

SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL

-APRIL 2, 2009-

A Special meeting of the Cranston City Council was held on THURSDAY, April 2, 2009 in the Cranston High School East Auditorium, 899 Park Ave., Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M. by Council President Lanni.

Roll Call showed the following members present: Councilmen Lupino, Aceto, Navarro, Archetto (appeared at 7:00 P.M.), Pelletier, Santamaria, Councilwoman Bergin-Andrews (appeared at 6:45 P.M.) and Council President Lanni –8.

Absent: Council Vice-President Livingston -1.

Also Present: Mayor Allan W. Fung; Robin Muksian-Schutt, Director of Administration; Gerald Cordy, Deputy Director of Administration; Anthony Cipriano, City Solicitor; Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor; Robert Strom, Director of Finance; Mike Igoe, City Controller; Steve Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor.

-APRIL 2, 2009-

The City Clerk read the following:

**CITY OF CRANSTON
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

In Accordance with the Home Rule Charter and Section 6.08, I hereby call a special meeting of the City Council to be held on **Thursday, April 2, 2009** at **6:30** p.m., in Cranston High School East Auditorium, 899 Park Avenue., Cranston, RI at which meeting the following items of business shall be transacted:

- Resolution forming a committee comprised of Cranston businesses to assist the City in recruiting new businesses to the City.
- Public Hearing relative to the Operating and Capital Budget for the City of Cranston for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010, Appropriation Ordinance, Capital Budget and Capital Improvement Program for the four (4) fiscal years thereafter, and Ordinance establishing salaries of officers and employees of the City of Cranston pursuant to Chapters 5 and 6 of the Home Rule Charter; Resolution levying and ordering the assessment and collection of a tax on ratable real estate and tangible personal property pursuant to Section 6.11 of the Home Rule Charter

I hereby request the City Clerk to notify all Council members of the Call of the special meeting.

Executed at Cranston, Rhode Island, this 30th day of March, 2009.

/s/ John E. Lanni, Jr., Council President

Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing-impaired must notify the Office of the City Clerk at 461-1000 Ext. 3197 seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.”

-APRIL 2, 2009-

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a true copy of the attached Call of a special meeting of the City Council to be held on Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 6:30 P.M. in the Cranston High School East Auditorium, 899 Park Ave., Cranston, R.I. was delivered via electronic mail on the 31st day of March, 2009 and regular mail, postage prepaid to the addresses listed below.

Council President John E. Lanni, Jr.
111 Woodview Dr.
Cranston, RI 02920
john.lanni@yahoo.com

Councilman Terence Livingston
28 Tucker Ave
Cranston, RI 02905
Terry@livingstonlaw.us

Councilman Anthony J. Lupino
15 Black Oak Court
Cranston, RI 02921
tlupino@cox.net

Councilman Emilio L. Navarro
61 Autumn St.
Cranston, RI 02910
Navarro_emilio@hotmail.com

Councilman Richard Santamaria
20 Burr St.
Cranston, RI 02920
Ritatj10@yahoo.com

Councilman Robert Pelletier
81 Laconia Rd.
Cranston, RI 02920
Rpelletier1@verizon.net

Councilman Mario Aceto
152 Locust Glen Dr.
Cranston, RI 02920
acetocitywide@gmail.com
MAceto@CranstonRI.org

Councilman Paul Archetto
359 Princess Ave.
Cranston, RI 02920
Parchetto@ccri.edu

Councilwoman Michelle Bergin-Andrews
280 Summit Dr.
Cranston, RI 02920
Michelle@andrewslawoffices.com

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees

-APRIL 2, 2009-

Public Speakers:

Edward Hanley, 5 Meredith Dr., appeared to speak and stated that we need to work together in this City and put the politics aside. He is a golf professional at the Cranston Country Club and instead of talking about golf with people that live in Cranston, he is finding himself talking about politics more and more.

James Quinlan, 55 Angell St., Republican City Chairman, appeared to support the Mayor's budget. It is very clear that the budget Mayor Fund has inherited is a clear result of actions by the previous Administration.

