

SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL

-JUNE 24, 2003-

Special meeting of the City Council of the City of Cranston was held on Tuesday, June 24, 2003 in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 P.M. by the Council President.

Roll Call showed the following members present: Councilmen Fung, Jackvony, Council Member Fogarty, Councilmen Ferolito, Lanni, McDonough and Council President Pastore –7.

Absent: Councilwomen O’Hara and McFarland –2.

Also Present: Paul Grimes, Director of Administration; Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor; Jerome Baron, Director of Finance; Catherine Ciarlo, School Superintendent; Joseph Cofone, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Joseph Balducci, School Business Administrator; School Committee Members Jacqueline White, Anthony Lupino, Steven Stycos, Edward Eramian and Michael Palumbo.

Minutes of the last meeting were dispensed with and stand approved as recorded.

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City Clerk read the following:

**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, June 24, 2003** at 6:00 P.M., Council Chambers, Cranston City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, RI at which meeting the following items of business shall be transacted:

Discussion of funding of school department's budget.

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

Executed at Cranston, Rhode Island, this 19th day of June, 2003.

/s/ Peter T. Pastore, Jr.
Council President

-JUNE 24, 2003-

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, June 24, 2003 at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, RI, was delivered on the 19th of June, 2003 by regular mail, postage prepaid to the address listed below.

Council President Peter T. Pastore, Jr.
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Cranston, RI 02921
[Ppastore@randolphsavings.com](mailto:ppastore@randolphsavings.com)

Councilman Marc D. Ferolito
mferolito@msn.com

Council Member Cynthia M. Fogarty
Fogarty1@msn.com

Councilman Allan W. Fung
alfung@cox.net

Councilwoman Ellen O'Hara
ellencohara@cox.net

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

Councilwoman Paula McFarland
pmcfarland@prodigy.net

Councilman Randall A. Jackvony
rjackvony@cox.net

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

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

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Council President Pastore stated that this meeting will be an informational meeting and we will probably be meeting more often and he asked that going forward, table be set up so School Committee members and Administration can sit inside the Chambers.

Council President Pastore stated that a packet was placed on each of the Council Members' desks of expired Boards and Commission members and asked that they review this packet for the July Council meeting.

Council President Pastore stated that letters were drafted by the City Clerk addressed to the Governor, Cranston Delegation and House Majority Leader, in support of bill regarding Separation of Powers.

Jacqueline White, School Committee Chair, appeared to speak and stated that the School Department is still working on the numbers, but that they will not be able to meet expenses and contractual obligations. The Superintendent is doing some elimination of positions and some consolidating. In order for the School Department to operate, they need more than what the Council and Mayor has given and they would like to open up some dialogue. The School Department is a department of the City and they need to be adequately funded. They will be receiving 3.24% from the State. Mr. Eramian stated that this is \$1,030,000 up from last year. He also stated the costs for training for teachers. Council President Pastore stated that with this amount from the State and if the \$2.8 million Bond passes at the Special Election tonight, this would close the gap fairly quickly. Ms. White stated that the School Committee would like to keep an open dialogue as much as possible.

Council President Pastore asked from the School Committee and School Administration, any correspondence in the future, be sent to him as Council President and copied to the rest of the City Council members.

Council President Pastore asked how many people have notified the School Administration of their intention to retire. Ms. White stated 68 Administrators and teachers. Council President Pastore asked what this is in dollars. Mr. Eramian stated that last year, 40 people retired at savings of approximately \$13,000 per position. Council President Pastore asked that as the School Department gets more definitive numbers, there needs to be dialogue between the Council and the School Committee. As there are more definitive numbers, some kind of savings should be able to be garnered from that pool.

Ms. White stated that some consolidating and elimination would be done. Council Member Fogarty stated that it sounds like the positions are going to be filled. Mr. Eramian stated that the School Department is looking to fill the teachers positions. Of the nine or ten Administrators who will be retiring, some will not be replaced.

Councilman Jackvony stated that going forward with these meetings, he would like to see the figures mentioned by Mr. Eramian for training and that is what we would be looking for to get a better understating.

Council President Pastore stated that he had asked Mr. Angell of the Financial Review Board and Ernest Almonte, Auditor General, to attend this meeting, however, Mr. Angell is at another meeting and Mr. Almonte is out of town. He asked that going forward, Mr. Angell or Mr. Almonte attend these meetings so everyone gets the same information.

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Councilman Ferolito asked who are the Administrators that will be retiring, which Administrators will not be replaced and what would be the savings. Mr. Eramian asked that this be referred to the next meeting, so that all the numbers can be prepared.

Councilman Lanni asked how much a teacher would get paid with a classroom of one student over the maximum. Mr. Cofone stated approximately \$1,800 a year. Councilman Lanni spoke regarding consolidation. He stated that he does not see anything happening between the City and School regarding consolidation. Ms. Ciarlo stated that she has met with Robin Muksian-Schutt, Deputy Director of Administration, and she also stated that there was not consistency within the City departments. She stated that the School Department would be willing to join in a joint purchasing with the City. Council President Pastore reiterated Councilman Lanni's concern on consolidation. Mr. Grimes stated that the City is still interested in consolidating the purchasing products between the City and School departments. Mr. Balducci stated that he attended meetings with the City Administration and looked at consolidating the purchase of paper. The School Department provided the City a list of the items that are purchased with the latest prices. We are moving in the right direction, it is just a matter of starting it. Mr. Grimes stated that we have not yet done any joint buying of office supplies.

Councilman Ferolito asked if there has been any thought given into looking at consolidating with other School Departments, such as Warwick. Mr. Balducci stated that they did investigate prices, but they do better on their own. This does help smaller communities, but not communities the size of Warwick or Cranston.

Mr. Lupino stated that communication between the City and School Department has been a major situation. We need to formally discuss how we can better communicate. He also stated that a major cause of their deficit is for outside tuition. Mr. Lupino stated that a Resolution was passed last night by the School Committee asking for a traffic study in regards to the elimination of the Crossing Guards from the City side of the Budget and he is concerned where the funding will come from if the School Department decides to keep this program.

Ms. White questioned when it is anticipated that this body will meet again. Council President Pastore stated that perhaps in early August, before opening of the school year.

Council President Pastore stated that in reference to the impact fees, he had requested the Administration to look at revising the impact fees. Unfortunately, an Ordinance is not ready to be introduced tonight as Mr. Kirshenbaum is still working on it.

Ms. Wall suggested in terms of establishing a procedure for formal communication and any correspondence in terms of documentation needed to go out to the School Committee Members and the Superintendent, either be sent to in care of Superintendent or care of the School Committee Chair, whichever they would prefer. Ms. White stated that dialogue between the School Committee and the Council, she thinks that should come through the Chair of the School Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Maria Medeiros Wall
City Clerk

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees

(See Stenographic Notes of Ron Ronzio, Stenotypist)