

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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February 12, 2015
Start: 11:22 a.m.
Recess: 11:59 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:
JULISSA FERRERAS
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Vincent M. Ignizio

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Good morning and welcome to today's Finance Committee hearing. I am Julissa Ferreras and I am the Chair of the Committee. I wanna thank everyone for joining us today. We've been joined by Council Members Rodriguez, Miller, Cornegy, Johnson and Gibson and I know there's more members that are coming up on their way.

I wanna take this opportunity to congratulate our Speaker on what I thought and I'm sure many of my colleagues, was a very successful State of the City yesterday, so we're looking forward -- and this Committee is going to be doing a lot of oversight on making sure that a lot of the ideas and policy direction that she had put forth yesterday, that we're able to deliver that on this budget, so I just wanted to thank her for stepping us in the right direction, but also for us, we're going to be fully engaging in this budget process so it is officially kicked off.

Today we will consider a transparency resolution, a Preconsidered Intro related to the tax lien sale and a BID item.

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2 Let's start with the transparency
3 resolution. The transparency resolution sets forth
4 new changes in the designation of certain
5 organizations receiving local, aging and youth
6 discretionary funding, as well as new changes in the
7 designation of certain organizations receiving
8 funding pursuant to certain initiatives in the
9 budget. Organizations appearing in the resolution
10 that have not yet completed the prequalification
11 process conducted by the Mayor's Office of Contract
12 Services, the Council and any other entity are
13 identified in the attached chart with an asterisk
14 (*). As with all transparency resolutions, Council
15 Members will have to sign a disclosure form
16 indicating whether or not a conflict exists with any
17 of the groups on the attached list. If any Council
18 Member has a potential conflict of interest with any
19 of the organizations listed, he or she has the
20 opportunity to disclose the conflict at the time of
21 their vote. As a reminder, please disclose any
22 conflicts you may have with proposed subcontractors
23 that are used by organizations sponsored by
24 discretionary funding; these disclosures must be made
25 before the subcontractor can be approved. Jeremy

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2 Plofker of the General Counsel's Office can assist
3 you with any questions or concerns regarding
4 disclosures.

5 Now let's address the Preconsidered
6 Intro. If you remember, at the end of January the
7 Council adopted Local Law 14 of 2015, which extended
8 the authority of the Commissioner of the Department
9 of Finance to sell tax liens until December 16th. In
10 an effort to ensure that the tax lien sale is fair,
11 efficient and effective, one of the things the law
12 did was create a temporary task force comprised of
13 the Administration and the Council to examine ways to
14 minimize nonpayment of charges that were subject to
15 the lien sale, including increasing awareness and the
16 participation in tax benefit programs. The task
17 force is also charged with evaluating payment
18 arrangements and evaluating the impact of the tax
19 lien sale process on affordable housing, particularly
20 as it relates to HDFC.

21 The task force is required to hold its
22 initial meeting by September 1st, 2015 and issue a
23 report detailing its findings and recommendations by
24 September of 2016. The Preconsidered Intro before us
25 today would make two technical amendments to Local

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2 Law 14. First, it would change the date of
3 appointment of the task force members no later than
4 60 days after enactment of the Local Law 14 to no
5 later than August 1st, 2015. Second, it would
6 clarify that The Speaker can appoint any individual
7 to the task force that is an employee of the Council.
8 While on the subject of the tax lien sale, I'd like
9 to remind my colleagues that the lien sale this year
10 will take place on May 15th, 2015; this means that
11 the last day to pay, enter an agreement or fill out
12 an exemption or eligibility checklist is May 14th,
13 2015. My Chief Counsel, Tanisha Edwards, recently
14 sent all Council Members a 90-day list of property
15 notice for sale in the main sale; I urge all my
16 colleagues, particularly those whom I met in December
17 whose districts have historically been the most
18 affected by the lien sale, to please reach out to
19 your constituents on the list. You should encourage
20 them to either pay the amount they owe or enter into
21 a payment arrangement as soon as possible to prevent
22 the inclusion in the lien sale.

23 Lastly, we'll be voting on a resolution
24 concerning the establishment of the South Shore
25 Business Improvement District. The resolution sets

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2 forth the date and time of the hearing that this
3 committee will hold to consider the legislation
4 establishing the BID. The hearing will take place on
5 February 26, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in this room. This
6 BID will be located on Staten Island in Council
7 Member Ignizio's district and will consist of three
8 small non-contiguous commercial strips located in the
9 towns of Great Kills, Eltingville and Annadale. This
10 is an interesting BID because it will be the City's
11 first BID consisting of three separate commercial
12 strips under the umbrella of one BID. The BID will
13 be comprised of 217 parcels of land containing 275
14 businesses, most of which are independently owned and
15 some of which are regional and national chain stores.
16 The majority of the BID is commercial, but there are
17 also public facilities, transportation and utilities,
18 vacant land and 82 residential units. The BID will
19 have a relatively small budget of \$185,000 in its
20 first year, with the average assessment being
21 approximately \$1002 per year and the maximum
22 projected assessment being \$5090 per year. I
23 understand that Council Member Ignizio is here and
24 would like to say a few words about the BID.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you,
3 Madame Chairwoman and let me say your hair looks
4 lovely, [background comments] being a married man, I
5 know I have to notice these things and you being my
6 friend, I have to point them out; your hair looks a
7 lot better than your previous chairman did for
8 Finance, [background comments] that's for sure.
9 That's a little dig on my friend Dominic. Anyway,
10 we're very excited on the South Shore to be forming
11 this BID and I appreciate all the work that went into
12 it from my staff and from the people in the
13 community; ultimately we're breaking new ground with
14 showing local communities that they can have BIDs if
15 they are creative with their development process and
16 what we did here was, we used the Staten Island Rapid
17 Transit as the connecting link to all these towns and
18 ultimately will lower administrative costs so we're
19 able to get more bang for the buck in these local
20 communities and ultimately provide for a better
21 business environment and for the constituents and
22 patrons to use these commercial districts, so we're
23 very excited about it; I thank you, Madame Chairwoman
24 for carrying this and we look forward to its adoption
25 at the end of the month.

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you very much, Council Member Ignizio and I appreciate your compliment, especially since the former Finance Chairs have all been men, so I'm glad that I look better than the men. [background comment, laughter]

Those are all the items for today and if we have no further comments from the members, I'll ask Billy Martin to.. the Clerk, the Committee Clerk to now call the roll. Yes, we can couple all of them.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on Finance. Chair Ferreras.

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I vote aye and as a friend of Staten Island, I especially wanna support the establishment of the BID, so I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cornegy.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: As the Chairman of Small Business, of course I vote aye.

[laughter]

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Well I was gonna vote no, but [laughter] [background comments] important; I vote aye on all. [background comment] Absolutely.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Ignizio.

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: If I could just briefly explain my vote. I was remiss in not acknowledging my very good friend, former Chief of Staff and current State Assemblyman, Joe Morelle, who's in the crowd -- thank you very much Assemblyman Morelle for joining us [applause] and I know he's very excited, 'cause he represents this BID district as well and wanted to make sure it passed here today, so that's why he's here, so we appreciate you being here, Joe and I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I vote aye.

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 9 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions, all items have been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: And we will keep the roll open for 30 minutes. Again, thank you colleagues; I'm sorry that we started off late today; I really thank you for hanging out. Thanks.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Cumbo.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye on all.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I proudly vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote, Committee on Finance is now 11 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: This meeting is now adjourned.

[gavel]

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 February 17, 2015