

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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June 30, 2023
Start: 12:03 p.m.
Recess: 12:28 p.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Justin L. Brannan, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Diana Ayala
Charles Barron
Gale A. Brewer
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
David M. Carr
Amanda Farias
Kamillah Hanks
Crystal Hudson
Farrah N. Louis
Francisco P. Moya
Chi A. Osse
Keith Powers
Pierina Ana-Sanchez
Althea V. Stevens
Marjorie Velazquez
Julie Won

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

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Finance, recorded on June
4 30, 2023, in the City Hall Chambers by Giselle
5 Rivera.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
7 welcome to the Committee on Finance.

8 At this time, we ask if you could please
9 place phones on vibrate or silent mode. Thank you.

10 Chair, we are ready to begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: [GAVEL] Okay, good
12 morning and welcome to today's Finance Committee
13 meeting where we will be adopting the FY 2024 budget.

14 I'm Justin L. Brannan, Council Member,
15 and I Chair the Committee on Finance.

16 I want to acknowledge my fellow Council
17 Members who are here today. Council Members Louis,
18 Barron, Stevens, Brooks-Powers, Velazquez, Farias,
19 Hudson, Won, Brewer, Ayala, Osse, Powers, Sanchez,
20 and Moya is on Zoom.

21 Today, the Finance Committee will take
22 the necessary actions for the City Council to adopt a
23 107.1-billion-dollar budget for FY 2024. I first want
24 to thank Speaker Adams for her leadership throughout
25 the entire budget process and particularly through

2 these last six months. The Speaker's commitment to a
3 budget that provides the necessary investments into
4 the essential services that New Yorkers rely on while
5 also preparing for future risks embodies the
6 leadership the people of the City sent us here to
7 achieve. I'd also like to thank the Speaker for her
8 continued commitment to high standards of
9 transparency and inclusivity of all the Members
10 throughout the budget process.

11 I also must thank the tireless work and
12 acknowledge the tireless work of the Council's
13 Finance Division from preliminary through executive
14 to today, it has been months of very long hours,
15 questions from Members, regular briefings,
16 presentations, and reports, and there's so much work
17 that goes on behind the scenes back at mission
18 control across the street. This budget really
19 reflects your dedication, and we really, really
20 greatly appreciate it so thank you to all the Finance
21 Staff, to all of the Financial Analysts, the
22 Economists, the Administrative Support Staff who got
23 us to this vote today. A very special thank you to
24 the Finance Division's Leadership Team who
25 spearheaded this effort, Finance Director Richard

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2 Lee, Managing Director Jonathan Rosenberg, Deputy
3 Director and Chief Economist Dr. Ray Majewski, who
4 we'll talk about more later, Deputy Director Emre
5 Edev, Chima Obichere, Paul Scimone, Eisha Wright,
6 Assistant Directors Crilhien Francisco and Elizabeth
7 Hoffman, Supervising Economist Paul Sturm, Unit Heads
8 Aliya Ali, Julia Haramis, James Reyes, Jack Storey,
9 and Finance Counsel Kathleen Ahn. Of course, a huge
10 thank you to Finance Division's Chief Financial
11 Officer and Deputy Chief-of-Staff to the Speaker
12 Tanisha Edwards for her leadership. The budget
13 success we have achieved today is possible from the
14 dedicated efforts of you and the Staff so we thank
15 you all.

16 I would be remiss if I also did not thank
17 the Legislative Documents Unit. Today is like
18 Christmas Day for the LDU. They pull it all together
19 through countless emails and changes and corrections
20 and last minute requests from Central Staff that come
21 from Members every hearing, every vote, every
22 Stated. Thank you to Jonathan Ettricks, Ruthie Del
23 Franco, Ivette Molina, Billy Martin, and Matthew
24 DiStefano.

25

2 The ever-present Sergeants-at-Arms who
3 keep things orderly and safe on both sides of the
4 street during budget season, parade season,
5 everything in between. Thank you, Carl, Rafael, and
6 your entire team.

7 Last but not least, a special shout-out
8 to my Staff for all that you do, in particular my
9 Special Advisor Jonathan Yedin and my right-hand man
10 through all of these hearings Committee Counsel
11 Michael Twomey.

12 This budget represents the Council's
13 commitment to preserving the key services New Yorkers
14 as a people, as a city rely on to meet the challenges
15 ahead. While decisions have to be made, there is no
16 reason to cut with a scythe in a 107-billion-dollar
17 budget. As just an example of the restorations we've
18 accomplished, we've successfully restored 36.2
19 million dollars in programmatic cuts to our
20 libraries, secured 16 million dollars for Promise NYC
21 childcare services, and implemented a 15-million-
22 dollar baseline pilot to convert 1,800 school-day,
23 school-year, 3K seats to extended-day, extended year.

24 On housing, the Council restored 32.9
25 million dollars to NYCHA's Vacant Unit Readiness

2 program to get vacant apartments ready for new
3 tenants as well as reach the target of 4 billion
4 dollars in capital funds for the construction of new
5 affordable housing. These are anchors around which
6 communities can build and grow their quality of life.

7 We approached this budget with eyes wide
8 open to potential difficulties in the out-years but
9 with the knowledge that resilience doesn't happen by
10 accident. It requires meaningful investments. With
11 the investments secured in this budget, the City has
12 a solid foundation from which to continue to recover,
13 succeed, and be healthy and safe.

14 Now, let's turn to adopting this budget.
15 Before we get to the vote, I'd like to discuss the
16 specific items that we will vote on today. All
17 Members received a budget packet by the Committee
18 Counsel that contains all the budget-related
19 legislation that must be voted on by the Committee
20 and again by the full Council at the Stated Meeting
21 later today. I'm just going to list the items that
22 are on our agenda that require a vote in this
23 Committee.

24 Number one is a resolution approving the
25 FY 2024 expense budget.

2 Number two is a resolution approving the
3 FY 2024 contract bureau.

4 Number three is a resolution approving
5 the FY 2024 capital budget, which is Reso. A and
6 Reso. B.

7 Number four is a resolution approving an
8 expense budget modification which would close out FY
9 2023.

10 Number five is a resolution approving a
11 revenue budget modification which closes out FY 2023.

12 Number six is a resolution approving the
13 proposed FY 2024 Community Development Program
14 reallocation of the 49th Year Funds and proposed 50th
15 Year Program.

16 Number seven is three property tax
17 resolutions, current base proportion, adjusted base
18 proportion, and the resolution fixing the tax rates.
19 All are interlocking resolutions that together are
20 necessary for adopting the FY 2024 property tax
21 rates.

22 As well as a transparency resolution, the
23 other documents which do not require a separate vote
24 are Schedule C, a list of the terms and conditions
25 adopted for FY 2024, and that's it.

2 As a reminder to Members, Schedule C is a
3 schedule of the expense and contract budgets and the
4 appropriations for the organizations listed in
5 Schedule C are funded by the expense and contract
6 budgets.

7 Council Members will have to sign a
8 disclosure form indicating whether or not a conflict
9 exists with any of the groups listed in Schedule C or
10 Reso. A, which details the designations of the
11 capital discretionary funds. A separate disclosure
12 form must be completed for the transparency
13 resolution. If any Council Member has a potential
14 conflict of interest with any of the organizations
15 included, they have the opportunity to disclose the
16 conflict at the time of their vote. If you have not
17 signed those disclosure forms yet, Staff from the
18 General Counsel's office are here today and available
19 to guide you through the process. Please contact one
20 of them before you vote.

21 As a further reminder, please disclose
22 any conflicts you may have with the proposed
23 subcontractors that are used by any of the
24 organizations sponsored. These disclosures must be
25

2 made before the subcontractor can be approved to
3 receive funds.

4 Those are all of our items for today. Are
5 there any questions or comments from the Committee?

6 Council Member Barron.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I want to make a
8 comment just regarding the budget. I just want the
9 public to know that this budget was just given to us
10 10 minutes ago. This is the final budget that we
11 received 10 minutes ago. What they should've attached
12 to it was speedreading so we can get through the
13 budget and make an intelligent assessment of this
14 budget.

15 I also want to say that a budget is a
16 document not just about dollars and cents, but it is
17 about your values, your priorities. This budget does
18 not value the low-income, poor communities of East
19 New York, Brownsville, Harlem, and the Bronx, black
20 and brown communities that are suffering from double
21 digit poverty, double digit unemployment. How do you
22 have a 107-billion-dollar budget and when you look at
23 that budget, you got 3 billion dollars' worth of cuts
24 and then we're going to celebrate the restoration of
25 200 to 300 million out of the 3-billion-dollar cuts.

2 Cuts to education, millions. Cuts to healthcare, cuts
3 to our youth, our seniors. Even we tried to get some
4 fair transportation, didn't want to fully fund that
5 for low-income people. This budget is anti-working-
6 class people. While there was some progress made, the
7 City Council fought to put some things back, but
8 we're dealing with a Mayor who's a not-so-closet
9 Republican conservative cop Mayor that values these
10 things more than the people of our city.

11 I finally want to say that I'll
12 definitely be voting no for this budget. We should
13 use the power of the City Council to say we're going
14 to check this Mayor. I know this budget is no good
15 because I never saw a more reluctant handshake by a
16 Speaker in all my 14 years in doing this budget. I've
17 never seen such a reluctant handshake, but, because
18 they have to work together, that front has to be put
19 up. We shook hands on this yesterday, not we, not me,
20 they shook hands on this yesterday before they even
21 saw it. We just got the final budget today so for the
22 people of New York City, you need to rise up, you
23 need to rise up and take a strong stance on how your
24 tax-paying dollars are being spent and used. The fact
25 that you're not the priority. I want to enc the

2 Council to vote no on this budget until they do it
3 right by the people of New York.

4 I want to say also 439 million dollars
5 should have been added or put into this budget, set
6 aside for our retirees. These are people who worked
7 in our schools, lunchroom attendants, who made sure
8 that our children could cross the streets, traffic
9 safety officers. These are people who did the
10 essential service, EMS, sanitation, and you, Mayor
11 Adams, you don't want to pay 439 million that the
12 City has been paying for 57 years, you want to force
13 them into Aetna who took our policies for enslaved
14 Africans, who is under investigation for corruption,
15 and who doesn't unionize, but all these unions were
16 with the non-unionizing Aetna. I say keep them in
17 Senior Care because we need to care for those
18 retirees.

19 I will be voting no on this budget
20 because, as Adam Clayton Powell said who sat three
21 seats over to my right, he was the first black
22 Council Member in this District, and he said use
23 what's in your hands. If you have power in your
24 hands, use it for the people of New York City. Use it
25 so that we can have a more humane sensitive budget.

2 This budget is not fiscally prudent. It's fiscally
3 negligent and economically oppressive to the poor
4 working-class families of New York. I will be proudly
5 voting no on this budget.

6 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you, Council
7 Member Barron.

8 Are there other comments or questions
9 from the Committee?

10 We've also been joined by Council Members
11 Hanks and Carr.

12 If there are no more questions or
13 comments, I'm going to ask Billy Martin, the
14 Committee Clerk, to call the roll.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
16 afternoon. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
17 vote Committee on Finance. All items are coupled.
18 Chair Brannan.

19 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: I vote aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ayala.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Moya.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I have to disclose.

24 I'm sorry.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Hang on. Council
3 Member Ayala has to make a disclosure.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Sure.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I am disclosing on
6 the record of the Council proceedings that one, AHRC,
7 the New York City Chapter of the New York City
8 Association for the Help of Retarded Children, which
9 I take offense to that name, is funded in the budget
10 that we are adopting, and my partner is an employee
11 of that organization and that, two, Positive
12 Workforce is funded in this budget that we are
13 adopting and my son and my brother are associated
14 with that organization. Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
16 you. Council Member Moya.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
19 you. Powers.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I vote aye, and
21 I'm disclosing on the record of the Council
22 proceedings that Mount Sinai Hospital is funded in
23 the budget we are adopting. My mother is an employee
24 of the organization.

25

2 Chair, just a quick second of your
3 indulgence.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you. I just
6 want to congratulate Chair Brannan, the Finance
7 Division, the Speaker, and many others for a very
8 hard-fought negotiation here, and, after months of
9 doing hearings and fighting to get restorations,
10 which are a big deal. I want to congratulate them. I
11 want to say a very big congratulations to Richard
12 Lee, Tanisha, and the whole Finance Division here for
13 the work they did, and I'm very happy to see our
14 libraries, our cultural institutions, and many others
15 that are getting the restorations they rightfully
16 deserve, and I hope we will continue to fight for
17 them in the future, and I know we will, and to see
18 many of the other great victories here as well.

19 I proudly vote aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
21 you. Louis.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I would like to
23 disclose on the record of the Council proceedings
24 that Metropolitan Transportation Authority is funded

2 in the budget that we're adopting today and my
3 brother is an employee with the entity.

4 I would also like to echo the same
5 sentiments as Majority Leader Powers. I want to
6 congratulate you, Chair Brannan, on your hard work as
7 well as the Finance Division, Tanisha, Richard, and
8 everyone else.

9 I vote aye on all.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brooks-
11 Powers.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Permission
13 to explain my vote.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Sure.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: First, I'd
16 like to commend you, Chair Brannan, as well as
17 Speaker Adams for leading this Body through a very
18 difficult budget year, recognizing that the Mayor has
19 made significant cuts to critical services for New
20 Yorkers, and while we may not have been able to make
21 every line item come back, we were able to hold the
22 line in the sand for a number of critical areas
23 including for our seniors, including for our
24 education system, including for public
25 transportation, and I just want to remind everyone

2 that the budget in the City Council is a year-round
3 process, and we look forward to exercising our full
4 oversight responsibilities over the course of the
5 year.

6 With that, I would like to disclose on
7 record of the Council proceedings that Queens Alumni
8 Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated
9 is funded in the budget we are adopting, and I am
10 associated with that organization, and that Greater
11 Allen AME Cathedral of New York is funded in the
12 budget we are adopting, and I am associated with that
13 entity, and that Edge School of the Arts, also known
14 as ESOTA, is funded in the budget we are adopting,
15 and my daughter is associated with that organization.

16 With that, I vote aye.

17 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
19 you. Barron.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Just want to
21 disclose that my son works for BRIC, which is funded
22 in this budget. He's an employee of that entity.

23 As I vote no on items M141, no on M142,
24 and no on M143, which is basically the budget, I vote
25 no on that and just want to remind also that when

2 they talk about 36 million being restored to the
3 libraries, that's a good thing, but they're restoring
4 it on top of cuts from last year so that 36 million
5 doesn't even make the libraries whole because they
6 had to do cuts last year, 3 and 4 percent, and cuts
7 this year, and so they play this little fake fight
8 game and restore stuff that they cut it and didn't
9 make them whole this year so I vote no and aye on all
10 the other items.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
12 you. Brewer.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. I
14 definitely vote yes. Like everyone, I want to thank
15 the Speaker and Chair Brannan. I also want to thank,
16 obviously, Richard Lee, Tanisha Edwards, Johnathan
17 Rosenberg, Vanessa Diaz, all the MDI Staff with Jimmy
18 Reyes (phonetic), Carolyn Gill, and Owen Kotowski
19 (phonetic) and Cynthia Hornig, Shula (INAUDIBLE) and
20 Sam Goldsmith from my office. A very tough budget. I
21 want to second the comments that we're going to keep
22 working on it during the year, particularly for
23 those, we worked as hard as we could for the human
24 service employees for whom I have great respect. We
25 obviously need to try to get COLAs to be increased,

