

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, February 12, 2009 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman Emilio L. Navarro, Chair
Councilman Mario Aceto, Vice-Chair
Councilman Paul H. Archetto (appeared at 7:10 p.m.)
Councilman Anthony J. Lupino
Councilman Terence Livingston
Council President John E. Lanni, Jr.

Also Present: Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.
Councilman Robert J. Pelletier
Robin Muksian-Schutt, Director of Administration
Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor
Robert Strom, Director of Finance
Steve Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor
David Capuano, City Treasurer
Joseph Morris, Tax Revenue Agent
Salvatore Saccoccio, City Assessor
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 Councilman Lupino, 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 HEARING/NEW BUSINESS

Real Estate/Tangible Tax Abatements

Mr. Saccoccio appeared to speak.

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

Motor Vehicle Tax Abatements

Mr. Saccoccio appeared to speak.

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

Tax Assessment Board of Review Decisions due to Taxes Assessed December 31, 2007 (informational only)

Councilman Pelletier stated that there are approximately 14 people on this list and questioned why they are all from the same area. **Mr. Saccoccio** stated that these taxpayers all live in the area of Yardworks. This is all one-year abatement on the current tax year we are in.

No action needed.

Report from Treasurer for approval of waivers

Mr. Morris appeared to speak.

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Councilman Lupino, it was voted to recommend approval of this list of Tax Interest Waivers. Motion passed unanimously.

Statue Report on City Camera exchange with Veolia Water

Ms. Schutt appeared to speak and presented a handout to the Committee regarding this issue and stated that the City camera is at Veolia's location and not being used and will not be used until an agreement is codified.

Mr. Sylvia indicated that the Board of Contract and Purchase approved the figures indicated in the handout, last year.

On motion by Councilman Lupino, seconded by Council President Lanni, it was voted to move this item to the full Council meeting for approval.

Under Discussion:

Ms. Schutt stated that at this time, this is just for a status report. This should be done by Resolution to the full City Council.

Solicitor Kirshenbaum stated that he will have to research this and advise the Council.

Resolution urging the Rhode Island General Assembly to enact legislation enabling the City of Cranston to enact an Ordinance requiring businesses resident within the City to obtain a license.

Cindy Fogarty appeared to represent the Cranston Chamber of Commerce and stated that the Chamber is opposed to this Resolution. This would be imposing more fees. They already pay State fees and other fees to the City.

On motion by Councilman Lupino, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to recommend approval of this Resolution.

Under Discussion:

Council Vice-President Livingston stated that during the Budget hearings last year, a department head brought this idea forward, not just to bring in more revenues, but also to give the Council authority to oversee businesses, which now would not require a license. This is more of a regulatory thing, a tool to deal with problem businesses. He had a business in his Ward that was an issue for the neighbors, because they did not require any specific license from the City, they could not be brought before the Council's licensing committee.

Council President Lanni stated that this is also a way to identify businesses that are operating in the City.

Councilman Aceto stated that he agrees with the Chamber of Commerce. If an Ordinance is passed requiring businesses to register with the City, he is in favor of that, but we need to be business friendly. He also questioned who would be processing the paperwork and administering the issuance of the licenses and would it be the Clerk's Office and can this Office handle the workload. We really cannot afford to be unfriendly towards businesses.

Council Vice-President Livingston stated that the first step is getting legislation passed at the State and then address the other issues.

Mr. Sylvia stated that he could generate a list of businesses connected to the City from the Sewer Roll. Council Vice-President Livingston stated that he is more concerned about regulating businesses at this point.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Resolution and motion passed unanimously.

***Committee's Review of 2008 Final City Audit Report from Kostin, Ruffkess & Company.**

No discussion was held.

**** Recommendations for Audit Committee appointment**

No discussion was held.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni Asst City Clerk/Clerk of Committees