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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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March 2, 2023
Start: 10:22 a.m.
Recess: 10:50 a.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Diana Ayala
- Charles Barron
- Gale A. Brewer
- David M. Carr
- Amanda Farias
- Kamillah Hanks
- Crystal Hudson
- Ari Kagan
- Farah N. Louis
- Francisco P. Moya
- Chi A. Osse
- Keith Powers
- Pierina Ana Sanchez
- Marjorie Velazquez

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Check one, two. Check
3 one, two. This is a prerecorded sound test for the
4 Committee on Finance. Today's date is March 2, 2023.
5 It's being recorded by Michael Leonardo in the
6 Committee Room.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
8 welcome to today's New York City Council hearing on
9 the Committee on Finance. Folks, quiet please, quiet
10 please.

11 Good morning and welcome to today's New
12 York City Council hearing for the Committee on
13 Finance.

14 At this time, we ask that you silence
15 cell phones and electronic devices to minimize
16 disruptions throughout the hearing. We thank you for
17 your cooperation.

18 Chair, we are ready to begin.

19 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you. [GAVEL]
20 Good morning and welcome to today's Finance Committee
21 meeting. I'm Council Member Justin Brannan. I have
22 the privilege of Chairing the Committee on Finance.
23 I've been joined by Council Members Kagan, Hudson,
24 Farias, Carr, Powers, Hanks, Barron, Osse, and Louis,
25 and Moya and Sanchez are on Zoom.

2 Today, our Committee will be voting on
3 the following items, the Council's FY-24 operating
4 budget, a revenue budget modification, a transparency
5 resolution, an Article 11 resolution, and finally
6 Intro 524-A.

7 First, we've got the Council's FY-24
8 operating budget and the accompanying OTPS schedule.
9 The Council's Fiscal '23 proposed budget includes
10 75.7 million dollars for personal services and 24.3
11 million for OTPS, which stands for other-than-
12 personal services.

13 Next, the revenue budget modification
14 recognizes 1.69 billion of new revenue in FY-23 and
15 authorizes the appropriation of that new revenue to
16 increase the Budget Stabilization Account by 1.46
17 billion to prepay FY-24 debt service in FY-23 and
18 increase the general reserve by 225 million to
19 maintain funding.

20 Next, we've got the transparency
21 resolution which sets for the new designation and
22 changes in the designation of certain organizations
23 receiving certain local aging and youth discretionary
24 funding and funding pursuant to certain initiatives
25 in the budget. As with all transparency resolutions,

2 Council Members will have to sign a disclosure from
3 indicating whether or not a conflict exists with any
4 of the groups on the attached list. If any Council
5 Member has a potential conflict of interest with any
6 of the organizations listed, they have the
7 opportunity to disclose the conflict at the time of
8 their vote. As a reminder, please disclose any
9 conflicts you may have with proposed subcontractors
10 used by organizations sponsored by discretionary
11 funding. These disclosures must be made before the
12 subcontractor can be approved for funding. Disclosure
13 forms must be completed and submitted prior to the
14 vote on the transparency resolution and may be
15 emailed to Julius Caranda who is also present today
16 in Chambers to take your questions.

17 Next, an Article 11 resolution will
18 authorize a full 40-year Article 11 exemption to
19 support the preservation of one 241-unit co-op
20 building in Council Member Richardson Jordan's
21 District. The amendment will allow for renovation
22 work and refinancing the building debt to allow
23 maintenance to remain affordable for current and
24 future shareholders.

2 Finally, Intro 524-A sponsored by my
3 friend, Council Member David Carr, would authorize a
4 new interest rate for primary resident homeowners who
5 enter into payment plans with the City and stay
6 current on those plans. The new rate would be set by
7 Council Resolution at a later date following
8 recommendations from the Banking Commission and would
9 be open to property owners with a combined income of
10 no more than 200,000 dollars and whose property has
11 an assessed value no more than 250,000 dollars.
12 Property owners who are not paying their outstanding
13 taxes would still be charged the standard late
14 interest rate.

