

SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL

-DECEMBER 12, 2006-

Special meeting of the City Council was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2006 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M. by the Council President.

Roll Call showed the following members present: Councilmen Fung, Livingston, Councilmen Lanni, Barone, and Council President Garabedian –5.

Absent: Councilman McDonough, Council Member Fogarty, Council Member Bucci, Council Vice-President McFarland -4.

Also Present: Jerome Baron, Director of Finance; Mike Igoe, City Controller; Steve Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor.

Also Present representing the School Department were: Richard Scherza, School Superintendent; Joseph Balducci, Chief Financial Officer; Raymond Votto, Chief Operating Officer; School Committee Members Steven Stycos; Deborah Greifer; Andrea Iannazzi; Michael Traficante and Anthony Lupino, Acting Chair.

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Clerk read Call of the Meeting:

**CITY OF CRANSTON
RHODE ISLAND**

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

In Accordance with the Home Rule Charter and Section 3.07 thereof, I hereby call a special meeting of the City Council to be held on **Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.**, Council Chambers, Cranston City Hall, 869 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI at which meeting the following items of business shall be transacted:

- A joint meeting with the Cranston School Committee pursuant to the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Chapter 16-2-21.2 (d), to review revenue and expenditure projections and to discuss issues affecting the preparation of the school budget , as required by the Omnibus Property Tax Relief and Replacement Act of 1985.

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 November, 2006.

/s/ Aram G. Garabedian
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.”

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a true copy of the attached Call of a special meeting of the City Council to be held on Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers, third floor, City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, R.I. was delivered via electronic mail on the 30th day of November, 2006 and regular mail, postage prepaid to the addresses listed below.

Council President Aram G. Garabedian
173 Belvedere Dr.
Cranston, RI 02920
Aram@blissproperties.net

Council Member Maria A. Bucci
21 Red Hawk Dr.
Cranston, RI 02921
MarBC4@aol.com

Council Member Cynthia M. Fogarty
60 Ausdale Rd.
Cranston, RI 02910
Fogarty1@msn.com

Councilman Allan W. Fung
252F Mayfield Ave.
Cranston, RI 02920
alfung@cox.net

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

Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone
16 Samuel Court
Cranston, RI
Jeffreyb22@cox.net

Councilwoman Paula McFarland
100 Pomham St.
Cranston, RI 02910
pmcfarland@prodigy.net

Councilman Kirk McDonough
67 Dellwood Rd.
Cranston, RI 02920
kirkmcdonough@cox.net

Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr.
111 Woodview Dr.
Cranston, RI 02920
jlanni@peterpanbus.com

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

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

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

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

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Council President Garabedian recognized Council Members-Elect Richard Santamaria and Emilio Navarro in the audience.

Council President Garabedian asked City Clerk if there is any business she would like to present. City Clerk stated that Ordinance 10-06-6 and 10-06-7 passed by the City Council on November 27, 2006 have been vetoed by the Mayor and they will be listed on the Council Docket for the December 18, 2006 City Council meeting.

Mr. Balducci presented a handout of this fiscal year and next three year projections. He stated that the figures in the handout are best guess estimates at this time. They may change along the way. Councilman Barone addressed the "Revenues" handout and asked if this includes the positions for the Grant Writer. Mr. Balducci stated, no it does not.

Mr. Balducci addressed the "Expenditures" handout and explained the expenditure projections. Councilman Fung asked if there are any new hires anticipated. Mr. Balducci stated, no.

Councilman Fung asked what the overall trend is to the population in the schools. Mr. Scherza stated that we are in a very slow declining district-wide at 2/10 of 1% per year.

Council President Garabedian asked what the percentage is of students that are serving our children versus other communities. Mr. Scherza stated that it is about 75-78% of Cranstonians.

Mr. Balducci addressed the "Benefits" handout. Council President Garabedian asked what the co-pays are for school employees. Mr. Balducci stated teachers – 5%, Administrators – 10% and non-certified group – 3%.

Mr. Balducci addressed the "Purchased Services", "Textbooks and Supplies", "Capital Outlay" and "Other Services" handouts.

Councilman Lanni asked how many children are in Special Education that we bus out of the City. Mr. Balducci stated that those that are in the Summer Camp there are approximately 25-30 children. There are approximately 100 children that we service during the school year that are bused out of the City.

Councilman Lanni asked, when doing repairs on buses, if competitive bidding is used. Mr. Balducci stated, no, they use vendors that they have used in the past.

Councilman Barone stated that during the Budget process, when it was decided to close Horton School, it was stated that there would be savings. He asked if the School Department he has seen any savings in closing of Horton School. Mr. Scherza stated that they have not realized any significant savings yet. The building is being refurbished for program to be placed there along with offices. It is not a one-time savings. Councilman Lanni asked what percentage of the school is being used for education. Mr. Scherza stated that right now, approximately ¼% of the building is being used for education and by the middle of the year, it will be at approximately 100%. Mr. Lupino stated that this building is going to be used for Special Services, which it was intended to be used for. Technically, the school was never closed. Councilman Lanni asked how many students would use this facility. Mr. Scherza stated that at this time, approximately 6-8 students. Going into next year, it would be at its max of approximately 20-28 students.

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Council President Garabedian asked what the status is of any possible consolidation of services between the City and School. Mr. Traficante stated that the Consolidation Task Force is still in the process of trying to find areas to consolidate and the study should continue and areas such as Building Maintenance, were looked at. Councilman Lanni asked if there are any areas where we have consolidated. Mr. Balducci stated that we did do a joint purchase of custodial supplies and we do do joint purchases with the Senior Services Department for food.

Mr. Baron appeared to speak and presented a handout and stated that our levy right now is approximately \$145 million. If we increased the levy by a maximum of 5.25% and gave it all to the School Department, we would still be short approximately \$30 million over a three-year period.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Maria Medeiros Wall, JD
City Clerk

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committee

(See Stenographic notes of Ron Ronzio, Stenotypist).