREAS**, it is evident that the City of Cranston is not enforcing the 50/50 program.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cranston City Council hereby requests that the Department of Public Works, the administration of the City of Cranston or any other entity working within the City on installing sidewalks enforce the 50/50 ordinance.

Sponsored by: Councilman Archetto

Referred to Public Works Committee February 16, 2012

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Real Estate Tax Abatements**

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Donahue, it was voted to recommend approval of this Resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Motor Vehicle Tax Abatements**

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Donahue, it was voted to recommend approval of this Resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Tax Interest Waiver Approvals**

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Donahue, it was voted to recommend approval of the above list of Tax Interest Waiver Approvals. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Richard Bernardo, Director of Public Works. - Advice and Consent**

**Vice-Chair** asked if there were any speakers from the public, there were none. The matter was continued to the April 12, 2012 meeting.

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Favicchio, it was voted to continue this item to the April meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

**Cranston School Committee Response Feb. 23, 2012 to Resolution 2012-2** and suggestion by Councilman Stycos of having two Council members meet with School Committee to have an overview discussion regarding this issue. Referred from City Council 2/27/2012.

On motion by Councilwoman Bucci, seconded by Council President Lupino, it was voted to accept Councilman Stycos's recommendation. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution** requesting the General Assembly provide adequate funding for Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. Sponsored by Councilman Stycos.

**Council President Lupino** stated that he cannot support this Resolution because RIPTA is not user friendly and they keep purchasing large buses. He often sees buses running half empty.

**Councilman Stycos** stated that as a RIPTA rider, RIPTA is very-well liked and they are being used more then before, mostly for people going to and from work. Buses are on time, clean and drivers are polite.

On motion by Councilman Stycos, seconded by Councilman Archetto, it was voted to recommend approval of the above Resolution. Motion passed on a vote of 3-2. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilmen Archetto, Stycos and Councilwoman Bucci -3. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilmen Donahue and Favicchio -2.

**Resolution** requesting the General Assembly to delay implementation of action taken on Bills S2100 and H7098 until Fiscal Year 2014 and to make all changes revenue neutral for municipalities. Sponsored by Council President Lupino.

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Donahue, it was voted to recommend approval of the above Resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

1 THE CITY OF CRANSTON

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3 **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL**  
4 **REQUESTING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR**  
5 **RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

6 *No.*

7 ***Passed:***

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9 ***Anthony J. Lupino, Council President***

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11 ***Resolved that***

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13 ***WHEREAS***, The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's (RIPTA) mission is to provide  
14 safe, reliable, cost-effective transit service with a skilled team of professionals responsive to its  
15 customers and the environment.

16 ***WHEREAS***, RIGL 39-18-3 establishes that RIPTA's purpose includes providing public  
17 transit services that meet mobility needs of the people of the state, including the elderly and  
18 disabled, increasing access to employment opportunities, facilitating energy efficient  
19 transportation, reducing traffic congestion, and enhancing air quality.

20 ***WHEREAS***, In fiscal year 2011, RIPTA's ridership increased by 1.5% to nearly 50,000  
21 riders per day.

22 ***WHEREAS***, In the FY 2012 budget, RIPTA's funding was reduced by more than \$1.3  
23 million.

24 ***WHEREAS***, The state subsidy for RIPTA is appropriated annually by the General  
25 Assembly from proceeds of the motor fuel tax (31-36-20).

26 ***WHEREAS***, This method of funding is both unsustainable and unreliable since fuel tax  
27 revenue will decrease as more citizens use public transportation and as vehicle fuel efficiency  
28 increases.

29 ***WHEREAS***, Since 2003, the RIPTA fare has increased from \$1.25 to \$2, a 60% increase  
30 in less than a decade.

31           **WHEREAS**, RIPTA’s fare is higher than fares in Boston, Hartford, New Haven and  
32 Worcester.

33           **WHEREAS**, New fare increases would place a significant burden on RIPTA’s riders,  
34 who, on average, earn below the state median income.

