

(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, December 5, 2013, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:35 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
 Council Majority Leader Paul H. Archetto
 Councilman Donald Botts, Jr.
 Council President John E. Lanni, Jr.

Also Present: Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.
 Gerald Cordy, Director of Administration
 Carlos Lopez, Chief of Staff
 David Igliazzi, Assistant City Solicitor
 Robert Strom, Finance Director
 Kenneth Mason, Director of Public Works
 Salvatore Saccoccio, City Assessor
 Roy Damiano, City Council Internal Auditor
 Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
 Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
 Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

Chair indicated that the minutes of the last meeting need to be amended in regards to the Police Contract Ordinances. He stated that there were two Ordinances, the first was for the one-year and the second was for the three-year contract. This was stated three places during the discussion at the last meeting. He also stated that after conferring with the stenographer's notes, it was determined that the Clerk typed in the wrong Ordinance number on page three of the minutes. He asked City Clerk to clarify this further.

City Clerk stated that the minutes of the last meeting show the three year Police contract Ordinance as being tabled and the one year was reported out to the full City Council as being denied. The amendment should state that the three-year contract Ordinance was denied and the one-year was tabled. If this is corrected in the minutes this evening, she can report the three-year contract as being denied to the full City Council meeting in December.

Councilman Aceto asked if this could be considered a scrivener's error. City Clerk stated that due to the magnitude of the two Ordinances, she felt it should be brought to the Committee's attention. Also, the Ordinance reported out to the full City Council was the incorrect one.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Councilwoman Lee, it was voted to accept the stenographer's transcript in regards to the minutes of the last meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Council Majority Leader Archetto stated that today's newspaper, the Mayor was quoted as stating that there is a \$500,000 surplus and commended the Administration and Mr. Strom. Council Majority Leader Archetto stated that there was no mention of the Council.

CORRESPONDENCE:

PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:

- **Claim of erroneous tax assessment : Virginia Kowal, 45 Kimberly Lane North. (Cont. 11/14/2013).**

Virginia Kowal appeared to speak and presented a handout and stated that she is looking for a tax rebate of the difference from what she was paying in 2004 to what she was charged from 2004 to 2009.

Mr. Saccoccio stated that when his Office found out from Ms. Kowal in 2009, regarding this issue, an inspector was sent to the home and abatement was made at that time. In 2003, there was a revaluation and inspector was not able to get into the home and they valued it at what they thought from the outside. Ms. Kowal then appealed the value and State Law prohibits him from going back to re-open this since it was appealed.

Councilman Aceto asked Solicitor what the State Statute states and if there is any authority giving the Council authority after appeal period. Solicitor Igliazzi stated that if Ms. Kowal is asking to abate taxes, that is in the prevue of the City Council. He does not think the Statute speaks about the specific reasons for abating taxes. He would have to look at the Statute. If the City Council is going to abate taxes of this nature, some sort of procedures should be adopted.

Mr. Lopez stated that he has worked with Ms. Kowal personally since 2009 and have looked at her situation multiple times. He indicated that it is very clear on the tax bills, that it is the responsibility of the taxpayer to see that their bill is correct. He also stated that Ms. Kowal had the legal option available to her and take her case to Superior Court and get a ruling from the Court. She has chosen not to pursue this. This was discussed over and over with Ms. Kowal every year.

Council President Lanni stated that the 90-day appeal period supersedes this Committee. Yes, the City Council can abate her taxes, but that is a very slippery slope and suggested not considering this. The way he sees it, she should go to Court. Ms. Kowal stated that she cannot go to Court because the Statute of Limitation has expired.

Chair stated that this is not before the Committee for a vote. It would have to be an Ordinance or an abatement proposal.

No action taken.

9-13-01 Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 3.92 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Revenue and Finance" (Tax Incentive Reform Commercial Five Year). (Cont. 10/17/2013 & 11/14/2013). [\[click to view\]](#)

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Majority Leader Archetto, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilman Santamaria proposed the following amendment:

- Section 1(A)(1), delete "two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00)" and add "five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)".

