

(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 Monday, January 8, 2018, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by the Chair.

Present Council Vice-President Michael W. Favicchio, Chair
 Councilman Kenneth J. Hopkins, Vice-Chair
 Councilman Trent M. Colford, Sr.
 Councilman Paul J. McAuley
 Council President Michael J Farina

Absent: Councilman Christopher G. Paplauskas

Also Present: Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr.
 Councilman Steven A. Stycos
 Councilman Paul H. Archetto
 Robert Strom, Director of Finance
 John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
 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 Hopkins, seconded by Councilman Colford, 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:

OLD BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARINGS/NEW BUSINESS:

- **Discussion of computerization in City Hall (Cont. from 11/7/2017 for update from Administration and City Clerk).**

City Clerk stated that our land records database has been online for several years but not available to the public for lack of a billing module. This project was delayed for several years due to the bankruptcy of the original vendor, AmCad, which was subsequently taken over by two vendors, Progrio and Granicus. Ms. Wall provided copies of a handout and stated that there are two components to this project. The first component scanning the older books, including Grantor/Grantee indexes which is being done by Progrio, and the second component is the billing module for the public which involves Granicus. There is a conference call scheduled with Granicus this week and she can give an update at the next meeting.

Chair asked Mr. Strom the status of computerization of the City Council meetings and if the City has met with Jay Rosenfield of Clerkbase. Mr. Strom stated that the meeting has not taken place. It should be forthcoming.

11-17-05 Ordinance Authorizing the City to Construct a Dog Park at Florida Ave. Sponsored by Council President Farina. (Cont. 12/4/2017).

Council President Farina stated that he will be withdrawing this Ordinance and is working with Mr. Liberatore, Parks and Recreation Director, at looking at three additional locations that would make more sense than Florida Ave. for a dog park.

- **Real Estate Tax Abatements**

No one appeared to speak in favor or to oppose.

On motion by Council President Farina, seconded by Councilman Colford, it was voted to recommend approval of this list of Tax Abatements as recommended by City Assessor. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Tax Assessment Board of Review Decisions as of December 31, 2016**

Informational only. No action needed.

- **Tax Interest Waiver Approvals**

On motion by Council President Farina, seconded by Councilman Colford, it was voted to recommend approval of the above list of Tax Interest Waiver Approvals as recommended by City Treasurer. Motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Councilman Stycos indicated that the Public Works Agenda for the January 11th meeting has one item on it and he suggested to Councilman Hopkins, Public Works Committee Chair that the meeting be cancelled and this item can be discussed at a Council meeting or Doge Park Committee meeting. It was agreed that the January 11th Public Works Committee meeting be cancelled.

Councilman Hopkins thanked everyone in the Public Works Department for all their help during last week's snowstorm.

Council President Farina stated that for the new Council members, during a snowstorm or in an emergency, the Council members are to contact Councilman Paplauskas, the Council Emergency Liaison rather than contacting Mr. Lopez and he will defer to the Administration.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosalba Zanni".

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees

To: Finance Committee

From: Maria Wall, City Clerk



Cc: Robert Strom, Finance Director; Robin Muksian, Dir. Of Adm.

Date: January 8, 2018

Re: Web access for land records and digitization of all land records

This project was waylaid due to the bankruptcy of the original vendor, AmCad, which took several years to resolve. There are two components to this project, the web access and billing, and the digitization. AmCad was taken over by two separate vendors, Granicus took over the software component and Progrid the digitalization and indexing.

Digitization. This is well underway. Progrid has several people on site scanning those records that do not have usable microfilm, or missing microfilm. The onsite project has been underway since the middle of December and the completion was initially projected to be three months which would be the middle of March, I'm awaiting a status update. The microfilm is simultaneously being digitized off site and a short index, book and page, is being created.

Once the digitization project is completed, Progrid will start creating a long index for our records go back to 1960. This is the most relevant period for title searches. The grantor/grantee index books will be digitization and available on the web for searches beyond that period.