35           **WHEREAS**, many Cranston residents rely on RIPTA bus service to travel between  
36 home, work, and school.

37           **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Cranston City Council requests that  
38 the General Assembly address the RIPTA funding crisis.

39           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the City Council respectfully requests that the  
40 General Assembly amend the State budget to provide adequate funding for a sustainable and  
41 efficient RIPTA system.

42           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to  
43 House Speaker Gordon Fox, Senate President Teresa Paiva Weed, Representative Helio Melo,  
44 Senator Daniel DaPonte, Representative Agostinho Silva, and the entire Cranston General  
45 Assembly delegation.

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47 Sponsored by Councilman Stycos

48 Referred to Finance Committee March 15, 2012

1 THE CITY OF CRANSTON

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3 **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL**  
4 **REQUESTING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO DELAY IMPLEMENTATION OF**  
5 **ANY ACTION TAKEN ON BILLS S2100 AND H7098 UNTIL FISCAL YEAR 2014 AND**  
6 **TO MAKE ALL CHANGES REVENUE NEUTRAL FOR MUNICIPALITIES**

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8 *No.*

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10 *Passed:*

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12 *Anthony J. Lupino, Council President*

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14 **Resolved, That**

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16 **Whereas**, the General Assembly is considering changing the valuation of motor vehicles  
17 from an average retail basis to an average trade-in price basis, and

18 **Whereas**, any changes in the valuation will affect the City of Cranston's tax levy, and

19 **Whereas**, current law does not allow municipalities to increase the tax rate on motor  
20 vehicles, and

21 **Whereas**, the State legislative process frequently extends beyond the tax levy  
22 determination date of many municipalities,

23 **Therefore**, it is requested that the General Assembly not implement any actions from  
24 pending bills S 2100 and H 7098 until fiscal year 2013 and to make all changes revenue neutral  
25 for municipalities

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27 Referred to Finance Committee March 15, 2012

28 Sponsored by Council President Lupino and Councilman Archetto



**Building permit fees – review of fines.** Councilman Archetto

**Councilman Stycos** asked for continuance of this item on advice of legal counsel, due to pending Builders Association lawsuit.

On motion by Councilman Stycos, seconded by Councilman Favicchio, it was voted to continue this item. Motion passed unanimously.

**On-street overnight parking – review of fines.** Councilman Archetto

Councilman Stycos presented a draft of a proposed Ordinance implementing overnight parking permit and fees.

**Council President Lupino** questioned line 41 of the draft Ordinance. He stated that if a resident is a legal resident of the City, but works for an out of State business and has an out of State business car, this would have to be considered.

**Council President Lupino** questioned where the funding would come from for signs.

**Councilman Favicchio** asked Councilman Stycos if he has done any cost benefit analysis on this. Councilman Stycos stated that this has been looked at in Providence. Councilman Favicchio stated that this has some real costs associated with it and has not been determined.

**City Clerk** indicated that this draft Ordinance is not listed on the Committee's agenda in a proper manner and should not be discussed. The only issue before this Committee is the on street parking fines issue. The Ordinance should be introduced and advertised in order to have public comment.

**Chair** asked Administration for any comment regarding this issue. Mr. Cordy stated that he has not had the opportunity to review this and cannot respond at this time.

On motion by Council President Lupino, seconded by Councilman Donahue, it was voted to continue this issue.

Under Discussion:

**Councilman Donahue** stated that there is nothing to continue. There is no vote to be taken.

Motion to continue passed unanimously.

**Discussion** in changing time of meeting

**Council President Lupino** stated that the intent is to move the Public Works Committee to the spot of Claims Committee on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 P.M. and move Claims Committee to the fourth Monday of the month prior to the Council meeting at 6:00 P.M. and switch Finance Committee meeting to 7:00 P.M. and Ordinance Committee meeting to 6:00 P.M. the same evening as is now. This would allow more time for the Finance and Ordinance Committee meetings and make it more convenient for the public to attend these meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosalba Zanni". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rosalba Zanni  
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees