

*(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, November 13, 2014, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 P.M. by the Chair.

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

Also Present:            Council Minority Leader Michael Favicchio  
                                 Gerald Cordy, Director of Administration  
                                 Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor  
                                 Robert Strom, Finance Director  
                                 Salvatore Saccoccio, City Assessor  
                                 Anthony Moretti, 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:**

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Council Vice-President Farina, 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:**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Eligibility for elderly homeowners property tax exemption  
Requirement that motor vehicles be registered in Cranston. Councilman Stycos**

**Mr. Saccoccio** stated that there are approximately half dozen applications out of approximately 100 that were denied because they did not have a motor vehicle registered in Cranston. There are approximately 5,000 that receive the exemption at this time.

**Chair** asked Mr. Saccoccio if he could check into whether any of the 5,000 who receive the exemption should not be receiving it. He asked for opinion from the Solicitor regarding this request. Solicitor Kirshenbaum stated that he will meet with Mr. Saccoccio and Mr. Strom regarding this. Chair asked that Solicitor Kirshenbaum also speak to Mr. Quinlan, the Council legal counsel, regarding this because he drafted this legislation.

- **Sidewalk cost/share program – formation of sub committee  
Status of \$100,000 sidewalk capital project (Councilman Stycos)**

**Mr. Cordy** stated that Mr. Mason, Director of Public Works, forward his recommendation to the Chair on October 31<sup>st</sup> and provided a schedule to the Chair of when he would be available to meet with the Chair to discuss this.

**Chair** stated that he assumed Mr. Mason was going to be present this evening. He asked that this item be continued to next month and Mr. Mason attend or Administration be able to answer questions regarding this issue. He also asked that the email from Mr. Mason be added as a link to next month's agenda.

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS/NEW BUSINESS:**

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

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Councilman Botts, it was voted to recommend approval of the above list of Tax Abatements. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Tax Assessment Board of Review Decisions assessed as of December 31, 2013.**  
[\[click to view\]](#) (For Information Only)

No action needed.

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

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

#### **9-14-06 Ordinance to amend the property tax exemption regarding tangible property valued less than \$10,000.00. Referred back by City Council 10/27/2014. [\[click to view\]](#)**

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

#### Under Discussion:

**Council Minority Leader Favicchio** proposed reducing the amount to \$5,000.

**Mr. Saccoccio** stated that there are approximately 2,800 to 3,100 accounts. A \$5,000 exemption would eliminate approximately 800 accounts. He indicated that this would require General Assembly legislation.

On motion by Councilman Aceto, seconded by Councilwoman Lee, it was voted to amend the Ordinance from \$10,000 to \$5,000. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair passed gavel to Vice-Chair.

**Chair** motioned that the Finance Director report back to the Council at a certain point on the effects of this change. He asked when it would be the best time to do that. Mr. Strom stated that this would require State Statute change.

**Mr. Saccoccio** stated that it would depend on how fast the State passes the legislation. If they pass the legislation the beginning of January, there may be time for us to see effect in May of 2015. If it is passed after January, he will not be able to report to the Council until 2016.

On motion by Councilman Stycos, seconded by Council Majority Leader Archetto, it was voted to have the Finance Director report back to the Finance Committee on the effects of this change by January 1, 2016. Motion passed on a vote of 6-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilman Stycos, Council Vice-President Farina, Councilwoman Lee, Council Majority Leader Archetto, Councilman Aceto and Council President Lanni -6. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilman Botts -1.

Gavel was passed back to the Chair.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance as amended and motion passed unanimously.

**10-14-06 Ordinance ratifying School Committee's collective bargaining agreement with the RI Laborers' District Council, Local 1322 Bus Drivers/Mechanics Unit (Bus Drivers/Mechanics 2014-2017).** [\[click to view\]](#) [\[click to view summary\]](#)

**Ray Votto**, School Department Chief Operating Officer, appeared to speak regarding this Ordinance and Ordinance 11-14-07.

Also present were School Superintendent Judith Lundsten and Joseph Balducci, Chief Financial Officer.

**Mr. Strom** stated that after reviewing this, he feels this contract is fair and supports it because there will be no negative financial impact to the School Budget.

**Mr. Moretti** agreed with Mr. Balducci's calculation of his fiscal note, but disagreed with the presentation of the fiscal note.

**Council Minority Leader Favichio** stated that a concern he has is he does not know why we do not have a unified system of fiscal notes. He cannot tell what the costs of the contracts are over three year term of the contracts.

**Mr. Strom** stated that he has contacted both the Auditor General and the current Auditors for the City and they have indicated to him that there is no precise methodology of fiscal notes. Both the way he does fiscal notes and the way Mr. Balducci does fiscal notes are acceptable.

On motion by Council Vice-President Farina, seconded by Councilwoman Lee, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

**10-14-07 Ordinance ratifying the School Committee's collective bargaining agreement with the RI Laborers' District Council, Local 1322 Tradespeople Unit (Tradespeople 2014-2017).** [\[click to view\]](#) [\[click to view summary\]](#)

On motion by Council Vice-President Farina, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Rosalba Zanni  
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees