

(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, August 15, 2013, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman Steven A. Stycos, Chair
Council Vice-President Michael J Farina, Vice-Chair
Councilman Mario Aceto
Councilwoman Sarah Kales Lee
Councilman Donald Botts, Jr.
Councilman Paul H. Archetto
Council President John E. Lanni, Jr.

Also Present: Councilman Michael Favicchio
Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.
Gerald Cordy, Director of Administration
Carlos Lopez, Chief of Staff
Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor
Robert Strom, Finance Director
Patrick Quinlan, City Council Legal Counsel
Roy Damiano, City Council Auditor
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the June and July meetings and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARINGS/NEW BUSINESS:

Janice Ruggieri, School Committee Member, appeared to speak and indicated that the School Department was denied a slight increase in their Budget this Budget session and the Administration has approved prior contracts with raises and now is considering the Firefighters contract also with raises. There is inequity in funding in all City departments.

Paul Valletta, President of Firefighters Union, Local 1363, appeared to speak and stated that the Union has come to the table twice and saved the City in excess of over \$5 million. In this proposed contract, there is a 24-month pay freeze and a negotiated section for OPEB benefits and also a co-pay for retirement.

Richard Tomlins, 400 Farmington Ave., appeared to speak and stated that the Firefighters contract is a well-designed political year contract. He has asked the question a few times if the sewer bill increased is compounded and has not received an answer.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Real Estate and Tangible Tax Abatements** [\[click to open\]](#)

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, it was voted to recommend approval of the above Real Estate and Tangible Tax Abatements. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Motor Vehicle Tax Abatements** [\[click to open\]](#)

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to recommend approval of the above Motor Vehicle Tax Abatements. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Tax Interest Waiver Approvals** [\[click to open\]](#)

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

Failure of Vision Appraisal to inspect interior of home – report from Administration

Chair presented two e-mails from constituents regarding the issue of Vision Appraisal not entering the homes to conduct the inspection.

Salvatore Saccoccio, City Assessor, appeared to speak and stated that he spoke to the Vision Appraisal representative who was in this area and she advised him that she that she asked the homeowners to go into the home and was told by the property owner that they preferred she not. Mr. Saccoccio indicated that the appraisers receive bonuses by entering the home so more homes they go into, the more money they make. If they are denied entrance into the home, they ask the property owner to sign a form denying the entrance into the home and some refuse to sign.

Council President Lanni asked, of the two constituents who contacted the Chair, do we have signed statements from these people. He also asked if it is mandatory that they have access into the home. Mr. Saccoccio stated, no, it is not mandatory.

Council President Lanni stated that if the inspectors are not allowed into the home and the owner is not happy with the assessment, they can appeal to the Tax Assessment Board of Review and the Board can ask permission to go into the home and appraise it.

Mr. Saccoccio stated that he can contact Vision Appraisal tomorrow to discuss this issue and he will request that they go back out to the properties questioned by the Chair.

**7-13-1 Ordinance ratifying the International Association of Firefighters, AFL-CIO Local Union 1363 (FY July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2016). [\[click to view\]](#)
[\[click to view amended fiscal note\]](#)**

On motion by Council Vice-President Farina, seconded by Councilman Archetto, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Mr. Cordy stated that there are significant give backs in prior contracts along with other Unions. He asked Mr. Strom to address the Fiscal Note.

On motion by Councilman Botts, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to move the question. Motion failed on a vote of 4-3 not meeting the majority needed to pass. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilmen Botts, Aceto, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni -4. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Councilmen Stycos, Archetto and Councilwoman Lee -3.

Mr. Strom stated that this proposed contract is a very fair contract. He pointed out the following items the Union will be incurring:

- First year, they will be giving back 1% budgeted increase
- They will be contributing to OPEB
- Design Plan changed
- Retirees will start contributing from July 1, 2013

The following items the Union will be receiving:

- Increase in dental
- Increase in life insurance
- 1% in Fiscal Year 2015 in salary

Mr. Damiano was asked by the Chair to present his report on this contract.

On motion by Councilman Archetto, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, it was voted to go into Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining/Litigation. Motion passed on a vote of 5-2. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilmen Botts, Archetto, Aceto, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni -5. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Councilman Stycos and Councilwoman Lee -2.

The meeting went into Executive Session at 7:50 P.M.

Present in Executive Session: Councilmen Stycos, Aceto, Botts, Archetto, Councilwoman Lee, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni; Councilmen Favicchio and Santamaria; Gerald Cordy, Director of Administration; Carlos Lopez, Chief of Staff; Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor; Robert Strom, Finance Director; Patrick Quinlan, City Council Legal Counsel; Roy Damiano, City Council Auditor; Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk; Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees.

The meeting came out of Executive Session at 9:00 P.M.

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, it was voted to come out of Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, it was voted to seal the minutes of Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair asked Mr. Strom to state what the revision to the Fiscal Note is.

Mr. Strom stated that the revision is approximately \$150,000.

Chair stated that he will be voting to oppose this contract mainly due to the Fiscal Note. The Administration's Fiscal Note is drastically and is not figured correctly.

Mr. Strom stated that the first year of the contract, there is a savings of approximately \$193,000.

Councilman Archetto, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni agreed with the Administration's Fiscal Note and stated that the process used in Cranston is the same process used in every City and Town in the State.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance and motion passed on a vote of 5-2. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilmen Botts, Archetto, Aceto, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni -5. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilman Stycos and Councilwoman Lee -2.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees