

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

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February 27, 2013  
Start: 11:17 a.m.  
Recess: 11:26 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
JOEL RIVERA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Elizabeth S. Crowley  
Inez E. Dickens  
Erik Martin Dilan  
Lewis A. Fidler  
Vincent J. Gentile  
Robert Jackson  
James Vacca  
Albert Vann  
Karen Koslowitz  
James S. Oddo  
Christine C. Quinn

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Joseph A. Puma  
Candidate for Appointment  
Civilian Complaint Review Board

Charles Mauler  
Concerned Citizen

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very much. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Joe Rivera. I am the chair of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections. Before we begin, let me introduce the members who are here with us today. We have Council Member Al Vann, Council Member Leroy Comrie, Council Member Karen Koslowitz, Council Member Inez Dickens, Council Member Vincent Gentile. We also have Council Member Lew Fidler, our minority leader Jimmy Oddo, Council Member Rosie Mendez, Council Member Gale Brewer is also here with us as well, and we are also joined by members of the staff. We have Chuck Davis. We also are joined by Nadia Joshua [phonetic], who will be standing in for today. We also have other members such as Jasmine Vega, Alicia Vassal [phonetic], Cora Marie Diegas [phonetic], John Clark and Diana Ariega [phonetic].

Today we have before us one candidate for our review, Joseph A. Puma. Mr. Puma is a Manhattan resident, was recommended by the Manhattan delegation for designation by the Council to the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

1  
2 Upon appointment by the mayor, Mr. Puma will fill  
3 a vacancy and serve for the remainder of a three  
4 year term that expires on July 4<sup>th</sup> of 2015.

5 Welcome, Mr. Puma. Will you please raise your  
6 right hand to be sworn in?

7 MALE VOICE: Do you swear or affirm  
8 to tell the truth?

9 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Yes, I do.

10 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very  
12 much. Let me briefly describe the functions of  
13 the Civilian Complaint Review Board. The Civilian  
14 Complaint Review Board is an independent body  
15 charged with the duty to investigate complaints of  
16 misconduct by police officers toward the public.  
17 Board members are required to reflect the city's  
18 diversity. The board consists of 13 members, 5  
19 designated by the Council for appointment by the  
20 mayor, 5 appointed by the mayor and three  
21 designated by the police commissioner, which are  
22 the only members who have law enforcement  
23 experience. The Board has a civilian staff  
24 responsible for conducting the investigations of  
25 complaints received by the Board. The Board's

1 jurisdiction is limited to complaints complaining  
2 excessive force, abuse of authority, discourtesy  
3 or use of offensive language. The Board operates  
4 in panels of at least three members. All CCRB  
5 members are eligible for compensation on a per  
6 diem basis. The current per diem rate is \$315.  
7 Before we move on the Mr. Puma, let me call on  
8 Council Member Rosie Mendez to make a brief  
9 statement. Council Member?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,  
12 Mr. Chair. Joseph Puma is a resident of my  
13 district, and he is also a friend. He came to  
14 work for my predecessor after I left, and I met  
15 him in that capacity, and then he served on the  
16 board of a not for profit organization doing  
17 housing and public housing organizing. It is  
18 through there where I really go to know Joseph,  
19 and I know him to be a very thoughtful, detailed,  
20 and very dedicated and committed human being  
21 committed to people and issues. I am proud that  
22 he has agreed to serve on the CCRB and I hope that  
23 everyone here affirms his appointment. Thank you  
24 very much, Mr. Chair.

25 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very

1  
2 much, Council Member. At this point in time, Mr.  
3 Puma, do you wish to make an opening statement?

4 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Yes, briefly.

5 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Perfect. Just  
6 state your name for the record, and you may begin.

7 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Joseph A. Puma.  
8 Good morning, Chair Rivera, members of the Rules,  
9 Privileges and Elections Committee and Council  
10 Member Mendez and Council staff. My name is  
11 Joseph Puma, and it is an honor to sit before you  
12 as a candidate for service on the Civilian  
13 Complaint Review Board. I consider this a unique  
14 and important opportunity to serve the residents  
15 of New York City. I approach this opportunity  
16 after spending seven years of my early career  
17 working in New York City government with just over  
18 two years separating my departure from the  
19 intergovernmental relations unit of the Mayor's  
20 Office of Management and Budget and - - . I also  
21 come from a civil rights advocacy and community  
22 organizing background having worked at the NAACP  
23 legal defense and educational fund, and I  
24 currently serve a community based organization,  
25 Good Old Lower East Side, as a board member. I am

1 a native New Yorker and 30 year resident of public  
2 housing on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

3 Currently I am pursuing a master of arts at Union  
4 Theological Seminary in Manhattan. I believe my

5 combination of experiences and my temperament

6 would enable me to be a fair and effective member

7 of the CCRB helping it fulfill its charter

8 mandated responsibilities. Let me add one more

9 thing, I am well aware that this seat, which has

10 been reserved for a resident of Manhattan, has

11 been vacant for some time, so I consider it a

12 great honor that my possible appointment would

13 finally fill a longstanding gap on the Board.