Sean Gately, 14 Owl Court, appeared to speak not only as a resident, but as a representative of his neighborhood. He stated that we need to stop playing political games and start acting as residents of the City of Cranston and get this City moving forward.

Tom Paolino, 114 Deerfield Rd., appeared to speak and stated that political games have to stop. Not working with the Mayor will only make things worse.

Mark Lucas, 28 Riverfarm Rd., appeared to speak and indicated that five of the Council members on this Council were on the Council last year and voted for the Fire Contract and Laborer's contract, which gave raises and no concessions and five of the Council members who were on the Council last year voted to hire a part-time Auditor at \$40,000 plus healthcare and now this Council is trying to make the Mayor the bad guy.

Aram Garabedian, former Council President, 173 Belvedere Dr., appeared to speak and stated that the Mayor and the Council need to develop a strategy to work together. The taxpayers of our City cannot sustain the cost of our current government, City and State. We rank fourth in the Nation for public employees salary, 23rd in average taxpayer earnings.

Arthur Jordan, Business Agent for Laborer's Union Local 1322, 35 Lincoln Park Ave., appeared to speak as a City Highway employee and stated that the Laborer's Union have stepped up and always has. He asked that the Council restore the four employees who have been eliminated in the Mayor's proposed Budget and bring them back to work.

Paul Valetta, President of Local 1363 Firefighters Union, appeared to speak and addressed the nine vacancies in the Budget that have been zeroed out by the Mayor. If these vacancies are not filled, the City would have to pay the following:

- 67% of the layed off firefighters salaries, additional \$26.40 per child up to a maximum of five
- The City would be responsible for 65% of the members healthcare coverage
- \$101,110 salaries, \$6,330 in healthcare, \$5,634 holidays, \$3,120 annuity

Savings of \$121,925 for the next twelve weeks.

- Unemployment \$528 x 12 weeks x 9 positions
- Holidays \$5,634
- Healthcare \$21,560
- Clothes & Maintenance \$2,475
- Severance \$55,480 for unused sick time
- Overtime \$230,990

The City would be losing money if these vacancies are not filled. All the Unions have come to the table and are aware that times are bad. This Union and the Mayor have come up with concessions in the amount of over \$3.8 million over the next twenty-eight months.

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Steven Bloom, 54 Ingleside Ave., appeared to speak and stated that this Budget is a political Budget. There are only two places where this Budget can be balanced: by raising taxes or concessions. The Council has taken the ability of the Mayor to propose possible future concessions and we are left with a Budget that looks like this. You all have a responsibility and if you do not like what you see, your responsibility is to propose alternatives.

Richard Tomlins, 400 Farmington Ave., appeared to speak and stated that the Council needs to come up with solutions or a plan to make this City sound, fiscally, now and in the future.

Carol Goldman, Hoffman Ave., appeared to speak and stated that she was a teacher in Massachusetts and at the time, she paid 40% of the healthcare and now that she is retired, she is paying 50%. What the Cranston teachers are paying is absolutely ridiculous.

Steven Antonucci, President of Police Union, 60 Pine Ridge Dr., appeared to speak and addressed the City-wide lay offs. He echoed the savings stated by Mr. Valetta, in the Police Department as well. He urged the Council to remove any lay offs and get back to the table. Once this Contract is ratified, the other City Unions will follow with their concessions.

Manuel Miguel, former candidate in Ward 2 Republican Party, appeared to speak as a resident of the City. He stated that he respects the Council and the Mayor, but most of all, he respects the process, but now that process is being broken. We need to come together to solve the problems facing the City.

Albert Benetti, 24 Concord Ave., appeared to speak and suggested that the City meet with all the Unions in the City and try to get them in one unified healthcare plan. This would save millions and millions of dollars over years. This would create equitability for every City employee. He addressed a remark that was made whereby the Council was not involved in the negotiations with the Mayor and the Police Union. He stated that he was a member of the Charter Review Commission in 1998 and not one Council member at the time asked the Commission to change the Charter making the Council be part of the collective bargaining process.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Maria Medeiros Wall, JD
City Clerk

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees

(See Stenographic Notes of Meredith Mahoney, Stenotypist)