

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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May 31, 2012  
Start: 10:38 a.m.  
Recess: 10:50 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
HELEN D. FOSTER  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Erik Martin Dilan  
Lewis A. Fidler  
Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.  
Joel Rivera  
Larry B. Seabrook  
Elizabeth S. Crowley

## APPEARANCES (CONTINUED)

Lt. Edward Boles

Treasurer

Uniformed Fire Officers Association

Larry Scott Blackmon

Deputy Commissioner

New York City Parks Department

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2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Good morning.  
3 I'm Helen Diane Foster, chair of State and Federal  
4 Legislation. Albany has presented us with another  
5 opportunity to consider home rule requests that  
6 effect the city of New York. First, I'd like to  
7 introduce members of my committee who are here.  
8 Thank you very much. Elizabeth Crowley from  
9 Queens, Joel Rivera from the Bronx, Erik Dilan  
10 from Brooklyn and Domenic M. Recchia, Jr. from  
11 Brooklyn. I'm sorry.

12 This morning the Committee will be  
13 voting on two items. The first item being  
14 considered today would require the FDNY to provide  
15 all fire officers with at least 40 hours of field  
16 training and classroom instruction in the building  
17 and construction codes and local ordinance and an  
18 additional 40 hours of field and classroom  
19 instruction in fire code. - - will be on relevant  
20 changes to fire inspection duties that have been  
21 implemented since the promulgation of the new fire  
22 and building codes took effect back in 2008. It  
23 is necessary for the safety of all New Yorkers  
24 that all fire officers are required to keep  
25 current on all changes to fire, building and

1  
2 construction codes in New York City. An  
3 additional item being considered today would  
4 permit St. Michael's Cemetery located in Astoria,  
5 Queens the ability to acquire a small parcel of  
6 land located next to the cemetery. This land is  
7 currently being underutilized and is in disrepair.  
8 In exchange for the land that St. Michael's is  
9 acquiring, they have agreed to transfer a  
10 replacement parcel of land to the city. At this  
11 time, we're going to hear from Eddie Boles from  
12 the Uniformed Fire Association, followed by Larry  
13 Scott Blackmon, Deputy Commissioner for Parks  
14 Department.

15 [background conversation]

16 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: As soon as you  
17 are ready, you can begin. Thank you.

18 LT. EDWARD BOLES: Good morning.  
19 Thank you. My name is Eddie Boles. I have  
20 promotions in 20 minutes at Randall's Island, so  
21 I'll try to make this as brief as possible. I  
22 know you all have a busy schedule. You have my  
23 testimony. I appreciate the work of the Speaker  
24 and the Chair, Chair Foster and the entire  
25 Committee for passing the home rule to provide our

1  
2 officers with training in the fire and building  
3 codes, and to do proper inspection for the safety  
4 of our citizens. We are asking once again for a  
5 home rule, which you provided for us in 2008. We  
6 feel it is necessary for this training. We have  
7 an excellent relationship with the leadership in  
8 the department; however, and they've made several  
9 changes to improve providing us with the knowledge  
10 base for us to do proper inspections and  
11 constantly, you are being faced in the City  
12 Council—I know there was a hearing on illegal  
13 conversions, new construction, and believe it or  
14 not, the 2008 code is being revised right now for  
15 2012. So I implore you to provide us with the  
16 tools, provide us with the knowledge to do the  
17 proper inspections of buildings in New York City.  
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you. If  
20 you'd like, Deputy Commissioner Larry Scott  
21 Blackmon.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BLACKMON:  
23 Thank you. Good morning, Chair Foster and members  
24 of the State Federal Legislation Committee. I  
25 thank you for the opportunity to testify on the

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2 home rule on the Committee's agenda today that  
3 would affect New York City parkland. The  
4 legislative item as it relates to parks is a  
5 resolution requiring the New York State  
6 Legislature to pass bills introduced by Senator  
7 Gianaris, S. 2513 and Assembly Member Simotas, A.  
8 4874, which would authorize the city of New York  
9 to discontinue the use of certain parkland and  
10 convey it to St. Michael's Cemetery in Queens.  
11 The parkland that is being referred to is a 3.77  
12 acre strip of land adjacent to the cemetery. Any  
13 area - - action is subject to the requirement that  
14 the city use any proceeds and/or land received in  
15 exchange for the conveyance authorized by this act  
16 to acquire or improve upon land for park purposes  
17 in an amount equal or greater than the fair market  
18 value of the land being conveyed. At this time,  
19 no replacement parkland or compensation has been  
20 identified in order to adopt alienation  
21 legislation. Given the uncertainty surrounding  
22 the replacement parkland, it would thus be  
23 premature to adopt alienation legislation prior to  
24 reaching an agreement. The Parks Department is  
25 opposed to this piece of legislation at this time.

1  
2 The Parks Department has been exploring options to  
3 potentially facilitate this action and we have  
4 been in communication with DECAS [phonetic]  
5 regarding the appraisal of this property. DECAS  
6 and Parks will be reaching out to St. Michael's  
7 Cemetery to arrange a meeting to discuss DECAS'  
8 most recent findings. We are happy to have these  
9 discussions; however, we must stress that this is  
10 only the beginning of the process. We take the  
11 alienation of parkland very seriously and  
12 alienation occurs after and only after extensive  
13 dialogue and negotiation. Passing this  
14 legislation without identifying replacement  
15 parkland sets a very dangerous precedent. I thank  
16 you for the opportunity to testify before you and  
17 I'm happy to answer any questions you may have,

18 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you very  
19 much. Any questions? I'd like the vote called  
20 please?

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
22 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote. Council Member  
23 Foster?

24 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rivera?

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COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Dilan?

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: [off mic]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Recchia?

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Crowley?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: by a vote of five  
in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
abstentions, items have been adopted. Members,  
please sign the Committee Reports. Thank you.

MALE VOICE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: This meeting  
is... We can leave it open for 15 minutes.

[long pause]

CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

State and Federal Leg is now closed.

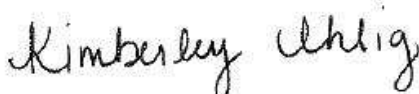
[gavel]



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 6/21/12