I've asked Progrid to prioritize scanning of the grantor/grantee indexes from 1985 – 1960 so that we can give the public on line access as soon as possible.

Note, this project also includes the digitization of all City Council records, Ordinances and Resolutions that are in bound volumes. (Maria Giarrusso has already had those Council Records that are in unbound volumes scanned on site by city staff).

Web access. Our land records have been on line since last year, and the site was intended for city use only as we did not have a billing module in place to charge the public for copies. The site was discovered, unbeknownst to the City and available to the public for a short period of time. It was shut down to the public once we discovered this.

Granicus has already created the on line access. We need to implement a billing component. I looked at several cities and am intending to use the City of Warwick as a model. Basically, the public would have free unlimited access to search and view our records as they do on site, but would be charged to print out a copy. Warwick charges \$1.50 to users who have accounts and \$2.00 for non-account users. I feel there is an issue with this as \$1.50 is the maximum allowed that can be charged by State statute.

Based on preliminary discussions with the vendor, there are basically two options for the billing module:

- 1) Purchasing the software at approximate cost of \$20,000.00 with an annual maintenance fee of \$5,000, and the City would retain all revenues. Note that copy revenues have been consistently declining for the past five (5) years from \$65,000 in 2012 to \$36,500 in 2017. This trend is due to new technology which enables title people to photograph the copies they need. I do not see the reversing though it may stabilize
- 2) Granicus would provide the software, with an annual maintenance fee and the revenues would be split 50/50 with the vendor.

I am still awaiting final proposals from the vendor and hopefully will have these for the February Finance meeting. But after discussion with Robert Strom, Finance Director, we concluded that in light of the diminishing revenues from land record copies, and our limited IT support staff, that not splitting the revenues without the initial outlay to purchase the module was the best avenue to pursue if the final proposals are in keeping with the original information I was given.

All costs/expenses for the above will come from restricted funds that are not part of the general budget.

E-Filings

This module is available for implementation from Granicus; however, State enabling legislation is required. Bills have been introduced for several years now. First introduced in 2007, then 2009 and most recently in 2017 session.