15 I want to recognize Council Member Carr
16 if he has any remarks on his bill. Council Member.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair
18 Brannan. Good morning, Colleagues. Intro 524-A is
19 going to resolve a longstanding policy dilemma that
20 we as a Council face every budget year and have faced
21 for I think longer than most of us can remember,
22 which is how do we set an interest rate that punishes
23 and deters tax scofflaws, people who just don't want
24 to pay their tax bills, while at the same time not
25 punishing homeowners who are simply struggling to

2 make ends meet, maybe they had a bad year, they lost
3 an income earner or someone lost their job, they're
4 seniors on a fixed income, maybe as my grandmother
5 would say they're house rich but cash poor. We want
6 to make sure that folks who are trying to make an
7 earnest effort to dig themselves out of a tax arrear
8 hole can do so without the City making it more
9 difficult by giving them a higher interest rate so
10 this bill is going to allow us to do that later in
11 June when we do the interest rate adoptions. We're
12 covering 80 percent of homeowners potentially based
13 on the income threshold and so I think this is a
14 really, really good piece of legislation that is
15 going to help a lot of New Yorkers across the five
16 boroughs. Chair Brannan, I thank you for all of your
17 support and leadership on this issue. I thank the
18 Staff, I'm going to be thanking them individually on
19 the floor later today, they did yeoman's work in
20 making sure this got done, and I'm just so pleased
21 that we're voting to report it out this morning.
22 Thank you so much.

23 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you, Council
24 Member. Are there any other comments or questions

2 from my Colleagues on any of the items today? Council
3 Member Louis.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Sorry. I really
5 wasn't trying to make this long for you, Chair. I was
6 just looking through this packet and noticed that
7 Welcome NYC does not have a Haitian organization to
8 provide services. I think we've heard from thousands
9 of Haitians that have migrated here from the border
10 that they need assistance with case management. I've
11 met with organizations like Hope that's located in
12 Queens in Council Member Williams' District that's
13 asked over and over again for additional support
14 services so that they can provide support across New
15 York City, and I got a call from Finance that they
16 would add a group and they did not so I just want to
17 highlight that for the record that while there are
18 some amazing groups on here, we have some Haitian
19 folks that do need additional case management
20 services as opposed to just legal services, and I'm
21 hoping that a change can be made in the next
22 transparency resolution. Thank you so much, Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Work on that. Anyone
24 else? Council Member Barron.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: The debt service,
3 200,000 of that is going in the reserve budget?

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: I think the total
5 amount was 225.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Is going in
7 reserve. I just want to go on record saying I oppose
8 that. I think it should be used to offset the cuts to
9 all the agencies that the Mayor is engaging in as
10 opposed to putting it in the reserve account that
11 already has 8.3 billion. While I support prepaying
12 the debt service because that will help us next year,
13 but it should not be put into the reserve account.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay. Anyone else?
15 We've also been joined by Council Member Brewer.

16 With that, I will ask Billy to call the
17 roll.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
19 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
20 vote Committee on Finance. All items are coupled.
21 Chair Brannan.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: I vote aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Moya.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you. Powers.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I vote aye and
5 want to congratulate Council Member Carr on his bill
6 which I think is a common sense solution to a problem
7 we've been talking about for a long time. Thanks. I
8 vote aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Louis.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I vote aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farias.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanks.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: I vote aye.

19 Congratulations to my Colleague, Council Member David
20 Carr.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: I vote aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Osse.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: I vote aye, and I

25 want to congratulate Council Member Carr. It goes to

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2 show that when you're not an extremist you can still
3 get things done within this Body.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Sanchez.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: I vote aye.

6 Congratulations, Council Member Carr.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
8 you. Carr.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I'd just like to
10 disclose on the record that in the transparency
11 resolution we're voting on today that we're funding
12 CUNY and my spouse is a student at CUNY. With that
13 said, I vote aye on all.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Kagan.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: I would like to
16 disclose that my daughter is a student at CUNY
17 college, and also I would like to congratulate my
18 Colleague, David Carr, and also I'm voting aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
20 you. By a vote of 13 in the affirmative, zero in the
21 negative, and..

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We've also been
23 joined by Council Member Diana Ayala.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Council
25 Member Ayala.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I'm the deciding
3 vote. I don't know. Let me think about this. I vote
4 aye.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
6 you. All right. By a vote of 14 in the affirmative,
7 zero in the negative, and no abstentions, all items
8 have been adopted by the Committee.

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We're going to leave
10 it open but everyone can go, right?

11 Okay, everyone except Keith can go.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:
13 Continuation roll call, Committee on Finance. Council
14 Member Velazquez.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: I have to
16 disclose again?

17 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yeah.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: I'll disclose
19 that my brother is a part of (INAUDIBLE) New York,
20 and my husband works for DEP. Aye on all.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
22 you. Final vote Committee on Finance. All items have
23 been adopted by the Committee, 15 in the affirmative,
24 zero in the negative, and no abstentions.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: The hearing is now
3 adjoured.

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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 March 9, 2023