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2 but it was hard-fought, and the Mayor cuts the
3 workers who are the backbone of our city. Thank you
4 very much, everyone involved.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
6 you. Farias.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I'm disclosing on
8 the record of the Council proceedings that NYU
9 Langone is funded in the budget we are adopting and
10 my mother is an employee of that entity, and that the
11 New York City Department of Education is funded in
12 the budget that we are adopting and my sibling is a
13 student at that entity.

14 I vote aye on all.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanks.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you. I vote
17 aye on all except for M169 and accompanying Reso. 713
18 and Reso. 703 and 704. Aye on all the rest.

19 Thank you for all your hard work.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
21 you. Hudson.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: I'm disclosing on
23 the record of the Council proceedings that Museum of
24 the City of New York is funded in the budget we are
25

2 adopting, and my spouse is associated with that
3 entity.

4 I'm aye on all.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Osse.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Permission to
7 explain my vote.

8 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: I'm voting against
10 this budget for many reasons, but I want to commend
11 the libraries and the cultural institutions for their
12 tireless fight in making sure that they received the
13 funding that they deserve. Very proud of the work
14 that we've done together in rallying to push back
15 against the Mayor's cuts. We here in this room and
16 the broader Council know how important our libraries
17 and our cultural institutions are to the people of
18 New York City.

19 With that, I vote aye on all except for
20 M141, M142, and M143. Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
22 you. Sanchez.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you. I am
24 disclosing on the record of the Council proceedings
25 that the City University of New York is funded in the

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2 budget we are adopting, and my brother is employed by
3 that entity.

4 With that, I vote aye.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Stevens.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Good afternoon.

7 I'm disclosing on the record that the University of
8 New York is funded in this budget we are adopting and
9 my daughter is a student at that institution, and
10 Columbia Presbyterian is funded in this budget we are
11 adopting and my daughter is an employee of that
12 institution.

13 Although I am really upset that we
14 weren't able to deliver for the human service sector
15 with their COLA, the fight will continue, and I vote
16 aye on all.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

18 Velazquez.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Permission to
20 explain my vote.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Of course.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: I am disclosing
23 on the record of the Council proceedings that my
24 spouse is an employee of the Department of
25 Environmental Protection, and Samaritans of New York

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2 is funded in the budget that we're adopting and my
3 sibling is a board member of that entity, and that
4 New York City Department of Housing Preservation and
5 Development is funded in the budget we are adopting
6 and my sibling is associated with that entity.

7 I vote aye on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
9 you. Williams. Won.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Aye on all.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Carr.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I'd like to disclose
13 on the record of the Council proceedings that the
14 City University of New York is funded in the budget
15 we are adopting and my spouse is a student at that
16 entity, and the Italian Club of Staten Island and the
17 Jewish Community Center of Staten Island are being
18 funded in the budget we are adopting and I am a
19 member of both of those organizations.

20 I'll make more lengthy thank-yous at
21 Stated but just thank you to all the Staff who worked
22 on this.

23 I'll be voting no on M169 and
24 accompanying Resolution 713 as well as Reso. 703 and
25 704 and aye on the rest. Thank you.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you. One moment.

4 All items have been adopted by a vote of
5 17 in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
6 abstentions with the exceptions of the following
7 items.

8 M141, M142, and M143 as well as M169 and
9 Preconsidered Resolution as well as Resolution 703
10 and 704 were adopted by the Committee with 15 in the
11 affirmative, 2 in the negative, and zero abstentions.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you. Before we
13 close, I want to congratulate our Chief Economist,
14 Ray Majewski. This will be his last budget.

15 Okay, this meeting is adjourned. We'll
16 see you at Stated in a little while. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 3, 2023