City Of Cranston
Detail Revenues
FY18

Group: 0000	Account Description	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018	Final Variance
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	As Submitted By the Mayor	As Amended By the Council	
Taxes, State Aid & General Revenues										
41110	ABATEMENTS	(242,801)	(314,792)	(208,705)	(167,263)	(104,598)	(150,000)	(100,000)	(75,000)	25,000
41156	TAX REVENUE 2002 FY03	358	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41157	TAX REVENUE 2002-SUPPLMNTLFY03	758	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41158	TAX REVENUE 2003 FY04	1,537	1,799	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41159	TAX REVENUE 2004 FY05	54,597	2,306	2,273	0	0	0	0	0	0
41160	TAX REVENUE 2005 FY06	4,476	5,321	5,114	2,200	0	0	0	0	0
41161	TAX REVENUE 2006 FY07	14,566	12,115	7,986	9,708	6,493	0	0	0	0
41162	TAX REVENUE 2007 FY08	17,037	14,539	9,021	8,295	12,372	0	0	0	0
41163	TAX REVENUE 2008 FY09	76,743	25,278	11,413	12,082	7,375	0	0	0	0
41164	TAX REVENUE 2009 FY10	153,887	37,098	20,091	9,258	11,040	0	0	0	0
41165	TAX REVENUE 2010 FY11	1,259,435	174,850	70,468	41,951	31,636	0	0	0	0
41166	TAX REVENUE 2011 FY12	177,799,124	1,049,836	295,561	65,959	40,610	0	0	0	0
41167	TAX REVENUE 2012 FY13	0	178,631,631	854,849	223,206	80,938	0	0	0	0
41168	TAX REVENUE 2013 FY14	0	0	179,327,785	1,007,209	364,549	0	0	0	0
41169	TAX REVENUE 2014 FY15	0	0	0	180,321,237	686,078	0	0	0	0
41170	TAX REVENUE 2015 FY16	0	0	0	0	183,674,083	1,475,000	0	0	0
41171	TAX REVENUE 2016 FY17	0	0	0	0	0	184,990,425	1,380,000	1,380,000	0
41172	TAX REVENUE 2017 FY18	0	0	0	0	0	0	189,985,552	189,985,552	0
41500	IN LIEU - CRANSTON HOUSING	117,457	104,054	131,203	125,387	122,015	125,000	125,000	125,000	0
41501	PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATION TAX	967,459	1,008,020	1,090,383	995,808	1,038,680	995,808	1,038,680	1,038,680	0
41502	IN LIEU OF TAXES-PILOT	4,554,377	5,511,820	6,043,927	5,645,800	5,538,701	5,645,800	5,287,952	5,287,952	0
41503	EXCISE TAX PHASE-OUT	962,964	884,157	902,676	1,006,431	1,005,084	1,005,084	1,005,084	1,005,084	0
41504	INTEREST & PENAL ON PROP TAX	1,078,106	1,146,436	1,033,888	1,063,835	1,061,361	1,100,000	1,075,000	1,075,000	0
41505	SCHOOL HOUSING AID	2,503,054	2,322,792	2,260,760	2,093,712	2,030,983	2,519,915	2,519,915	2,519,915	0
41506	STATE HOUSING AID LIBRARIES	35,753	34,000	32,247	30,000	0	0	0	0	0
41508	STATE REVENUE SHARING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41509	STATE AID-DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES	0	1,201,480	2,320,642	1,160,321	0	1,124,439	1,341,001	1,341,001	0
41510	JOHNSON AND WALES AID	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	220,155	220,000	220,000	220,000	0
41516	ESCHEATS AND GARNISHEE FEES	312	209	256	326	341	0	0	0	0
41517	AUCTIONEER FEES	3,701	2,669	1,893	1,258	2,491	0	0	0	0
41518	VOLUNTARY TAX PAYMTS	4,580	5,796	4,571	6,739	4,135	0	0	0	0
41519	HOTEL TAX - LAW 42-63.1-3	8,959	8,644	9,122	8,542	14,593	17,576	19,577	19,577	0
41520	RESTAURANT TAX	1,403,896	1,511,108	1,560,435	1,685,466	1,789,268	1,865,108	2,017,085	2,017,085	0
41521	3RD PARTY RESCUE-MEDICAID	1,332,622	984,098	1,160,648	971,959	1,048,270	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	0
41522	3RD PARTY RESCUE	2,606,172	2,574,505	2,700,000	2,757,682	2,969,979	2,900,000	2,900,000	2,900,000	0
41523	TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER	164,170	156,250	158,372	189,791	175,400	175,000	190,000	190,000	0
49125	NSF FEES	18,945	(2,097)	(8,630)	(1,690)	(7,859)	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)	0
49130	OTHER REVENUE	14,270	26,448	20,724	37,778	32,386	4,600	4,600	4,600	0