14 Although I did not personally know the previous

15 occupant of this seat prior to his death and

16 wasn't familiar with his work prior to my

17 candidacy, it is my understanding that his service

18 to the Board and city was celebrated by many. I

19 keep this contextual information in mind in light

20 of my possible confirmation today. I wish to

21 thank the Manhattan delegation, and specifically

22 Council Member Mendez, for recommending me for

23 service on the CCRB, and I thank this committee

24 for its consideration.  
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2 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very  
3 much, Mr. Puma. At this point in time, we will  
4 field questions from Committee members. We will  
5 start with Council Member Gale Brewer.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you,  
7 Mr. Chair. I co-chair the Manhattan delegation,  
8 and I want to thank Council Member Mendez for  
9 recommending you. We have had a long journey--the  
10 like of which I don't think any other delegation  
11 has gone through in terms of finding the right  
12 candidate. Many of knew and loved Dennis deLeon,  
13 and he was an extraordinary leader in many ways  
14 and certainly gave us a lot of information and was  
15 a great CCRB representative, and I know that you  
16 will be the same. I think it's very indicative of  
17 how great you will be given the fact that you have  
18 been going to some of the meetings, and you have  
19 been able to show us your commitment. The CCRB is  
20 extremely important. I think you know that. I  
21 know I've got or three cases pending before it,  
22 and I think the whole Manhattan delegation feels  
23 some challenges that we have waited this long  
24 because every person at the CCRB carries some  
25 weight in terms of dealing with the backlog, so I



1  
2 know in your material that you provided, you  
3 indicated the importance of dealing with that  
4 backlog, and I think your personality and your  
5 knowledge of both the city and civil rights issue  
6 will bode us well. There is always a silver  
7 lining--or mostly a silver lining to all  
8 challenges, and you are our silver lining. Thank  
9 you very much.

10 JOSEPH A. PUMA: Thank you, Council  
11 Member.

12 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very  
13 much, Council Member. Are there any other  
14 committee members that want to ask a question or  
15 make a statement? Seeing none, thank you very  
16 much, Mr. Puma. At this point in time, we are  
17 going to open it up to the public. We have one  
18 member who wants to testify. Sir, if you can  
19 rejoin the audience, Mr. Puma, and then we will  
20 call you back in a minute. Just give me a second  
21 there, sir. No, Mr. Puma, you can... Okay.  
22 Perfect. We have with us Mr. Charles Mauler  
23 [phonetic], who is going to make a statement. We  
24 do have a three minute clock on for public  
25 testimonies. You may begin, sir. Just pull the

1  
2 microphone closer to you, turn it on, state your  
3 name for the record, and you may proceed.

4 CHARLES MAULER: I don't know  
5 anything about this man, and I don't think the  
6 people of New York know anything about this man,  
7 and I don't think you guys have explained who he  
8 is or why he is right for the job compared to  
9 anybody else, so I don't know why the people of  
10 New York, the people of my neighborhood, my family  
11 should support him. You guys haven't really  
12 explained it. That's it. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very  
14 much, Mr. Mauler. At this point in time, I'll  
15 call Mr. Puma back to the - - , and I'll be  
16 calling on the clerk to call the roll, and the  
17 Chair recommends an aye vote for Mr. Puma.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
19 committee clerk. Roll call vote Committee on  
20 Rules. Council Member Rivera?

21 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I vote aye.  
22 Congratulations.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Comrie?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK: Fidler?

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vann?

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Gentile?

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Dickens?

COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Koslowitz?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Oddo?

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: By a vote of eight in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions, item has been adopted. Members please sign the Committee Report.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very much, Committee members, and thank you, Mr. Puma. Congratulations on your appointment. We will be keeping the roll open for 30 minutes for other members to come up and vote as well.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Speaker Quinn?

SPEAKER QUINN: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The current vote now stands at nine in the affirmative.

[pause]

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member  
Crowley?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I vote  
aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The vote now  
currently stands at ten in the affirmative.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote in the  
Committee on Rules now stands at ten in the  
affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
abstentions.

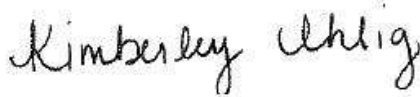
CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: The Committee  
on Rules, Privileges and Elections is now  
adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_3/4/13\_\_\_\_\_