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Majority Leader Archetto, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(A)(1), delete "two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00)" and add "five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)". Motion passed on a vote of 5-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilman Stycos, Councilwoman Lee, Councilman Aceto, Council Majority Leader Archetto and Council President Lanni -5. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilman Botts -1. Council Vice-President Farina as not present for roll call vote.

Councilman Santamaria proposed the following amendment:

- Section 1(A)(2), delete "two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00)" and add "five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)".

On motion by Council Majority Leader Archetto, seconded by Councilman Aceto, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(A)(2), delete "two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00)" and add "five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)". Motion passed on a vote of 5-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilman Stycos, Councilwoman Lee, Councilman Aceto, Council Majority Leader Archetto and Council President Lanni -5. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilman Botts -1. Council Vice-President Farina as not present for roll call vote.

Councilman Santamaria proposed the following amendment:

- Section 1(B), after "exclude any and all", add "bank branch"

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Councilman Stycos, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(B), after "exclude any and all", add "bank branch". Motion passed on a vote of 6-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilmen Stycos, Botts, Councilwoman Lee, Councilman Aceto, Council Majority Leader Archetto and Council President Lanni -6. Council Vice-President Farina was not present for roll call vote.

Councilman Santamaria proposed the following amendment:

- Section 1(E), delete subsections (2) and (3)

On motion by Councilwoman Lee, seconded by Councilman Stycos, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(E), delete subsections (2) and (3). Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Santamaria proposed the following amendment:

- Section 1(K), after “partnership or person”, delete “or does not maintain three new jobs”

On motion by Councilwoman Lee, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(K), after “partnership or person”, delete “or does not maintain three new jobs”. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. DiBoni stated that language needs to be added stating that the businesses need to submit their payroll records to his office and indicated that the prior Ordinance had this language. City Clerk indicated that this is stated in Section E(4), which has now been removed.

Mr. DiBoni suggested that Section 1(E) should also reflect “new businesses” and not just “existing businesses”.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: Section 1(E)(1), add “New businesses or” at beginning of sentence and after “its employment”, add “of full time W-2 employees”. Motion passed on a vote of 6-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilmen Stycos, Botts, Councilwoman Lee, Councilman Aceto, Council Majority Leader Archetto and Council President Lanni -6. Council Vice-President Farina was not present for roll call vote.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance as amended. Motion passed on a vote of 6-1. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilman Stycos, Councilwoman Lee, Councilman Aceto, Council Majority Leader Archetto, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni -6. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Councilman Botts -1.

9-13-02 Ordinance in amendment of Title 3.96 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Revenue and Finance” (Tax Incentive Reform Commercial Ten Year). (Cont. 10/17/2013 & 11/14/2013). [[click to view](#)]

9-13-03 Ordinance in amendment of Title 3.96 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Revenue and Finance” (Tax Incentive Reform Industrial Five Year). (Cont. 10/17/2013 & 11/14/2013). [[click to view](#)]

9-13-04 Ordinance in amendment of Title 3.88 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Revenue and Finance” (Tax Incentive Reform Industrial Ten Year). (Cont. 10/17/2013 & 11/14/2013). [[click to view](#)]

Councilman Santamaria asked that Ordinances 9-13-2 and 9-13-4 be withdrawn and 9-13-3 be continued.

On motion by Council Vice-President Farina, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to continue Ordinance 9-13-3. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Santamaria withdrew Ordinances 9-13-2 and 9-13-4.

10-13-1S Ordinance ratifying the IBPO (International Brotherhood of Police Officers) Contract, Local Union 301 (FY 2012-2013). (Tabled 10/17/2013 & 11/14/2013). [\[click to view\]](#)

No motions were made and no action was taken.