49144	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES-BOND PR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
49145	BOND PROCEEDS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
49500	TRANSFER FROM OTHER FUNDS	58,500	8,500	0	8,520	0	0	0	0	0
49510	OVERHEAD ALLOCATION-SEWER DEPT	400,000	500,000	500,000	700,000	700,000	800,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
	Total For Miscellaneous	195,525,014	197,778,871	200,468,972	200,171,486	202,556,559	206,783,755	211,979,446	212,004,446	25,000
Group: 1105 City Clerk										
	Account Description	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Budget	2018 As Submitted By the Mayor	2018 As Amended By the Council	Final Variance
42110	CERTIFIED COPIES	65,707	65,875	48,503	43,946	39,189	58,000	36,599	35,000	0
42111	BOWLING LIC	1,486	1,764	704	1,274	1,654	1,600	1,324	1,324	0
42112	ENTERTAINMENT LICENSES	2,340	3,235	3,120	375	6,030	2,000	3,300	3,300	0
42113	POOL TABLE LIC	1,300	600	1,200	100	1,000	1,300	500	500	0
42114	ALL NIGHT DINER LIC	3,610	2,550	3,300	1,950	2,255	3,500	3,000	3,000	0
42115	BINGO LIC	440	560	565	560	600	500	500	500	0
42116	LIQUOR LIC	186,374	191,023	197,933	184,267	198,795	192,000	187,000	187,000	0
42117	AMUSEMNT MACH & DEV LIC	240	4,975	3,565	390	3,920	4,000	1,000	1,000	0
42118	PEDDLERS LIC	650	1,650	1,050	1,800	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,000	0
42119	HUNTING & FISHING LIC RECORD	627	66	0	507	93	60	60	60	0
42120	2ND HAND AUTO LIC	10,050	9,635	11,050	11,780	12,505	10,000	10,000	10,000	0
42121	SUNDAY SALES LIC	12,400	20,445	10,110	14,505	16,465	15,600	15,600	15,600	0
42122	VICTUALLING LIC	40,010	44,290	43,385	46,925	44,255	44,000	46,000	46,000	0
42123	MARRIAGE LIC	10,224	13,492	10,972	17,843	12,567	15,000	12,000	12,000	0
42124	INSTRUMENT RECORDING	641,896	710,698	629,702	583,902	611,055	678,000	678,000	678,000	0
42125	DOG LIC	10,455	10,064	8,716	9,744	9,010	10,000	10,000	10,000	0
42126	FISHING LICENSE RECORDING	18	118	36	18	36	0	0	0	0
42127	HUNTING LICENSE RECORDING	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42128	MISC LICENSES	3,020	3,835	3,615	2,130	3,025	2,500	2,500	2,500	0
42129	PROBATE COURT FEES	94,416	113,713	134,230	94,217	91,568	110,000	100,000	100,000	0
42130	LEASING OF MOTOR VEH	454	616	1,332	0	1,350	600	600	600	0
42131	RECORDING TROUT LICENSE	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42132	ITINERANT FOOD VENDOR	800	2,285	800	400	450	1,000	200	200	0
42133	PRIVATE DETECTIVE	3,050	1,650	1,500	1,350	1,050	2,000	1,050	1,050	0
42134	FIREARMS DEALERS LICENSE	1,300	500	800	404	200	500	400	400	0
42135	FLOWER VENDOR	1,250	250	1,250	1,150	500	750	500	500	0
42136	GRAVEL BKS,SHVLS,SCR LIC	125	125	0	125	125	125	125	125	0
42137	AUTO REPAIR LICENSE	8,060	6,200	10,305	8,000	9,800	10,700	10,500	10,500	0
42138	TOBACCO LICENSES	8,800	8,735	13,300	13,075	11,695	13,200	11,400	11,400	0
42139	APPLICATION FEE	4,470	4,915	4,685	4,515	4,990	4,500	4,500	4,500	0
42140	CERTIFIED VITALS	69,227	69,320	68,037	72,569	75,040	70,000	80,000	80,000	0
42141	LICENSE ADVERTISING	14,250	16,825	12,535	25,610	13,570	14,000	15,500	15,500	0
42142	PROBATE ADVERTISING	17,668	21,202	19,689	17,820	17,845	20,000	17,000	17,000	0
42143	ZONE CHANGES	10,807	10,985	4,260	12,036	6,896	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
42144	ABANDONMENTS	0	352,383	0	550	2,400	0	0	0	0
42145	RI REAL ESTATE TAX ACCT	875,498	915,107	1,102,008	1,358,637	1,453,166	1,296,000	1,538,000	1,538,000	0
42146	VIOLATIONS	580	650	500	0	400	600	600	600	0
49110	CASH OVERRAGES	1	4	26	53	27	0	0	0	0
49120	CASH SHORTAGES	(17)	(78)	(81)	(51)	(1)	0	0	0	0
49125	NSF FEES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total For City Clerk	2,101,636	2,610,261	2,352,702	2,532,476	2,654,625	2,586,035	2,792,159	2,792,159	0