Mayoral nomination of Susan Stenhouse as Director of Senior Services (Cont. 11/14/2013).

On motion by Council Majority Leader Archetto, seconded by Councilman Botts, it was voted to recommend approval of the Mayor's nomination of Susan Stenhouse as Director of Senior Services.

Under Discussion:

Ray Sinapi, Co-Director, appeared to speak and stated that he and Nancie Paola are Co-Directors.

Councilman Aceto asked if there have been any grievances or issues with the Union with the Co-Directors being members of the same Union and being management. Mr. Lopez stated that there have been issues since there has been Co-Directors. He also stated that every year during Budget time, this has been raised by Union representatives.

Councilman Aceto asked if the Director's position is in the current Budget. Mr. Lopez stated, yes. Councilman Aceto asked what that dollar amount is. Mr. Strom stated that it is listed as not funded. The salary would be \$53,422 for a full year. This amount could be offset by a grant from United Way. Councilman Aceto stated that if this nomination is not approved this evening, will it go before the full City Council. Chair stated, no. City Clerk referred to City Code Section 2.08.110, Section C, where report is to be made to the City Council.

Mr. Cordy gave background information and introduced Ms. Stenhouse.

Council Majority Leader Archetto asked Ms. Stenhouse if she has held Administrative jobs in the past. Ms. Stenhouse stated that she has managed staff up to twenty.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of the Mayor's Nomination of Susan Stenhouse as Director of Senior Services and motion passed unanimously.

Resolution urging the Mayor to reinstated the 50/50 Sidewalk Program. Co-Sponsored by Councilwoman Lee and Councilmen Stycos & Archetto. (Cont. 11/14/2013). [\[click to view\]](#) [\[click to view Amended Res.\]](#)

Chair stated that discussion regarding this Resolution was held by the Public Works Committee.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Majority Leader Archetto, it was voted to recommend approval of this Resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/NEW BUSINESS:

11-13-4 Ordinance in amendment of Title 3 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled 'Revenue and Finance' (Real Property Tax Exemption for Elderly and Handicapped). [\[click to view\]](#)

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Councilman Aceto, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Mr. Saccoccio appeared to speak in favor.

John Lewis, 9 Beayamo Lane, appeared to speak in favor and stated that this may increase the tax base for the City of Cranston.

No one appeared to oppose.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance and motion passed on a vote of 6-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilmen Stycos, Botts, Aceto, Councilwoman Lee, Council Vice-President Farina and Council President Lanni -6. The Following being recorded as voting "nay": Council Majority Leader Archetto -1.

Resolution Loan Order of the City of Cranston Approving the Financing of Upgrades and Renovations to the City's Sewer System, Including Gravity Lines, Force Mains, Pump Stations and the Treatment Plant and all Preliminary and Incidental Expenses and Approving the Issuance of Wastewater System Revenue Bonds and Notes Therefore in the Amount not to Exceed \$25,000,000. [\[click to view\]](#)

Mr. Mason appeared to speak and explain this Resolution.

No one appeared to oppose.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Majority Leader Archetto, it was voted to recommend approval of this Resolution. Motion passed unanimously .

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

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

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

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

- **Tax Assessment Board of Review Decisions assessed December 31, 2012 [\[click to view\]](#)**

No action needed.

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

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Councilwoman Lee, it was voted to recommend approval of the above Tax Interest Waiver Approvals. Motion passed unanimously .

- **Tax Interest Waiver Denials** [\[click to view\]](#)

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

Draft of 2013 Audit [\[click to view part 1\]](#) [\[click to view part 2\]](#)

Mr. Strom appeared to speak and stated that the Audit Committee met last night and they approved to forward the draft of the Audit to the Finance Committee. The Auditing firm will be available at the December Council meeting to make a full presentation.

On motion by Council Vice-President Farina, seconded by Councilman Aceto, it was voted to forward the draft of the Audit to the full City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees