

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

-----X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

STATED MEETING

-----X

December 18, 2008
Start: XX:XXam/pm
Recess: XX:XXam/pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: SPEAKER CHRISTINE QUINN
LEROY G. COMRIE, JR.
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Joseph P. Addabo, Jr.
- Maria del Carmen Arroyo
- Tony Avella
- Maria Baez
- Charles Barron
- Gale A. Brewer
- Anthony Como
- Bill de Blasio
- Inez E. Dickens
- Erik Martin Dilan
- Mathieu Eugene
- Simcha Felder
- Lewis A. Fidler
- Helen D. Foster
- Daniel R. Garodnick
- James F. Gennaro
- Vincent J. Gentile
- Alan J. Gerson

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Eric N. Gioia
Sara M. Gonzalez
Vincent Ignizio
Robert Jackson
Letitia James
Melinda R. Katz
G. Oliver Koppell
Jessica S. Lappin
John C. Liu
Melissa Mark-Viverito
Miguel Martinez
Michael E. McMahon
Darlene Mealy
Rosie Mendez
Hiram Monserrate
Michael C. Nelson
James S. Oddo
Annabel Palma
Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Diana Reyna
Joel Rivera
James Sanders, Jr.
Larry B. Seabrook
Helen Sears
Kendall Stewart
James Vacca
Peter F. Vallone, Jr.
Albert Vann
David I. Weprin
Thomas White, Jr.
David Yassky

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

The Cast of "In the Heights"
Various roles

Gilford Monroe
Pastor
Mount Zion Church of God

1

[background noise]

2

3

SPEAKER QUINN: Alright, we're

4

going to start our ceremonials, and the first one

5

is going to be one that Chairperson Dilan is

6

spearheading, and it's very exciting. I'm going

7

to turn the mic over in a second and he has

8

chastised me already not to call him Secretary,

9

'cause of course it is pending confirmation by the

10

legislative body, and so we as a legislature would

11

never get ahead of ourselves, but we all in New

12

York have tremendous excitement and pride over the

13

fact that our President-Elect has chosen our own

14

Shaun Donovan to be the Secretary of HUD, which we

15

are incredibly excited about. [applause] And I

16

think each of us can pick out examples of projects

17

in our own district that we know wouldn't have

18

happened if it hadn't been for Shaun and his

19

staff, and we're excited to think about other

20

parts of our state and other parts of our country

21

getting to have projects like that. So we want to

22

say one thing, though, that as much as we want the

23

other states to have them, we want more. So, when

24

we call, we get called back first. [cheers]

25

Those people from Arkansas and North Dakota,

1
2 wherever, fall to the bottom of the list, we'll
3 always be your hometown, so we expect the
4 treatment. But in all seriousness, Shaun, thank
5 you for being a great public servant, than you for
6 all the work you've done. The first time I met
7 you - - at HPD Commissioner, we were at an event
8 at the West Village Houses in my district, a
9 Mitchell-Lama which we were able to save with
10 HPD's help. And I was holding a sign that says
11 "Thank you, HPD." So I will--and with the way I
12 first met you, thank you HPD and thank you, Shaun.
13 [applause] And let me turn the mic over to our
14 Housing Chair, Eric Dilan.

15 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you,
16 Madam Speaker. I just want to say to the current
17 Commissioner and the current Secretary-designee,
18 that it's been a pleasure to work with you on
19 housing issues that affect the City of New York.
20 It was a pleasure to work with you on issues such
21 as 421-A. And I know that you were ahead of the
22 nation in terms of the, dealing with New York
23 City's foreclosure crisis; however, as the City
24 Commissioner, you didn't have all the authority
25 you needed to actually make the corrective

1
2 actions. I'm happy to see that you will be one
3 that will lead this country out of this
4 foreclosure crisis, because this country needs a
5 man like you at this juncture. And, hey, you
6 know, I think Speaker's absolutely right, as
7 elected officials our constituents remind us every
8 day, "Remember where you come from." [laughter]
9 I have to, I have to repeat that message.
10 Brooklyn is your, is your current residence within
11 the City of New York, within the State of New York
12 [background noise, applause]

13 SHAUN DONOVAN: And I'm not moving.
14 I'm staying here.

15 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: And--

16 SPEAKER QUINN: Is that right?

17 FEMALE VOICE: The one thing that
18 many Brooklynites still care about, the one thing
19 many Brooklynites still care about that's not in
20 your portfolio, that will be in your portfolio in
21 the future, is the status of the New York City
22 Housing Authority. Please don't forget us when
23 you're there. [applause] We couldn't have a
24 better person making the decisions on the
25 condition of New York City public housing. And

1
2 we, you know, we can't wait till you get
3 confirmed. So, with that, Madam speaker, I am
4 done, I'd like to give the mic [off mic comment]
5 back to you. And I've been ordered by the Speaker
6 to ask the Clerk to read the proclamation.

7 CLERK: Council, City of New York
8 Proclamation. Whereas, the Council of the City of
9 New York is proud to honor Shaun Donovan for his
10 outstanding service to the New York City Housing
11 Preservation and Development; and whereas in March
12 2004, Donovan was appointed by Mayor Bloomberg to
13 be Commissioner of the New York City Department of
14 Housing Preservation and Development, HPD's \$7.5
15 billion new housing marketplace plan to build and
16 preserve 165,000 unites of affordable housing for
17 500,000 New Yorkers, is the largest housing plan
18 in our nation. Mr. Donovan spearheaded the
19 creation of the 200 million New York Acquisition
20 Fund, a partnership between the City foundations
21 and financial institutions intended to help small
22 developers and not-for-profit groups compete for
23 land in the private market. And whereas, most
24 recently, Mr. Donovan was appointed by President-
25 Elect Barack Obama to serve as the new Secretary

1
2 of the Department of Housing and Urban
3 Development, where he will play a key role in
4 curbing our nation's mortgage crisis, and helping
5 families stay in their homes. Now therefore be it
6 known that the Council of the City of New York
7 most gratefully honors Shaun Donovan for his
8 distinguished service to the City of New York and
9 to the nation. Christine C. Quinn, Speaker for
10 the entire Council; Eric Martin Dilan,
11 Councilmember, 37th District, Brooklyn.

12 SPEAKER QUINN: Yay! [applause]

13 And let me give the mic to our soon to be
14 Secretary of HUD.

15 SHAUN DONOVAN: Thank you very
16 much. This is the most beautiful proclamation
17 I've ever seen. It's also going to be the most
18 expensive proclamation I've ever seen. [laughter]

19 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes, that's right.

20 SHAUN DONOVAN: So, I would say,
21 first of all, to the Speaker who began her career
22 as a housing advocate, now surrounded by people
23 who are all housing advocates. I want to say a
24 special word to you as public servants. The work
25 that we all do every day, in everything that you

1
2 do, but particularly in housing and community
3 development, is not always easy work. It's work
4 where you have to work day-after-day and look
5 forward to the future with a faith, with a trust,
6 in me and the agency, because it's doesn't happen
7 overnight. You don't build buildings, you don't
8 build communities in a day. And yet, you all have
9 worked with me over close to five years now. I
10 have never felt a day, even when we were in the
11 midst of the most difficult negotiations, never,
12 never yelling, always civil discourse. Even at
13 those moments, I always felt your sense of passion
14 and dedication to the mission that we shared, even
15 if we didn't agree on the means, you always kept
16 your eyes on the prize and you always, we always
17 agreed on the ends. And I think because of that,
18 we were able to get enormous, incredible things
19 done. And I hope many of those things we don't
20 even see the results of today. But we will in the
21 years to come. And so, I guess the thing I most
22 want to say, and this is something I often say to
23 myself, when I get frustrated, when I'm feeling
24 like things aren't moving fast enough, and the
25 works isn't bearing fruit quickly enough, and I

1
2 say it with great humility, going to Washington in
3 the midst of an enormous housing crisis, one that
4 the city, that this country has not seen,
5 certainly, in many generations. I often think of
6 the words that Martin Luther King used to speak
7 regularly, and I recently learned that these
8 actually aren't his words, but he used to use them
9 all the time. He would say, "The moral arc of the
10 universe is long, but it bends toward justice."
11 And the work that we have done together has bent
12 this City and its future toward justice, so thank
13 you all very much for your partnership.

14 [applause]

15 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very
16 much. Thank you. [background noise, laughter]
17 Alright, if we could move this show on, Donovan
18 photo experience to the left in the committee
19 room. Alright, Inez, if we could take the
20 pictures with Shaun into the committee room,
21 'cause I need to [background noise] keep this show
22 moving. [background noise, cheers] R.J., here
23 you go.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Ladies and
25 gents, let me just introduce the cast of "In the

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Heights," and if you don't know about that [applause, cheers] then go on Broadway and you'll see a fantastic group of performers and singers and dancers and actors and actresses, that are performing "In the Heights." And if you know, you going to say, "What, Brooklyn Heights?" No, no, no, we're talking about "Washington Heights" in Manhattan. And all of the cast members were here earlier and because of our tight schedule we were not able to have all of them here at this particular moment. But we have all of them, and I ask them to introduce yourselves and role you play.

JILL FURMAN: Hi, actually Jill Furman, I wish I was in the show, but I'm actually the producer.

RICK NEGRON: Hi, I'm Rick Negron, and I'm just joining the cast. Tomorrow's my first show as the father in "In the Heights."
[cheers]

TONY CHEROLDES: Hi, I'm Tony Cheroldes [phonetic]. I'm on, I am one of the ensembles members, cast members of "In the Heights."

1
2 BLANCA CAMACHO: Blanca Camacho,
3 and I am one of the understudies. [applause]

4 NINA LAFARGA: Hi, I'm Nina
5 LaFarga, and I am in the ensemble. [applause]

6 RICKY TRIP: Hello, I'm Ricky Trip,
7 and I'm also in the ensemble. [applause]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And
9 because you have--hold on to this--because "In the
10 Heights" has brought attention not only to
11 Washington Heights, all of the positive things
12 that we bring to New York City, and the diversity
13 of cultures, you also bring attention to New York
14 City. And around the world, everyone is talking
15 about "In the Heights." And how many Tony Awards?

16 JILL FURMAN: Four.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Four Tony
18 Awards. [cheers, background noise] And including
19 best musical. And Lyn Manuel Miranda comes from
20 my district in Northern Manhattan where Miguel and
21 represent. And we're so proud of the Miranda
22 Family, we know his mother, his father, his
23 children, his grandchildren, and we're just so
24 blessed to have them in Northern Manhattan. And
25 so, with that, I'd like to have the Speaker say a

1

2

few words.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

SPEAKER QUINN: Absolutely. Well, I feel a particular sense of pride in "In the Heights" because it's a production obviously that Robert and Miguel have great pride in. But I am lucky enough to represent Broadway. So, I thank you for being every night, and twice on Sundays, and Wednesday, in my district, bringing people into the district and bringing people to the theater who get to experience music and dance, learn about Washington Heights, and bring revenues to the City of New York. [applause] So thank you all for that very, very much. 'Cause you know, people need to have fun in tough times, and you all are bringing lots of smiles to people's faces. So thank you very much. And if we could ask the clerk to read the proclamation.

CLERK: Council, City of New York Proclamation. Whereas, the Council of the City of New York is proud to honor the cast and creative team behind the jubilant musical "In the Heights," for their honest depiction of Washington Heights and their groundbreaking contributions to the American theater. And whereas, "In the Heights"

1
2 is an engrossing tale of hope and self-discovery,
3 told with colorful, true-to-life language and
4 music that evokes the salsa, marenga, and hip-hop
5 rhythms of Washington Heights. The show's
6 composer, lyricist and star, Lyn Manuel Miranda,
7 paints a vivid portrait of a strong, Latino
8 community struggling to redefine home. And
9 whereas, this year "In the Heights" played its
10 first Broadway performance at the Richard Rogers
11 Theater, on February 14th, and officially opened on
12 March 9th. This year it garnered 13 Tony
13 nominations and won four Tony Awards, including
14 best choreography, best orchestrations, best
15 original score and best musical. Most recently,
16 "In the Heights" received a Grammy nomination for
17 the best musical show album. And whereas, with
18 books, with music and lyrics by Mr. Miranda, a
19 book by Quiara Alegria Hudes, and an amazing cast
20 and creative team, "In the Heights" pays tribute
21 not only to residents of Washington Heights, but
22 to all New Yorkers. Now therefore be it known
23 that the Council of the City of New York is proud
24 to honor the creators, cast and crew of "In the
25 Heights" for their extraordinary artistic

1
2 contributions to New York City and the American
3 theater. Christine C. Quinn, Speaker for the
4 entire Council; Robert Jackson, Council Member, 7th
5 District, Manhattan; Miguel Martinez, Council
6 Member 10th District, Manhattan. [applause]

7 SPEAKER QUINN: And let me give the
8 microphone to Washington Heights's own Miguel
9 Martinez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Thank
11 you, Speaker. I also want to thank the cast and
12 Lyn Manuel Miranda. You know, the work that
13 you've done in terms of illustrating a community
14 of immigrant, a community that integrated into
15 what it is, being a New Yorker, and illustrating
16 the hard work of that community, we at, in
17 Washington Heights, are grateful. We usually only
18 see in the stories when it is, are negative
19 stories, and in this case you've taken Washington
20 Heights to Broadway, to illustrate the positive
21 story of families, of individuals with dreams, of
22 individuals that believe and always, always
23 remember their homeland. So, thank you, and
24 everyone in Washington Heights is so very much
25 proud of the work you're doing in illustrating who

1

2 we are up in upper, upper west side, Gale. In
3 Washington Heights. [laughter, applause]

4

5 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. And
6 who's going to speak from the cast? Alright!

6

7 JILL FURMAN: I'm sorry that a lot
8 of people had to leave, but I--

8

9 SPEAKER QUINN: The show must go
10 in.

10

11 JILL FURMAN: The sh--exactly, the
12 show must go on. [laughter] And on behalf of my
13 producing partners and Lyn Manuel Miranda, the
14 creator of the show, Quiara Hudes, who wrote the
15 book, and the rest of this amazing cast and team.
16 I want to thank the City Council so much for this
17 prestigious honor. It's so gratifying for us to
18 bring new audiences into the theater, and to see
19 this world that Lyn and Quiara have created. And
20 What's so appealing about "In the Heights" to us
21 is that even though it's a true New York story,
22 it's also a universal one. And even though it
23 represents the hopes and dreams of a Latino
24 community in upper Manhattan, it really represents
25 the hopes and dreams of every community. So,
we're delighted that it touches so many people

1
2 from so many backgrounds and cultures, and we're
3 so honored to be here. So thank you so much.

4 [applause]

5 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you all.

6 [pause, background noise] Congratulations.

7 MALE VOICE: Thank you so much.

8 SPEAKER QUINN: Bye-bye, thank you
9 very much - - . Alright, our next and final
10 ceremonial is being led by Tish James. Brooklyn
11 Step, right? Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Brooklyn
13 Steppers! Come on, whooo! [applause, cheers,
14 background noise] Brooklyn Steppers. [cheers,
15 background noise] Mayor's office said yes, but
16 okay. You guys, you can't - - . [background
17 noise] Shh. The Brooklyn Steppers, formerly the
18 Jackie Robinson Band that was formed out of Medgar
19 Evers College, Medgar Evers College, which was
20 former, but there was, that's where they were
21 situated. They are a 120 piece Southern
22 Collegiate style band, which consists of
23 woodwinds, brass, percussion, dance and flag; it's
24 comprised of students grades five to twelve, and
25 has become one of the country's most prestigious

1
2 marching bands. The style, the gait, the musical
3 presentation of the band is electrifying and
4 pulsating. And this wonderful band, President-
5 Elect Barack Obama, and Vice President-Elect Joe
6 Biden, have formally extended an offer to the
7 Brooklyn Steppers to march in the 56th Inaugural
8 Parade. Whooo! [cheers, applause] Members of
9 the Steppers from Brooklyn will join
10 representatives from across the country, and our
11 Armed Forces, in the historic parade down
12 Pennsylvania Avenue [cheers] following President-
13 Elect Barack Obama. They beat how many bands?
14 1400 bands across the nation! [cheers, applause]
15 It was the Brooklyn Steppers who won. And so, I'm
16 joined with a number of my colleagues, but also
17 with Council Member Al Vann, who I'll turn the mic
18 over to, because he had something to do with the
19 creation of the Brooklyn Steppers as he constantly
20 reminds me. [cheers, applause] So ladies and
21 gentlemen, because he's my former boss, Council
22 Member Al Vann. [laughs]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Thank you,
24 Tish. Well, I'm completely, I'm really speechless
25 because we know the genesis of this group. They

1
2 came out of Zeke Clemens who's formerly the
3 President of Jackie Robinson Physical Culture. I
4 knew them when they were a small group, an
5 unknown, before they became nationally acclaimed,
6 before they became internationally known, and all
7 of the hard work that has gone into it. I notice
8 the success that all of their participants enjoy,
9 they all go to colleges, they all do well, they're
10 recruited by college bands from all over the
11 country with a special emphasis on the traditional
12 southern black colleges. So what they have
13 accomplished is beyond belief. And that they have
14 now been invited to be one of the few speaks
15 greatly to the achievement that you have made
16 throughout the years. Tyrone would be very proud
17 of you and all the members of this group.
18 [applause, cheers] Thank you, thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So if you
20 want to know more about the drum line, I urge all
21 of you to go out tonight and rent "Drum Line," the
22 movie, it's a video, and it's based on the
23 Brooklyn Steppers. We're joined here today by
24 Tyrone Brown, the band director, Avisia Beard
25 [phonetic], William Shepherd, Benjamin Davis,

1
2 Renita Lionce [phonetic], Kendra Brown, Desmond
3 Hill, and just some of the 150 individuals who
4 will be traveling to D.C. representing the great
5 borough of Brooklyn [applause, cheers], the City
6 of New York and the State of New York. Ladies and
7 gentlemen, the band director, Tyrone Brown.

8 [cheers, applause]

9 TYRONE BROWN: What an extreme
10 honor to be able to be here today, recognizing our
11 accomplishments. The Brooklyn Steppers Marching
12 Band very--ambassadors for this City. We travel
13 this country very, very proud of where we're from,
14 and very proud of the support that we receive here
15 in the City. This is the only show stop marching
16 band in the City for many, many years, and New
17 York City calls upon us a lot to do large events.
18 When the Giants won the parade, they didn't want
19 us to march the parade, they wanted us here at
20 City Hall. And we always step up, we're always
21 prepared, we're always ready to go. Our young
22 people are very professional and very excited
23 about what they represent, represent positive
24 young people throughout the City. This selection
25 to perform for the Inauguration Parade is

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

definitely an honor to us. But we definitely share it with the rest of the City and the rest of the State. And it's a honor to be here today, I'm excited for my elected officials for constantly, continuously supporting our organization, and I want to, just want to remind everybody we are here, we represent the entire borough, our kids are spread out throughout, throughout the entire borough. We are based in one district, but our students come from the entire borough, and we are very excited about what we represent for you guys and for ourselves. Thank you, again. [applause, cheers]

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes! And to all of you, again as we talk about the budget next year, this band does not have a permanent home. Unfortunately, they were displaced from downtown Brooklyn, and we really need to get them a permanent home. Madam Speaker, some words?

SPEAKER QUINN: I just want to congratulate everyone, this is a tremendous honor. Myself and Council Member Foster were up in Albany on Monday, we were members of Electoral College, so I know what an honor it feels like to be

1
2 singled out to be part of history. And I just
3 want you all to know we will some of us from down
4 there be watching you; some of us from on TV
5 watching you; and I know that when we see you, you
6 will make us proud as you do every day, with your
7 tremendous accomplishments. So thank you all
8 [applause] and if the Clerk could read the
9 proclamation. Oh, the cit--there's nothing? No.
10 Oh, we're going to give out citations instead,
11 okay fabulous. [off mic comment]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Whereas a
13 great city is only as great as those persons who
14 give exemplary service to their communities,
15 whether through participation in voluntary
16 programs, through unique personal achievements in
17 their professional or other endeavors, or simply
18 through a lifetime of good citizenry. And whereas
19 such service, which is truly the lifeblood of the
20 community, and the City so often goes unrecognized
21 and unrewarded, now therefore it be, it resolved
22 that as a duly, that as duly elected members of
23 the New York City Council, we recognize that in
24 the Brooklyn Steppers Marching Band, and in Tyrone
25 Brown, the band director since 1994, we have an

1
2 outstanding citizen and citizens who are worthy of
3 the esteem of both the community and the great
4 City of New York. And it's signed by members of
5 the City Council. Congratulations. [applause]
6 Thank you all. Any other words, comments, Council
7 Member Barron? Okay, anybody else? Thank you
8 Brooklyn Steppers! That concludes ceremonials.
9 [applause]

10 [background noise]

11 MALE VOICE: Can I have your
12 attention, please? At this time can you please
13 place all cell phones and pagers on vibrate, and
14 will all non-Council employees and lobbyists,
15 please leave the main floor of the chambers. And
16 will the Sergeant-of-Arms please check the press
17 personnel to make sure that they have shoes on.
18 Thank you. [laughter]

19 [background noise]

20 SPEAKER QUINN: As we're getting
21 ready to start, as we're getting ready to start,
22 where's Robert Jackson? I think we all, as we're
23 getting settled in, need to sing Happy Birthday to
24 Robert Jackson. Today is Robert Jackson's
25 birthday, so happy birthday Robert Jackson.

1

2 [applause] Okay, alright, let's--thank you so
3 much. Sure. Can we--[background noise] No, they
4 want roll call to start, but we can't.

5 [background noise] [off mic comment] So we're
6 doing all this before we do the legislation? No,
7 I--Chuck?

8 [background noise]

9 [gavel]

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: All rise.

11 MALE VOICE: Quiet, please! Quiet
12 on the floor.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: I, all rise,
14 please. I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the
15 United States of America, and to the republic for
16 which is stands, one nation, under God,
17 indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
18 Roll call.

19 CLERK: Addabo.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Here.

21 CLERK: Arroyo. [pause] Avella.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: [off mic]
23 Here.

24 CLERK: Baez. [pause] Barron.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Here.

1

2

CLERK: Brewer.

3

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [off mic]

4

Here.

5

CLERK: Como.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Here.

7

CLERK: Comrie. [pause] De

8

Blasio. [pause] Dickens.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic]

10

Here.

11

CLERK: Dilan.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: Here.

13

CLERK: Eugene.

14

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.

15

CLERK: Felder. [pause] Fidler.

16

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Here.

17

CLERK: Foster. [pause]

18

Garodnick.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: [off

20

mic] Here.

21

CLERK: Gennaro. [pause] Gentile.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: [off mic]

23

Here.

24

CLERK: Gerson.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Here.

1

2

CLERK: Gioia. [pause] Gonzalez.

3

[pause] Ignizio.

4

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Here.

5

CLERK: Jackson.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Here.

7

CLERK: James.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: [off mic]

9

Here.

10

CLERK: Katz.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Here.

12

CLERK: Koppell. [pause] Lappin.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: [off mic]

14

Here.

15

CLERK: Liu.

16

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Here.

17

CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: [off

19

mic] Here.

20

CLERK: Martinez.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Here.

22

CLERK: McMahon.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: [off mic]

24

Here.

25

CLERK: Mealy.

1

2

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [off mic]

3

Here.

4

CLERK: Mendez.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Here.

6

CLERK: Monserrate. [pause]

7

Nelson.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: [off mic]

9

Here.

10

CLERK: Palma.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic]

12

Here.

13

CLERK: Recchia. [pause] [off mic

14

comments]

15

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Aye.

16

Here.

17

CLERK: Reyna.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Here.

19

CLERK: Sanders. [pause]

20

Seabrook. [pause] Sears.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Here.

22

CLERK: Stewart.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Present.

24

CLERK: Vacca.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: [off mic]

1

2 Here.

3 CLERK: Vallone.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Here.

5 CLERK: Vann. [pause] Weprin.

6 [pause] White.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: Here.

8 CLERK: Yassky. [pause] Arroyo.

9 [pause] Baez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: [off mic]

11 Here.

12 CLERK: Oddo.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: [off mic]

14 Here.

15 CLERK: Rivera. [pause] Gennaro.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: [off mic]

17 Here.

18 CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

19 SPEAKER QUINN: Here.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: We have a quorum.

21 All rise, please, for the invocation to be given

22 by, sorry, Pasto Gifford, Gilford Monroe.

23 GILFORD MONROSE: Let's pray.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

25 GILFORD MONROSE: Oh mighty God, we

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

come to you today, thanking you for all your mercies upon us. We pray for each member of the Council, Republicans and Democrats both present and absent. We pray for their safety and health. Give them divine wisdom to pass laws that are morally sound and financially responsible. We pray that you be with the Speaker of this body, the Mayor, the Governor of this great State and City. Be with New York City as we are faced with tough times ahead. May today's session be productive and pleasing in your sight, for Christ's sake we pray. Amen.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Motion to spread the invocation by Council Member Eugene.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very much, thank you. Madam Speaker, it is a personal honor that I rise to gladly spread the invocation delivered by one of my pastors, Reverend Monroe. Reverend Monroe is one of the outstanding leaders in the East Flatbush community. He's also part of the hate crimes taskforce, and he's also one of the funders of We're All Brooklyn. He continually exemplify the meaning of a true religious and community leader.

1

2 Thank you very much for recognizing him. Thank
3 you.

4 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank--Thank you
5 very much, Dr. Eugene. If I could ask my
6 colleagues to stand again, please. [off mic: All
7 rise] Couple of passings that I want to note, and
8 then we're going to have an exception to our
9 typical rule and hear from an extended member of
10 the City Council's family. At our last stated
11 meeting, we prayed for Jose Sucuzhanay who was
12 beaten, along with his brother, in an anti-gay and
13 anti-Latino attack in Bushwick. And on behalf of
14 myself and Council Member Reyna, I want to inform
15 all of us that he passed away over the weekend. I
16 know many of my colleagues joined myself and
17 Council Member Reyna at the rally on Sunday, in
18 support of him and his family, and in our efforts
19 to apprehend the four hateful individuals who
20 committed this crime, and to bring justice. And I
21 want to thank everyone who was part of that rally
22 and have been part of our ongoing efforts in
23 response to this crime. Reverend Monroe has been
24 part of our ongoing efforts citywide for quite
25 some time about hate crime. But I did want to

1
2 notify everyone of his passing. We also want to
3 extend our condolences to Council Member De Blasio
4 and his wife and family, Catherine Recrae
5 [phonetic], Council Member De Blasio's mother-in-
6 law passed away, and the services were yesterday.
7 So, I want to particularly thank you, Bill, for
8 being with us today after that. I know she'd been
9 sick for quite some time. And I, we, I think all
10 of us know that we recently lost Sheila Nelson,
11 Council Member Nelson's wife. And we're going to
12 hear from Bonnie Jill Nelson in a minute, so I
13 don't want to say too much, except I think anybody
14 who met Sheila, she was not so tall, but you
15 didn't really notice, 'cause she was a big gal;
16 full of power and energy and chutzpah. And you
17 know, I, am in a way glad I was never her doctor,
18 'cause I can't imagine any doctor who got, gave
19 her bad news, got, you know, the verbal equivalent
20 of a shot across the jaw from Sheila, 'cause she
21 wasn't taking bad news, she wasn't accepting bad
22 news, and she was going to, would do what she did,
23 which was fight and fight and fight and live much
24 longer than any of the medical experts gave her.
25 And I know that when I used to see her when I was

1

2 running for Speaker, she was always so excited to
3 see a woman running for Speaker. When I saw her
4 when I got elected Speaker, and since I've been
5 Speaker, she was always so excited to see a woman
6 in the job. And then the last time I saw her at
7 the Club dinner, she, she didn't look well, but
8 she gave me the biggest hug and told me, you know,
9 not to let the turkeys get me down, to keep going,
10 to keep fighting, and had so much energy and
11 power, even in her frail body. So, I feel very
12 lucky to have known her, very lucky to have been
13 supported by her, and I know the City of New York
14 through her service as a community board member,
15 as a partner to Council Member Nelson, as a
16 mother, and in so many other ways, as an educator,
17 as an administrator, as someone who was part of
18 our public school system, part of our CUNY system,
19 somebody who made a big difference in the life of
20 our City. So, I just want to thank you, Bonnie
21 Jill and Mike for sharing her with us, and offer
22 you the opportunity, Bonnie Jill, to come up and
23 say a few words about your mom.

24

25

BONNIE JILL NELSON: I really don't
use mic, since my voice carries, but as most of

1
2 you know now, I'm Sheila Nelson's daughter, and
3 I'm sure you all know that my mom went to heaven
4 on December 10th, where she probably started her
5 own City Council in heaven.

6 SPEAKER QUINN: [laughs]

7 BONNIE JILL NELSON: I wanted to
8 all let you know that my mom did not pass from
9 cancer; rather she was beating it with a fresh new
10 oncology team. She actually passed from an
11 infection, unfortunately acquired from a small
12 wound. Everyone she loved was there with her,
13 even her puppy, kissing and hugging her. My mom
14 did not suffer at all, and I know you're all happy
15 to hear that. She even spent my birthday with me,
16 on December 5th, with birthday cake and feeding the
17 seagulls right along the beach. I want to thank
18 you all for the literally hundreds of phone calls
19 and cards. The outpouring of love and concern is
20 something I've never seen before, but we all know
21 there was no one like my mom. Regarding the
22 chapel service, I did not want a carnival
23 atmosphere, she's too special for that. So I
24 personally handpicked those that loved her
25 unconditionally, and always stood by her. If you

1
2 weren't at her service, I'm sorry, that's my
3 fault. I wanted to make it extra intimate. But I
4 do want you to all know that she looked absolutely
5 gorgeous, exactly as she looked at my wedding, in
6 her red beaded ball gown and red satin high heels.
7 This experience has made my dad, Councilman
8 Michael Nelson and I, stronger and tougher than
9 ever. My mom's strength and resolve flowed into
10 us as we hugged and kissed her in last moments. I
11 did shorten this up for you guys. [laughter] My
12 mom took being a community activist very
13 seriously, and I would say to her, "Mom, it's just
14 a volunteer thing, you're spending so much time,
15 energy and research when we could be out
16 shopping." But my mom had such passion in
17 everything she did. She believed in helping
18 others without desire for reward, and told me that
19 the true character of a person is when they help
20 somebody who can do nothing for them. That's my
21 mom and my dad. When you would call my mom with
22 any problem, you'd be amazed how she was able to
23 resolve any problem you had, and she never, ever
24 did anything to get something back. How rare a
25 person. She simply felt that all people were

1
2 inherently good. My mother firmly felt that
3 loyalty and friendship came before politics.
4 Everyone here and beyond should learn that from my
5 amazing mother: brilliant, compassionate,
6 confident, warm, beautiful, loving, Sheila Nelson
7 could move mountains and she did. My mother was a
8 community activist, child advocate, and advocate
9 for people with disabilities, way before my dad
10 even entered politics. They adored each other and
11 worked so hard and well together. My mom is my
12 hero and a hero to many others, and I am so proud
13 of her, always the light of my life, the most
14 precious person ever. On the day of her services
15 it rained, and I was a little upset. So I asked
16 my dad, "Why must it rain on mommy's day?" And
17 like the beautiful, wise and loving person Michael
18 Nelson is, he held my hand and replied, "It's
19 raining, it's okay, it's raining because the world
20 is crying." And that comforted me immensely. My
21 mother received many awards for her achievements.
22 She was a leader extraordinaire, tremendously
23 succeeded academically, but the greatest award to
24 me was having her as my mother, my mentor,
25 confidant, and teacher. She truly helped people

1
2 unselfishly, and filled my entire life with
3 beauty, laughter, strong values and unconditional
4 love. I wish all of you great health, inner
5 peace, happiness, and hopefully you have all
6 gained some wisdom and humanity by simply having
7 known my mother. And I want to thank Speaker
8 Christine Quinn, who my mother admired and adored.
9 And I also want to thank the entire Council and
10 staff for always calling and always worrying and
11 asking about my mom. I want to thank all the
12 people here who called, cried and sent cards. My
13 mother will live on forever, and will continue to
14 help people and the community through my father
15 and I. Thank you all for allowing me these few
16 minutes to pay tribute and honor to my incredible
17 mom. I miss her dearly, and I wish you all a
18 happy and healthy holiday season. Thank you, God
19 bless. [applause]

20 [pause]

21 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you.

22 [background noise]

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Speaker?

24 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Madam Speaker,

1

2 are you going to continue?

3 SPEAKER QUINN: Pardon me?

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Are you

5 continuing? Or are you--?

6 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes, yes.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Okay.

8 SPEAKER QUINN: I believe we have
9 the adoption of the minutes now?10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Yeah. Adoption
11 of the minutes?

12 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Council Member
14 Gentile?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you.

16 I move that the minutes of the Stated Meeting of
17 November 13, 2008, be adopted as printed.18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Messages and
19 papers from the Mayor.

20 CLERK: M1252 and 125--

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

22 CLERK: --53.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: Rules, Privileges
24 and Elections.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Communication

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

from city, county and borough offices.

CLERK: Preconsidered M1254 through
M1256.

SPEAKER QUINN: Rules, Privileges
and Elections.

CLERK: M1257.

SPEAKER QUINN: Received, ordered,
printed and filed.

CLERK: Preconsidered M1258 through
Preconsidered M1260.

SPEAKER QUINN: Finance.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Petitions and
communications.

CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Land Use call
ups.

CLERK: M1261.

SPEAKER QUINN: If we could have a
roll call, please, on that Land Use call up item.

CLERK: Addabo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Aye.

CLERK: Arroyo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic]
Aye.

1

CLERK: Avella.

2

3

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: [off mic]

4

Aye.

5

CLERK: Baez.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: [off mic]

7

Aye.

8

CLERK: Barron.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [off mic]

10

Aye. [on mic] Aye.

11

CLERK: Brewer.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [off mic]

13

Aye.

14

CLERK: Como.

15

COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Aye.

16

CLERK: Comrie. [pause] De

17

Blasio.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Aye.

19

CLERK: Dickens. [pause] Dilan.

20

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: Aye.

21

CLERK: Eugene.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Aye.

23

CLERK: Felder. [pause] Fidler.

24

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Aye.

25

CLERK: Foster.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: Aye.
3 CLERK: Garodnick.
4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.
5 CLERK: Gennaro.
6 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes.
7 CLERK: Gentile.
8 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Aye.
9 CLERK: Gerson.
10 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: [off mic]
11 Aye.
12 CLERK: Gioia.
13 COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Yes.
14 CLERK: Gonzalez.
15 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: [off mic]
16 Aye.
17 CLERK: Ignizio.
18 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.
19 CLERK: Jackson.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye.
21 CLERK: James.
22 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Aye.
23 CLERK: Katz.
24 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Aye.
25 CLERK: Koppell.

1

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Aye.

2

3

CLERK: Lappin.

4

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

5

CLERK: Liu.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

7

CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: [off

9

mic] Aye.

10

CLERK: Martinez.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Aye.

12

CLERK: McMahon.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Aye.

14

CLERK: Mealy.

15

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Here.

16

CLERK: Mendez.

17

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

18

CLERK: Monserrate.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Aye.

20

CLERK: Nelson.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Madam

22

Public Advocate, I request to vote aye on all Land

23

Use call ups and all coupled general orders,

24

unanimous consent, please.

25

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

1

CLERK: Palma.

2

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

3

CLERK: Recchia.

4

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: [off mic]

5

6 Aye.

CLERK: Reyna.

7

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Thank you,

8

9 so much.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I vote aye.

10

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

11

CLERK: Nelson.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Aye on all

13

14 coupled general orders, except proposed intro 887,

14

15 I vote no.

CLERK: Sanders.

16

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Aye,

17

18 permission to vote on all general items.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I vote

20

21 yes.

CLERK: Seabrook.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Yes, I'd

23

24 like to be marked present and vote on all general

24

25 orders and I vote aye.

1

2

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

3

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Present.

4

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: What have

6

I missed?

7

CLERK: Sears.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Yeah, aye.

9

CLERK: Stewart.

10

COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Aye.

11

CLERK: Vacca.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Aye.

13

CLERK: Vallone.

14

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Aye.

15

CLERK: Vann.

16

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

17

CLERK: Nelson.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: [laughs]

19

Late breaking news, and please, I request to vote

20

no on Resolution 1740. Oh! 1741, I, thank you.

21

Thank--

22

CLERK: Weprin.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.

24

CLERK: White.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: I vote aye

1
2 on all Land Use items and request unanimous
3 consent to vote on all coupled general orders. I
4 vote aye on all.

5 CLERK: Recchia.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Yeah, I'd
7 like to vote on all Land Use call ups and all
8 general order calendar, I vote aye.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Thank you.

11 CLERK: Yassky.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Aye.

13 CLERK: Oddo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes.

15 CLERK: Rivera. [pause] Speaker
16 Quinn.

17 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes. [pause]

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Today Land Use
19 call ups were adopted by a vote of 50 in the
20 affirmative, zero negative. Communication from
21 the Speaker?

22 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. We have
23 a number of pieces of legislation, and obviously
24 some budget matters we're voting on today. First,
25 let me start with Intro 837, which is a piece of

1
2 legislation introduced by Council Member Robert
3 Jackson, shepherded through the Civil Service and
4 Labor Committee by our soon to be departing Chair
5 Joe Addabo, and I want to thank both Robert and
6 Joe for their work on this. This is a piece of
7 legislation that will lift the residency
8 requirement for District Council 37 employees,
9 after an employee has lived, resided in the City
10 of New York during their service to the City for
11 two years. We think this is a very fair
12 compromise that keeps in the spirit of the
13 contract that District Council 37 negotiated with
14 Mayor Bloomberg. I want to thank Lauren Axelrod
15 and Tracy Udell [phonetic] and Shaniqua Ouso
16 [phonetic] who worked on this piece of
17 legislation. I also want to thank Lillian Roberts
18 and everyone from DC 37 who helped consult on this
19 compromise, and I want to call on the bill's
20 sponsor, Council Member Robert Jackson.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you,
22 Madam Speaker. It is indeed an honor and pleasure
23 for me, on behalf of you and the members of the
24 City Council, when I introduce Intro 837. Knowing
25 that the covered members of DC 37 have been

1
2 wanting for many, many years, the opportunity if
3 they so desire, to move outside of New York City.
4 And I don't need to go from historical
5 perspective, but they have been seeking this
6 specifically as per their contract agreement with
7 Mayor Bloomberg for approximately two-and-a-half
8 years. I am so pleased and honored today, on
9 December 18th, that this bill, Intro 837, is going
10 to passed by this City Council the day of my
11 birthday. [applause] And I'd like to say that
12 Lillian Roberts, the Executive Director of DC 37,
13 and her members are in the house! [cheers,
14 applause] And I've had many, many phone
15 conversations, especially over the past several
16 weeks, with Wanda Williams, the Director of
17 Political Action, and I know that if you [cheers,
18 applause] and if you don't know, they represent
19 approximately 125,000 active employees and 60,000
20 retirees. And I must say that I, as an individual
21 member of the City Council, and as a union member,
22 has always fought for the needs of union members.
23 But as you know initially, everything was not
24 hunky dory. And I was not in agreement with one
25 aspect of it. But you know, you live and learn

1
2 every single day. And in fact, they've reached a
3 compromise with you, Speaker Quinn, and myself,
4 along with all the other sponsors, and there's
5 many of them. But clearly there was two names
6 initially on this bill, when it was introduced:
7 myself and Miguel Martinez. And subsequently,
8 there are approximately so many others, and I've
9 been asked to just read them, Madam Speaker, if
10 you don't mind, it'll take one minute. We have
11 Council Member Joe Addabo, who's the Chair of the
12 Committee; Alan Gerson; John Liu; Rose Mendez;
13 Simcha Felder; David Weprin; Eric Gioia; Vincent
14 Gentiles; Helen Sears; Larry Seabrook; Peter
15 Vallone, Jr.; David Yassky; Sara Gonzalez; Mike
16 McMahon; Tony Avella; Tom White; Mike Nelson; Bill
17 de Blasio; Hiram Monserrate [laughs]; Domenic
18 Recchia; Charles Barron; Jimmy Vacca; Kendall
19 Stewart; Letitia James; Annabel Palma; Joel
20 Rivera; Jessica Lappin; Inez Dickens; Simcha
21 Felder; Lew Fidler; Darlene Mealy; Melinda Katz;
22 James Sanders, Jr.; Como of Queens; Gennaro of
23 Queens--

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: --Mark-

1
2 Viverito of Manhattan; Eugene of Brooklyn; Jimmy
3 Oddo, our minority leader from Staten Island and
4 Brooklyn; Vincent Ignizio from Staten Island; Baez
5 from The Bronx; the Speaker, Christine Quinn; and,
6 last but not least, Diana Reyna of Brooklyn.
7 Congratulations, DC 37! [cheers, applause]

8 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, and I
9 also want to thank Laura Popa [phonetic] for her
10 work on that piece of legislation [cheer] and Rob
11 Newman. [applause] And next, let me just call on
12 Madam Public Advocate, I need to recognize Council
13 Member Mealy for a vote.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Council Member
15 Mealy.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yes. I vote
17 aye. Can I have permission to vote aye on all
18 Land Use call ups and all general orders?

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you.

21 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, Council
22 Member Mealy, thank you, Madam Public Advocate. I
23 also wanted to note that Intro 848 is adding a
24 regionally significant project to an empire zone
25 in Council Member Reyna's district. I want to

1
2 congratulate her and thank her for bringing this
3 project to our attention, so we can take this
4 action, and I want to thank John Smith of our
5 staff for working on this legislation. I also
6 want to thank Council Member Tom White for moving
7 that through the Economic Development Committee.
8 I also want to note that we're passing Intro 877-A
9 today, that is the co-naming of 49 thoroughfares
10 and public places in our five boroughs. Want to
11 thank Lyle Frank for his work on that, and thank
12 the Chair of our Parks Committee, Council Member
13 Helen Foster for her work on that, as well. I
14 also want to congratulate Naomi--how do you say
15 the last name, I don't want--Diana, how do you--
16 how do you say Naomi's last--Silie? You say it, I
17 want to make sure we get her name right on the
18 record. I don't want to say it wrong.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Silie
20 [phonetic].

21 SPEAKER QUINN: Naomi--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Silie.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: Want to
24 congratulate you, Naomi, to your appointment as a
25 member of the Board of Elections from Bronx

1

2 County. [applause] Naomi's mother is with her
3 today, who is an 1199 homecare member, who has
4 been trained by our own Annabel Palma, so I want
5 to congratulate them. And I want to thank Council
6 Member Reyna for her work on this appointment.
7 And Naomi, congratulations. I also want to note
8 that we are passing a piece of legislation today
9 that was introduced by Council Member Maria Baez,
10 with the support of Council Member Monserrate and
11 others, and passed through the Transportation
12 Committee Chair by Council Member John Liu. It is
13 a very common sense piece of legislation--

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

15 SPEAKER QUINN: --that suspends
16 alternate side of the street parking rules during
17 snowfalls, which I think is in fact what most New
18 Yorkers think the law is, anyway. I want to thank
19 Phil Homm [phonetic] for his work on this, and
20 call on the Chair of our Transportation Committee,
21 John Liu.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Thank you
24 very--thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to--

25 SPEAKER QUINN: If we could just

1
2 get a little quiet in the chambers while we're
3 talking about the other piece of legislation, if
4 folks could just try to exit quietly. Thank you
5 very much.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Well, I just
7 want to thank you, Madam Speaker, for your support
8 of this common sense bill. And I do want to thank
9 the administration and the Mayor's office for
10 working with us to improve the bill. There is a
11 slight change, it's a technical change, that will
12 result in a better bill. But the bottom line here
13 is that New Yorkers will no longer be afraid of
14 getting ticketed while they're cars are--

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please,
16 it's very hard to hear. Sorry.

17 MALE VOICE: Quiet, please!

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please,
19 it's very hard to hear.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: It's a really
21 good bill, and I think we're going to hear from
22 Council Members Monserrate and Baez. Thank you.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: Council Member
24 Monserrate?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank

1
2 you, Madam Speaker. I just rise to, to thank the
3 leadership of this body, and in particular
4 Chairman John Liu of the Transportation Committee;
5 my colleague Maria Baez from The Bronx who
6 cosponsored this legislation, good sense, common
7 sense legislation, which will provide relief for
8 the City of New York. And I guess the last bill
9 that I'll be passing out as a colleague of you al.
10 I will save my remarks for later, but I'm going to
11 miss you and Mayor Mike, please sign this bill
12 right away. Thank you very much.

13 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very
14 much, Council Member Monserrate. We are also
15 voting today on a number of actions relating to
16 the City's fiscal crisis and the City's budget. I
17 think we are all well aware of the fact that this
18 City, state, country and really internationally,
19 we are facing an economic crisis of profound
20 proportion, something that we haven't seen the
21 likes of since really the Great Depression. And
22 given the fact that the City of New York's
23 revenues come 25 percent from Wall Street, when
24 something like this--a situation we're in now
25 occurs, there is an immediate impact on our City's

1
2 revenues. Now it's important to note that as
3 tough as the situation we're in now, and as tough
4 as the choices are that we are making now, things
5 could be worse. Over the past three years, this
6 Council with the Mayor has taken \$8 billion and
7 prepaid future debt, prepaid future bills, and
8 created the \$2.6 billion healthcare trust fund
9 which will help us weather the bad times of Fiscal
10 Year '10 and Fiscal Year '11. Think of how worse
11 the choices would be if we didn't, hadn't taken
12 those actions, and didn't have that fund. Now
13 that said, the choices we still have are not good
14 ones. And the decisions we are going to make
15 today are tough ones. But I believe the actions
16 that the finance committee took and this Council
17 will take, are the right ones to keep the City
18 moving forward. We will vote today to eliminate
19 the property tax rate reduction of seven percent
20 that we put in place in FY'08. We put that in
21 place in FY'08 for a year. We were able to keep
22 it going for another half of year. Today we will
23 eliminate that reduction, in doing so generate
24 close to \$600 million for the City of New York.
25 We will also pass a hotel tax of less than one

1
2 percent on hotel rooms. That, over the next year-
3 and-a-half, will generate at least \$8 million.
4 That piece of--I'm sorry, \$80 million--that's
5 legis--that is money that will help us keep core
6 services going. Now, we recognize we can't just
7 raise taxes, we need to, in a time like this, rein
8 in spending. That's why we're cutting back close
9 to \$500 million worth of moneys we spend on City
10 services. It's important to note that the Council
11 has added another \$500 million worth of
12 suggestions for additional cuts, 'cause we
13 recognize these will not be the final cuts that we
14 make. Now, it's also important to note, though,
15 that although we will have to cut back on City
16 services, not every City service is the same.
17 Some are simply a higher priority. That's why in
18 the action we are taking today, there are \$20
19 million dollars of cuts to social services and
20 other programs, things like staffing and our
21 administration for children's services, staff who
22 keep children who are in harm's way safe. Funds
23 for our City University of New York, for our
24 community colleges, so young people who are
25 struggling to improve their life, will still be

1
2 able to have top notch community colleges. Funds
3 for housing for people with HIV and AIDS, who are
4 homeless and have no other option than to look to
5 the City of New York for help at housing. \$20
6 million of services like that, will remain in the
7 City's budget because of the actions the City
8 Council has taken in our negotiations. But note,
9 that's not \$20 million we're adding, at a time
10 when we don't have resources. It's \$20 million we
11 have found through alternative cuts that we have
12 proposed and are being taken. Cuts to things like
13 maintenance, that was still in the budget for the
14 911 Center in The Bronx. Think of it, we had
15 funding in the budget for maintenance on a
16 building that isn't done. That's a cut you can
17 take that hurts no one and helps us protect
18 children and protect our community colleges.
19 We're also in the actions we're taking through our
20 negotiations, sending an important statement about
21 this Council's belief in the importance of public
22 safety and keeping crime down in the City of New
23 York. The original November plan proposed to
24 eliminate the entire January academy in our police
25 academy, to eliminate the entire January class of

1
2 police cadets. Last week's announcement that
3 there would have to be another seven percent cut
4 to the police department sent a clear message that
5 the July class would have to go as well. Well,
6 today, through our negotiations and our actions,
7 we are making sure that there will be 250 police
8 cadets in the class in January; 250 officers will
9 go out onto the streets in every borough, from
10 Staten Island to The Bronx to keep New York safe.
11 And we are also making sure through our
12 negotiations, that there will be a July police
13 class. And that police class will have at least
14 250 officers. Today it is at 250 officers, but we
15 will work hard between now and July to get that
16 number up. None of these things can happen alone--
17 preserving services, keeping the City safe,
18 keeping police officers on our streets--we can
19 only make that happen by cutting back our spending
20 in other areas and increasing our revenues in ways
21 that are appropriate. Those are the steps we are
22 taking today. They're tough decisions, they're
23 choices we would rather not have to make, but I
24 think they are the right ones to make as our City
25 moves forward and moves its way through the

1
2 terrible recession we're in. Let me say one final
3 note, though. No matter how bad this recession
4 is, we should know two things. We are not
5 repeating the mistakes of the past. In the '70s
6 during the fiscal crisis, there was one day in
7 July, one singular day in July, when 5,000 police
8 officers walked into their precincts in police
9 headquarters, 5,000 police officers, and turned in
10 their guns and their badges. That was a message
11 that we were hanging up the fight against crime.
12 We are not sending that message today, we will
13 keep our police academy in business, and we will
14 keep sending police officers out into our
15 neighborhoods to keep them safe. And let me just
16 say one last thing, whatever decision people make
17 on this vote today, collectively we know one thing
18 as the City Council: We will weather this
19 recession. We have come out of worse crises,
20 we've come out of the 9/11 crisis and recovered,
21 we came out of the crisis of the '70s fiscal
22 crisis. Whatever action we take today on a vote,
23 we will remain united as a City Council to move
24 our City forward [applause] out of this recession
25 into economic recovery. I want to thank all of my

1
2 colleagues for their time and attention to this
3 matter. You're the only one clapping on being
4 united, Robert. But nonetheless, I appreciate it
5 very, very much. Let me [laughter] now call on
6 the Chair of our Finance Committee, David Weprin
7 and thank him for all of the work he's put into
8 this matter we're taking up today.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Thank you,
10 Madam Speaker. By making the tough decisions
11 we're making today, we can keep our City moving
12 forward as we make our way through this economic
13 crisis. If we want to keep cops on our streets
14 and teachers in our classroom, we have to make the
15 necessary sacrifice for the good of our entire
16 City. Nobody wants to vote on a property tax
17 increase. I certainly don't want to, but it is
18 the responsible thing to do today. No one
19 could've anticipated the severity of the situation
20 we are currently facing. So far, we have lost
21 over 200,000 jobs in the last six months, and
22 unfortunately there is more to come. The revenue
23 that we so relied on over the last few budgets is
24 no longer. There is good news that comes with the
25 bad, however. We get to deliver on our promise to

1
2 residents that they will receive their property
3 tax rebate checks this year. There will be 250
4 cadets going through the academy, and as the
5 Speaker mentioned we will guarantee another
6 academy in July. And yes, we were able to restore
7 cuts in the original November plan and replace
8 them with alternative cuts, all agencies, all cuts
9 are not equal. We must continue to be vigilant of
10 the current economic situation and act
11 accordingly, and that is what I feel we are doing
12 today. This was a historic budget modification
13 because it was the first time we have had full
14 blown budget hearings over a number of weeks in a
15 midyear budget modification. We made it through
16 the tough times before, but as unique as the
17 current situation is, we will come out of this
18 bigger, better and stronger. Most importantly, we
19 will be prepared for whatever the future brings us
20 because we have all acted responsibly. Thank you.

21 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you,
22 Chairperson Weprin. Let me just move off of
23 budget and legislation for a second. We have a--
24 four council members for whom this is their final
25 council meeting with us. And I wanted to take a

1
2 second just to say a little bit about each of them
3 and to offer each of them an opportunity to say a
4 little bit about themselves, before they move on.
5 First, Chair--Council Member Mike McMahon, Staten
6 Island's own. [applause, cheers] Now--You know,
7 our loss is certainly the country's gain, and I
8 will just want to say a couple things about Mike
9 and his soon to be trip to Congress. Congress
10 will soon learn more about garbage than they ever
11 thought they could possibly know. Now that may
12 sound funny, but Mike, as he called himself in
13 that New York Times profile about him not long
14 after he got elected was a rags, is a "rags to
15 trash story." And in being that, he has really
16 revolutionized how the City thinks about garbage.
17 And finally, ingrained the reality in City
18 government that if we don't see garbage as one of
19 the key environmental issues of our time, we will
20 never really have a sustainable City, and we will
21 never have an environmentally just City. So,
22 Mike, thank you for teaching us that lesson, even
23 though occasionally along the way we made fun of
24 you. It is a very important message, and a
25 message the country will be better for knowing and

1
2 understanding when you get to Washington. I also
3 want to thank you for your tremendous commitment
4 to public health, something that needs to be
5 amplified even more in Washington. I know, from
6 when I was Speaker, from when I was the Chair of
7 the Health Committee, you are a passionate fighter
8 for the needs of the healthcare of your district,
9 particularly the health inequalities of the north
10 shore of Staten Island. And one of the things I
11 saw through your work there is, you made a promise
12 to that part of your district that you would bring
13 them more health resources, and with the federal
14 qualified health center lookalike, you have
15 delivered. So, I'm excited about you doing that
16 for an even bigger district, and for two boroughs.
17 So, I just mentioned a couple of things, but those
18 things and the public's--the nurses in Catholic
19 and parochial schools, and so many other things,
20 thank you Mike for your service to this City, your
21 service to your home borough, and for your soon to
22 be service to Brooklyn and the country. So, best
23 of luck and congratulations. And if you could
24 give us a few parting words.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Thank you,

1
2 Madam Speaker, thank you for those kinds words.
3 It is certainly bittersweet that I rise for the
4 last time as a member of this New York City
5 Council. Although with that change in term
6 limits, you never know, maybe we come back in a
7 few years. [laughter] It's not forever, we will
8 not say goodbye forever. [background noise] It's
9 not the last time I'm going to say "Madam
10 Speaker," that's true as well, Chuck. But I want
11 to thank you, and your staff. It has been a great
12 run serving alongside you, as colleagues in the
13 Council, and taking care of Jingle Ball [laughter]
14 and so many other things as we sat together in
15 committees, and then working with your leader,
16 under your leadership as Speaker, it's--the City
17 is honored and privileged to have you sacrificing
18 every day to be in this role. I thank you, I
19 thank your incredible staff. Those who are here,
20 still, those who have been, they are loyal and
21 dedicated to you, and they are great public
22 servants. And of course, I thank my staff as
23 well, in particular Carmine Cogna [phonetic]
24 who's here [cheers] did all the work on the
25 garbage and I got all the credit. Give him a

1
2 round of applause. [applause] And to you, Madam
3 Public Advocate, it's been a pleasure serving with
4 you as well. And of course I can't forget the
5 fourth estate, we thank them as well for being
6 here. But I want to also thank my colleagues, the
7 council members with whom I've served. We have
8 through the worst of times together and we have
9 been through the best of times of together. We
10 came into office, many of us, my class of 2002,
11 and probably the worst period in the City's
12 history. And yet together, because of the
13 resilience and greatness of the people of this
14 great City, we came through it, and we know that
15 we will come through it again as we face difficult
16 economic times. I just want to also say, let you
17 all know, that you're all invited to Barack--
18 President Barack Obama's inauguration on January
19 20th. I can't get you any tickets, but they're not
20 getting the joke there, that's--Okay. [laughter]
21 But anyway, it has been a great pleasure. And I
22 also want to, in particular, thank my colleagues
23 from Staten Island: Andrew Lansa [phonetic],
24 who's moved on; Jimmy Oddo and Vinny Ignizio, who
25 are tireless fighters for our great borough.

1
2 Lastly and most importantly, I want to thank the
3 people of my district, who've given me the honor
4 and privilege of serving them in this great body.
5 It has indeed been a great pleasure. It is said
6 that upon espying the newly being constructed
7 Capitol Building in Washington, Alexander Hamilton
8 said, "It is here that the people govern." But I
9 think it is also true of this house, that here the
10 people of the City of New York, through you all,
11 govern every day. Someone asked me, "How does it
12 feel? As of, after today you will no longer be a
13 City Councilmember." And I felt a little sad, but
14 I also thought to myself, "I will always be a City
15 Councilmember." I will--you will always be my
16 colleagues, my brothers and sisters, keep up the
17 good work. God bless you all, happy holidays, and
18 Godspeed to you all. [applause]

19 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, thank
20 you. Before we hear from Council Members Addabo,
21 Monserrate and Como, let's just call on Council
22 Member Koppell, please, Madam Public Advocate.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you,
24 I apologize--

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Council Member--

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --to my
3 colleagues, but I have to leave, so I'd ask
4 unanimous consent to vote aye on all matters, all
5 general order matters; also on all resolutions.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

7 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. And I
8 think as we all also know, Chairperson Joe Addabo
9 will be leaving us soon to head up to the New York
10 State Senate. [applause] And our loss is
11 Albany's gain. You know, some folks thought that
12 Joe couldn't win that race, but they were no one
13 who had ever served with Joe Addabo, 'cause we all
14 know how hardworking and focused Joe is. He's
15 someone who since his time in the City Council has
16 been both the Chair of our Parks Committee and the
17 Chair of Civil Service and Labor Committee. He's
18 someone who as Chair of our Civil Service and
19 Labor Committee has been a keen eye and a real
20 fighter for the needs of working men and women,
21 and working families in our City. He's someone I
22 know who, particularly when I was chair of the
23 Health Committee, was an unbelievable fighter to
24 try to bring more healthcare resources,
25 particularly to the parts of his district that are

1
2 a little further out, particularly the peninsular
3 part. And I want to thank him for introducing me
4 to Peninsula Hospital so we could build a
5 relationship there. Joe is somebody who had the
6 honor of learning politics from his father, the
7 great Congress Member Joe P. Addabo, and I know
8 that it is just an unbelievably wonderful thing
9 for your family that you get to stay in public
10 life and continue the tremendous legacy and
11 commitment that the Addabo Family has had for
12 Queens. And I just want to thank you for being
13 such a, you know, we've often said, Joe, behind
14 your back, that if we had 51 Joe Addabos, this
15 would be an even better City Council. So thank
16 you very much, Joe, and if you'd give us a few
17 words.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Thank,
19 thank you, Madam Speaker. And it's been a
20 pleasure serving with you, as well. And--it is
21 on. And your staff, they've been great.

22 SPEAKER QUINN: If we could get a
23 little quiet.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: They've
25 been great to me and my staff, and again, Speaker

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Quinn I want to thank you--[hushing]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Quiet, please.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: --very

much, I want to thank you very much, again, you and your staff, Madam Public Advocate, and all, all staff, sergeant-at-arms, thank you very much for treating me with respect, and my staff. And again, we thank you very much. My colleagues, you know, you never forget your first of anything. So I will never forget my first legislative body that I've served with. From Jimmy Oddo's quotes of "West Wing," to the outstretched arms of Alan Jennings, to, you know, there are good [laughter] there are highs and lows, there are highs and lows. [laughter] So, I will remain--you can figure out which is which. I remember them all, and again, to serve in this body is truly an honor, and I appreciate that, and I thank my family for allowing me, and taking the sacrifice with me; and all, obviously the people in my district, for allowing me to serve them to the best of my ability. And I take this experience with me to Albany which, if you think this place might be a circus, wait till you see Albany.

1
2 [laughter] But nevertheless, I look forward to
3 using that experience and using it for the benefit
4 of the people in my district. I treasure the
5 experience I got here and I will never forget the
6 place nor its people. And I promised Pete here--
7 well, that's another thing, you know, my
8 colleagues, I'm [laughter] again, love you all,
9 but the two that I have sat with for seven years,
10 who have put up with me [cheer] and whether it be
11 stupid jokes or practical jokes, Helen Diane
12 Foster, Pete Vallone, I treasure your friendship,
13 as well. I don't know what Pete's going to do
14 without, without any more pens, but I promised
15 Pete I'd be shorter than Mike McMahon, so
16 therefore, ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much
17 for allowing me to serve with you. It's been
18 pleasure, thank you very much, thank you.

19 [applause]

20 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very
21 much, Joe. Let me next mention someone who is
22 going to continue to be colleagues with Council
23 Member Addabo, which is Council Member, soon to be
24 State Senator, Hiram Monserrate. And [applause]
25 Hiram is somebody who has certainly made his mark

1
2 here, with some very notable accomplishment.
3 Hiram made history in 2001 when he became the
4 first Latino elected to public office in Queens,
5 which was a very significant accomplishment. He's
6 someone who has chaired our Black, Latino and
7 Asian Caucus, someone who has been the chair of
8 our Veteran's Committee. He is someone who is a
9 leader in the effort to get the executive order
10 passed that made sure that no City agency would
11 ever turn into an INS office, that would deny New
12 Yorkers service because of their immigration
13 status, and he's somebody who we recently saw help
14 shepherd through a very significant rezoning for
15 Willet's Point, that will hopefully bring a lot of
16 jobs and economic development to that part of
17 Queens. And I want to, on behalf of all of us,
18 congratulate Hiram and wish him the best of luck
19 in Albany with Joe. Council Member Monserrate.
20 [applause]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank
22 you, Madam Speaker, thank you to my colleagues.
23 It has been an absolutely incredibly ride here in
24 the City Council. I want to thank my family, I
25 want to thank my constituents, I want to thank my

1
2 good friends in Labor, the WFP, and yes, I even
3 want to thank the Queens Democratic organization,
4 that threw their hat behind Hiram Monserrate in
5 2008. I think that's a, that was one of the most
6 notable ones of all. But I want to also just mark
7 a somber note, you know, it has been an incredible
8 experience, we have had some tremendous ups and
9 down in this body. One of the saddest things to
10 this day that I still carry with me is the loss of
11 my very good friend, who we saw stricken right
12 here in this body, that's James Davis. And I know
13 James Davis is up in heaven, and I just want to
14 say, "Hi, James, and we still love you, we still
15 think about you." I want to say that it has been
16 an incredible personal experience on one-on-ones
17 with all of you. You know, I had the opportunity
18 to be in this house for two term limits votes. I
19 voted yes the first time, guys. But that has been
20 a tremendous experience. The Speaker speaks about
21 executive order 41, I want to thank her. I want
22 to thank all my colleagues, then Speaker Miller,
23 also, who was behind the scenes working hard to
24 come to some accommodation with the
25 Administration. Thank you to the Mayor on that,

1
2 because once in a while I got to say thank you to
3 the Mayor, even though I might change that very
4 soon. [laughter] I also want to say, you know,
5 just the trip down memory lane, parking meters on
6 Sunday, we did that, and we have provided
7 alleviation for thousands of New Yorkers,
8 particularly those who choose Sunday as their day
9 of worship. I had the opportunity to introduce
10 translation bills. A veteran's initiative for the
11 first time in the City of New York that's
12 providing services for our veterans. And today
13 we'll be voting on another great bill that I
14 cosponsored with Maria Baez, alternate side of the
15 street parking. Another somber note, four street
16 renamings for four sold--fallen soldiers from my
17 community, and Helen Sears'. All of those, part
18 of which leads me to the next subject. I wanted
19 this to be a very cheery discussion. I was hoping
20 today that this body would be voting out a POW MIA
21 bill. I made a commitment to the mother of Alex
22 Jimenez Durang, when he was missing for over one
23 year, that we would do everything possible to
24 ensure that that bill became a reality.
25 Unfortunately, it will not happen today, I've had

1
2 conversations with the Speaker, and she has
3 assured me that she will continue to see how this
4 is resolved, and I would ask upon the Mayor's
5 Office to also work with us, never to forget the
6 veterans who have died and who are missing in
7 action, who have served this nation and provided
8 and done the ultimate sacrifice. And I want to
9 thank you all for being my friends and my
10 colleagues, Charles Baron, I'll never forget you,
11 my brother, brother in the struggle. Thank you
12 all, I will be fighting like heck in Albany to get
13 the resources to this City that we have not
14 gotten. And I know Joe will join me in that
15 fight. [applause] We will fight to ensure that
16 New York gets their fair share. God bless you
17 all, [Spanish] Si, se puede.

18 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, thank
19 you. Madam Public Advocate, if you can call on
20 Council Member Seabrook, please, and then we'll
21 have one final--

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Sorry, I couldn't
23 hear you.

24 SPEAKER QUINN: Seabrook, please.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: Council Member

1

2 Seabrook.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Thank--

4 SPEAKER QUINN: Now he's voting.

5 [laughter]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: No,
7 Miguel, I left and came back. [laughter] This,
8 this is the second time around, but I just wanted
9 to see with unanimous consent, to vote on all the
10 previous orders, and to vote yes on all Land Use
11 call ups. But just as a, to see these fine
12 individuals who are leaving, and I just want to
13 say that they are truly a class act of this City
14 Council. Having the opportunity to work with
15 them, all of them, that I have had, that they are
16 certainly a class act.

17 SPEAKER QUINN: - -

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: I'm
19 sorry. And, but anyway, good, well God bless all
20 of you, and I got to go.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: But I'll
23 be back, Miguel. [laughter]

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: And I

1

2 vote aye.

3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE: So ordered.

4 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, Council
5 Member Seabrook. And finally, although he's only
6 been with us for six months, we want to wish
7 Council Member Anthony Como all of the best. We
8 want to thank you for your service in the City
9 Council. [applause] We know this is certainly
10 not the last we're going to hear of you or of you
11 service to the City. You're someone who even
12 before the Council has done a great deal of work
13 for our City as an ADA, for the great Queens
14 District Attorney, Judge Brown. Also, been of
15 service to all of our voters through your work at
16 the Queens County Board of Elections. So we thank
17 you for having a life committed to the borough of
18 Queens, to its safety, to its voter participation,
19 and to efforts to make the neighborhood you love
20 and call home even better. We thank you for your
21 work and look forward to working with you in many
22 ways in the future. Thank you very, very much.
23 [applause] Let me just say, I failed to mention
24 when we were talking about the budget actions
25 today, and I'd ask all of my colleagues to join

1
2 with me in thanking the members of the Finance
3 staff, and also Momar Pidenas [phonetic] and Chuck
4 Mare [phonetic] for all of their work on all of
5 the budget actions we are taking today.

6 [applause] Thank you very much. And I have,
7 which I know everyone's going to be excited about,
8 a little bit of an agenda addition, which is that
9 we just found out there is another Land Use call
10 up that a colleague needs us to vote on today, or
11 otherwise it'll expire and they won't be able to
12 call it up. So, if the clerk could please read
13 the additional Land Use call up, we will vote on
14 that and then we'll move forward.

15 CLERK: M1262.

16 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes. This is a
17 Land Use call up at the request of Council Member
18 Gerson, so I'd ask for a roll call on this Land
19 Use call up. We apologize for the late addition.
20 Thank you.

21 CLERK: Addabo.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Yes.

23 CLERK: Arroyo.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic]

25 Yes.

1

CLERK: Avella.

2

3

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: [off mic]

4

Yes.

5

CLERK: Baez.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: [off mic]

7

Yes.

8

CLERK: Barron.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

10

CLERK: Brewer.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

12

CLERK: Como.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Yes.

14

CLERK: Comrie.

15

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [off mic]

16

Yes. [pause]

17

CLERK: De Blasio.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Yes.

19

CLERK: Dickens.

20

COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic]

21

Yes.

22

CLERK: Dilan.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: Yes.

24

CLERK: Eugene.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Yes.

1
2 CLERK: Felder. [pause] Fidler.
3 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yes.
4 CLERK: Foster.
5 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: Yes.
6 CLERK: Garodnick.
7 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.
8 CLERK: Gennaro.
9 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes.
10 CLERK: Gentile.
11 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Yes.
12 CLERK: Gerson.
13 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Yes.
14 CLERK: Gioia.
15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Yes.
16 CLERK: Gonzalez.
17 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: [off mic]
18 Yes.
19 CLERK: Ignizio.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.
21 CLERK: Jackson.
22 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye.
23 CLERK: James.
24 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.
25 CLERK: Katz.

1

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Yes.

2

3

CLERK: Koppell. [pause] Lappin.

4

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Yes.

5

CLERK: Liu.

6

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

7

CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: [off

9

mic] Yes.

10

CLERK: Martinez.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Yes.

12

CLERK: McMahon.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes.

14

CLERK: Mealy.

15

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [off mic]

16

Yes.

17

CLERK: Mendez.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [off mic]

19

Yes.

20

CLERK: Monserrate.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Aye.

22

CLERK: Palma.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

24

CLERK: Reyna.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Yes.

1
2 CLERK: Sears.
3 COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Yes.
4 CLERK: Stewart.
5 COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Yes.
6 CLERK: Vacca.
7 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Yes.
8 CLERK: Vallone.
9 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Yes.
10 CLERK: Vann.
11 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.
12 CLERK: Weprin.
13 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.
14 CLERK: Yassky.
15 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Aye.
16 CLERK: Oddo.
17 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: [off mic]
18 Yes.
19 CLERK: Rivera.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.
21 CLERK: De Blasio.
22 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Aye.
23 CLERK: Felder. [pause] Land Use.
24 CLERK: Speaker Quinn.
25 SPEAKER QUINN: Aye. [pause]

1

2

MALE VOICE: How's that, alright?

3

Huh? [background noise] I think--Okay.

4

[background noise]

5

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Not working,

6

oh it's working now, okay. M1262, Land Use call

7

ups were adopted by a vote of 43 affirmative, zero

8

negative, and one abstention.

9

SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very

10

much, and Council Member Gerson thanks everyone

11

for the additional Land Use call up. Discussion

12

of general orders.

13

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member

14

Barron?

15

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you,

16

Mr. Chair. I just rise to say that today, we know

17

that we are in a very tight situation

18

economically, but the people have been taxed

19

enough. How do we give with one hand \$400 and

20

then take it right back with a seven percent

21

increase, or a seven percent denial of the money

22

that they should be able to keep. I think we need

23

to look at our budget tighter, we need to look

24

through this budget to make sure there's no

25

management efficiency fat. We need to look at

1
2 that healthcare trust fund, not wait till 2010,
3 there's \$2.6 billion, use some of it immediately.
4 Don't pay into it when you know we're in a crisis.
5 So to continue to tax the people, and say, "We got
6 to cut vital, critical services" like we already
7 did for the budget in June, is unfair to the
8 people. I think it's time for us to say the
9 people have been taxed, subway tax may be coming.
10 A toll on the bridges may be coming. CUNY, SUNY,
11 raising that, you can tax them. But why doesn't
12 the Mayor and the Speaker join with the
13 progressive voices in this State and go to the
14 Governor, and say "Governor, don't hold back on
15 taxing the rich. Say that you know you can get
16 \$6.8 billion, but you want to save that for a
17 rainy day. It's pouring already." Every day is a
18 rainy day in our neighborhoods. And it's time for
19 us to have a more progressive taxation plan, let's
20 get the commuter tax, let's put the stock transfer
21 tax on the table. And I know we can't do that
22 here in the City, but at least the City leadership
23 can push it, can promote it in the State, or else
24 we're going to be in big trouble. The people have
25 been taxed enough, I say vote no on the property

1
2 tax, and let's make the Speaker, the Mayor, the
3 City Council go back through the budget and do the
4 right thing by the people, and find that which we
5 need to make sure that the people aren't in as
6 much pain. We are bleeding enough.

7 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Deputy
8 Minority Leader Oddo, sorry, Minority Leader Oddo.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Thank you.
10 I'm, I'm going to be voting against the tax
11 package today, and I think it's only right that I
12 start out by saying that my no vote doesn't make
13 me a good guy, and the yes vote of my colleagues
14 don't make them bad guys. This is a difference of
15 priorities, we see the world differently, and I'll
16 stipulate to the fact that there are no heroes
17 today, regardless of how you vote. And I only
18 hope that in all four corners of this building,
19 that sense abounds. I hope we don't return back
20 to some of the rhetoric of 2002 after the property
21 tax vote, when those of us who voted no had to
22 hear that somehow we were less courageous, or we
23 cared less about the City, or we were less
24 dedicated to the City. I strongly believe in my,
25 in my no vote, and I don't want to say it's a

1
2 philosophical difference, because I think it's
3 much deeper than that. I think I fundamentally
4 view City government differently than the majority
5 in this Council and the Administration. And I
6 don't believe that City government should try to
7 be all things to all people, from cradle to grave.
8 We can not sustain the level of spending that we
9 have endured for this last decade. And I think
10 average New Yorkers understand that, they're
11 tightening their belts. The public sector sees
12 that, they're tightening their belts. And the
13 reality is, according to the Wall Street Journal,
14 that our 2008 budget is nearly 50 percent larger
15 than the one inherited from Mayor Giuliani in
16 2001. That far outpaces inflation, inflation was
17 increased by 21 percent over the same period. You
18 can't sustain that level of spending. And just as
19 a quick reminder, I saw this the other day, this
20 is my own newsletter from a few years ago, and the
21 headline is about the City budget, "\$50 billion
22 and Growing." That was only a few years ago.
23 We're passed \$60 billion. And as painful and as
24 unfortunate this fiscal crisis is, as
25 disheartening and maddening as it is that we

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

allowed ourselves to get in this position, it is an opportunity to finally put this City on a sound fiscal footing. And, by the way, we invoke the rule, so it's five minutes, please. And I've heard repeatedly that we're not going to have the service cuts to take us back to the 1970s that destroyed the City's quality of life. But as Fred Segal pointed out in his article in the Post on November 23, in fact it was the tax increases by Mayor Lindsay that helped put us into that bankruptcy. John Kennedy had a quote that said, "The great enemy of truth is very often not the lie but the myth," and I have to say, with all due respect--

SPEAKER QUINN: Mr. Minority, can we just get a little quiet in the chambers, please.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: --there is a myth, and all due respect, that permeates this building, that says somehow City government has been the pillar of fiscal restraint and fiscal responsibility. I'm sorry, I don't believe that. Again, Wall Street Journal, if you look between

1
2 2000 and 2007, New York's tax receipts grew by 41
3 percent. Nicole Gellena [phonetic] said it's
4 never happened, will never come close to that
5 again. And yes, it was eaten by the four
6 Medicaid, pension costs, healthcare services debt.
7 But there's this myth, talk about myth, this myth
8 of uncontrollables. And I won't go down that road
9 because it's a speech unto itself. But my point
10 is, we have played the same game, we have allowed
11 this cycle to play over and over again. We are so
12 reliant on Wall Street, when Wall Street gins up,
13 it masks the underlying structural imbalance in
14 this City, and we know the cycle. And frankly,
15 we're not breaking the cycle today. And I
16 understand that we didn't take those surpluses of
17 billions of dollars that were fueled in part by
18 historic tax increases, and take it to the top of
19 the Empire State Building and throw the money out
20 the window. But eventually, we spent that money.
21 This vote today, with all due respect, is more of
22 the status quo. It's more of the same old, same
23 old approach that I personally don't believe in.
24 It doesn't break the stride, the cycle of
25 structural imbalance, and quite frankly, it really

1

2

doesn't live up to the advertising and the packaging that we heard just a few weeks ago about another controversial vote that took place in this body last month.

6

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member Martinez.

7

8

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Thank you.

9

10

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: I just want to remind folks, it's two minutes for everyone else, so don't ask.

11

12

13

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Jimmy gets five?

14

15

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Him, especially.

16

17

SPEAKER QUINN: There's a rule that relates to the Minority Leader.

18

19

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: The Minority Leader gets five.

20

21

SPEAKER QUINN: No, no, no, there's a rule that relates to the Minority Leader, the Minority Leader's absolutely correct.

22

23

24

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So don't ask.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: So, put

1

2 it back, put it back to two!

3

4

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Put it back to two?

5

6

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Put it back to two, thank you.

7

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: There you go.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: [laughs]

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Well, I will be voting for the tax packages. I know that it, no one here will be elected for voting to increase taxes; however, we're acting responsibly to ensure that we'll minimize the impact of this financial crisis and the services provided by the City to our communities. I particularly want to thank and congratulate Council Member Lew Fidler for his idea and his persistent in pointing out to us that there are alternative in other areas where we could tap into, to generate revenues for the City of New York, without further hurting the pockets of the average New Yorker. And that's the hotel tax. Even though this year will bring in \$80 million, that's also resources that we have in terms of option to continue to have the police in our streets, to continue to have the AC--the

1
2 Children's Services workers and supervisors, to
3 continue to provide the services to prevent elder
4 abuse. And I believe that even though it may not
5 be popular, New Yorkers will understand. New
6 Yorkers want a safe city, New Yorkers want to
7 continue to have the services they depend on,
8 particularly the most vulnerable New Yorkers will
9 understand. And times are hard, and we're asking
10 everyone to pitch in. We're not doing anything
11 out of the extraordinary, 'cause we're just
12 bringing back the property tax to what they were,
13 prior to 9/11. And we must do more, I agree. But
14 as we do more, we must continue to think of the
15 most vulnerable New Yorkers that depend on the
16 services of the City of New York, and at this
17 time, Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate you
18 for your courage and your leadership in driving
19 this body to understand that during these tough
20 economic times, the Council again steps up to the
21 plate responsibly, in ensuring that essential
22 services for the City of New York continue. I
23 also want to thank you, Madam Speaker, and Council
24 Member Jackson, on Intro 837. This Intro is about
25 equity, this Intro is about fairness, and this

1

2 Intro's about giving New Yorkers--

3 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: --that
5 work for the City of New York--

6 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: --the
8 option to live where they wish.

9 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Thank
11 you, Mr. Leader--

12 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: --and
14 Speaker.

15 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

16 Council Member Gonzalez. Council Member Gonzalez?
17 Alright, Council Member De Blasio. Oh--18 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank
19 you.20 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
21 Gonzalez, you ready? Okay.22 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: I'd like
23 to take a moment just to remember three different
24 individuals in my district, District 38. Today I
25 honor their names and their lives, and they are

1
2 Reverend Arthur William Thomas Crayton, Jr., of
3 Red Hook, Brooklyn, a pastor for 35 years and a
4 tremendous leader; police officer Louis Martinez,
5 a martial arts instructor, as well, an incredible
6 leader; and Angel Luis Gautier, a member of the
7 Transit Workers Union, a bus driver. These folks
8 were honorable and very well respected, and their
9 lives will be remembered. Thank you, and I
10 welcome their family who are here today, and I
11 honor them, too, thank you. [applause]

12 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
13 De Blasio.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank
15 you very much. I would speak at the time of my
16 vote on the property tax question, but I just want
17 to note on the rest of our agenda today, that I
18 want to say I think it's very important that we're
19 voting on Intro 837, the residency bill. I want
20 to congratulate everyone who was a part of making
21 that possible. It was a very long road, and
22 obviously particular congratulations to DC37.
23 There was a real debate on this issue, I think it
24 was a healthy one. And I think what came, became
25 very clear over time was there is a fundamental

1

2 question of fairness and equity that have to be
3 resolved, and I think the leaders of DC37 made
4 that point very clearly, and I'm glad that we are
5 responding to that core reality, and giving,
6 finally, the equity to these workers that they
7 deserve. At the same time, of course, hoping that
8 the vast majority of them will remain in our City
9 where we need them, as residents as well. Now, I
10 think it's also an occasion to say we need to look
11 to the next step, we need to look to how we can
12 make sure that all City employees have this same
13 freedom, this same right, and there are many more
14 who need to be given this opportunity going
15 forward. So I hope in the new year, the Council
16 will take up that issue. I also want to note that
17 we, as part of everything we're talking about
18 today related to the budget, we're talking about
19 some painful and difficult things, but also we
20 should all be thankful that some major
21 achievements have occurred as a result of the work
22 of the last few weeks. I want to thank the
23 Speaker and her staff, and everyone who worked on
24 this. And particularly to my colleagues on the
25 General Welfare Committee, we've all fought very

1
2 hard to try and protect childcare centers. As you
3 know, a recent proposal from the City would have
4 threatened up to 21 childcare centers across our
5 neighborhoods [applause] and that's unacceptable.
6 I'm very pleased to say that we've been given
7 assurances today from the Administration that that
8 plan will be put on hold for an additional month,
9 to give us all time to work together. And this is
10 something we have not had the opportunity to do,
11 and we look forward to doing, all of us, the
12 Administration, the Council, people in our
13 neighborhoods, leaders in our neighborhoods, and
14 the labor unions involved, to try and find
15 immediate and specific ways to save these
16 childcare centers. It's an incredible
17 opportunity, and we have to make sure we take full
18 advantage to protect these centers. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
20 Ignizio. [laughs]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you
22 very much, Mr. Public Advocate, I guess.
23 [laughter] But, I rise to, first off, to talk
24 about how Charles Barron now wants to be the
25 minority leader of the City Council to get his

1
2 extra three minutes, but not only that, to talk
3 really about what he'd said earlier on. Which his
4 that we are taxing our self, and taxing New
5 Yorkers, out of New York. It's ironic that we're
6 standing here discussing a bill that allows DC37
7 to live outside the City, for if we keep raising
8 property taxes, they have no choice but to live
9 outside the City, because it becomes untenable.
10 Some similar circumstances occurs with regards to
11 the foreclosure problem here in New York City.
12 What do you think this does? It makes the
13 foreclosure problem in the City of New York worse.
14 And regarding the Finance Chairman's comments
15 about the property tax rebates, well there was a
16 separation of powers issue. So much so that we
17 had to take it to court, and quite frankly, we
18 would have won. It was not part of this
19 negotiation, it should not be part of this
20 negotiation, and this body stood firm, along with
21 the Speaker, and said that it was not going to be
22 and it shouldn't be. When we stand up, and we say
23 "These are the priorities of this City Council,
24 and we shake hands as we did on July, on June 17th,
25 on those steps, that ought be carried forward,

1
2 without regard for that which wants to be changed
3 unilaterally." I think we made that case in a
4 compelling fashion, and I don't think things like
5 that are going to be tried again. But the things
6 that haven't been spoken of thus far is that there
7 will be a surplus this year. Yes, I know that's
8 shocking to some, but it will probably be
9 somewhere in the neighborhood of a half a billion
10 dollars, when you factor out this ill-conceived
11 property tax increase. It's wrong to go this way.
12 We've learned from history, I thought, that we
13 cannot tax our self out of an economic downturn;
14 however, we continue with the same follies. My
15 friends, I encourage you all to stand up and take
16 a second look, \$20 million in added programming is
17 not justification for \$1.4 billion--

18 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time's up,
19 Council Member.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: --on the
21 homeowners of this City. So I encourage you to
22 take a second look, and a third look, and a fourth
23 look, if you need be. You can - - it's all right,
24 and please vote no.

25 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

1

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you.

2

3

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member

4

Vallone.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you.

6

The Governor's raising taxes and releasing violent

7

felons. New York City's raising taxes and

8

slashing our police force. Our residents should

9

be very afraid. The Speaker said that this is not

10

a return to the '70s, well I think we should put

11

on our platform shoes and hang a disco ball,

12

because it is. She said that they fired 5,000

13

police officers in the '70s; well, that's true,

14

but Ray Kelly just testified that he's down 5,000

15

police officers since 2001. And firing officers

16

is not much different than not hiring officers,

17

because the result is the same: they are not on

18

our streets. You know, we were supposed to have a

19

twelve, a class of 1,200 in January, now we have

20

250. We were supposed to have a class of 1,200 in

21

July, now we have 250. That's a loss of almost

22

2,000 police officers, this will bring us down to

23

levels we have not seen since prior, prior to Safe

24

Streets, Safe City. And crime will start inching

25

back up to levels that we had back then, also.

1
2 You can already see it, murders, rapes, robberies,
3 all up; quality of life crimes like graffiti, way
4 up, way up, already, before we make any of these
5 cuts. These cuts will absolutely lead to more
6 crime. That is why I cannot support this. This
7 budget is better than the Mayor's, and the Speaker
8 deserves credit for that, as do the members. But
9 as Public Safety Chair, I cannot support a budget
10 which I believe endangers the public. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
12 Jackson.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you.
14 My colleagues I rise for two reasons today. One,
15 because there are several street conamings in my
16 district, the Paul Robeson Boulevard, and he was
17 an athlete, lawyer, scholar, writer, linguist,
18 orator, actor, singer, and a civil rights and
19 human rights activist. And he lived in my
20 district on Edgecombe and Jamal Terrace for over
21 30 years. Count Basie, 160th Street between St.
22 Nicholas and Edgecombe, and I don't need to tell
23 you who he was, and if you don't know, then go
24 Google him and you'll find out. A. Philip
25 Randolph, another great scholar, labor leader, and

1
2 civil rights activist and leader was honored at a
3 previous street renaming. This bill makes 145th
4 Street from river to river A. Philip Randolph
5 Boulevard. And also I rise to talk about the
6 issue of the bill concerning the budget. And some
7 of my colleagues would say that we should not vote
8 to increase the property tax back up to seven
9 percent, for six months; and the value of that is
10 approximately, you know, \$600 million. I am not
11 willing to risk the core services of New Yorkers
12 for \$600 million. We need that money in order to
13 protect, to make sure that our streets are safe,
14 to make sure our streets are clean, to make sure
15 that we provide core services to the people of New
16 York City. If in fact we did not do that, our
17 safety and security will be threatened. And I'm
18 not willing to take that risk. And to say that,
19 that we are not moving in the right direction,
20 this is the first time ever the budget negotiating
21 team has been meeting outside of the normal budget
22 process, to talk about alternative cuts to the
23 Mayor's plan. I think we're moving in the right
24 direction, and as Chris said, our leader, if we
25 don't stand united now, we are in trouble, we have

1

2 another two years ahead of us to try to move out
3 of this, and we must stand united as a Council,
4 even sometimes we disagree, but we must reach
5 consensus, so let's move forward.

6 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.
7 Council Member Katz.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Thank you,
9 Mr. Leader. Clearly these are difficult times,
10 nobody likes making difficult decisions,
11 especially those like restoring seven percent
12 property tax. There's not one person in this room
13 that wants to do that. And I keep hearing
14 arguments around the chamber, "Well, you know, we
15 don't really know if the numbers are real, we
16 don't really know if they've done everything they
17 can to find revenues in the right places. We're
18 not really sure if everything costs as much." but
19 you know, facts are facts. We have over \$3
20 billion budget gap next year. Even with the 2.5
21 percent gap, PEG, the five percent PEG, the seven
22 percent PEG, the increase in the hotel tax and the
23 property tax restoration that we're doing today,
24 we're still going to have over a billion dollars
25 to cut next year. We can't get around that. And

1
2 so what I did in order to get a perspective of
3 this, 'cause I like to have that when I'm voting,
4 is I went to OMB and I asked for some numbers to
5 try and figure out how much that \$600 million will
6 pay for. According to their numbers, 1,700 cops
7 will cost over \$100 million; 635 firefighters will
8 be about \$41 million; 3,500 teachers will cost
9 about \$226 million; 740 sanitation workers will be
10 about \$40 million; 485 correction officers would
11 be about \$28 million; and there's about a little
12 over \$100 million if we reduce library service to
13 half day at 72 out of 200 libraries that we have
14 in this City. That's about what \$600 million will
15 pay for in this City. And these are tough times.
16 But I agree with many of my colleagues. We have
17 cut so much in this City already, and we're going
18 to have to cut more even with today. So I was
19 sent here to make decisions, and I was sent here
20 to represent my district, and these services are
21 important to my constituents. And so with that, I
22 will be voting yes on the property tax increase
23 and the hotel tax.

24 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
25 Gentile.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I agree
3 with our colleague, Councilman Ignizio, that the
4 rebate check should not be tied to the property
5 tax in any way. That issue about sending out the
6 rebate checks was an issue of, as a matter of law.
7 And those of us who took the Mayor to task in
8 court believe we were right on the law, as this
9 Council believes we're right on the law, and we
10 believe that he would've been compelled to send
11 out the rebate checks, no matter what we did here
12 today. And yet he asks us to increase the
13 property tax, or in essence the sky will fall and
14 the earth will be swallowed up. For example, the
15 threatening of the elimination of the January
16 police class, and now offering a meager class of
17 250 next month, will still make it the lowest
18 police headcount in decades, as Councilman Vallone
19 has mentioned. And yet, OMB's own budget numbers
20 for NYPD show that the City, there is City funding
21 for a police headcount of 2,000 in January.
22 2,000, where did that money go? It has never been
23 explained, as to what happened to that money in
24 the NYPD budget. And incredibly, incredibly, the
25 City is still rolling money over as a surplus into

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

next year. And now the Mayor asks for a property tax increase on hardworking New Yorkers who are struggling already with the water rate increases, at the same time that they could very well lose their star rebate checks from Governor Patterson. In the backdrop of all this that faces struggling homeowners, is the fact that the City still plans, as we've said, to leave untouched \$2.6 billion surplus that's stuffed into the health benefits trust. \$2.6 billion, I say along with others in this room, don't spend any new money on paying these benefits, instead pay them out of the \$2.6 billion already in the fund, and it's more than enough to cover those costs. Doing so would give this City at least \$700 million, at least, to spend elsewhere, as Councilwoman Katz has mentioned. We cannot do this, this is wrong to do this, that to - - the order--

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time, Council

Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I will

vote no.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

Council Member Rivera.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you
3 very much. Today we are here, you know, taking a
4 very tough vote for many of us. And while we know
5 that in any given year we would not be here
6 talking about, you know, this increase and this
7 type of situation, we know we have tough times
8 ahead. All you have to do is look at the stock
9 market and see it go down from 14,000 to below
10 8,000 on some given days. All you have to do is
11 see the real estate market tank the way it has
12 over the past year-and-a-half, two years. This is
13 something that the City Council and the Mayor's
14 Office has to contend with on a daily basis. And
15 the only remedy that we have is the hotel tax and
16 the property tax. We have fought for many years
17 to try to get the commuter tax back, reinstated to
18 the City of New York, which would have bought \$600
19 million, but year after year after year our calls
20 for the commuter tax have come unanswered. So now
21 with the leadership of our speaker, and the
22 members that we have here in the Council, we are
23 doing the responsible thing by making sure that we
24 can keep police officers on our streets, by making
25 sure that we can keep our daycare centers open and

1
2 our senior centers thriving. We are doing what
3 the people have elected us to do. And that is to
4 help manage our City in these tough economic
5 times. It is not an easy vote. It's not. And as
6 a property owner, I say that because obviously we
7 know that New York City is a very costly city.
8 But we also know that in order to run and govern
9 our communities, and the City of New York is a
10 very costly endeavor. And that is why I say that
11 while it may be tough for many of us, what would
12 be tougher is increased crime on our streets.
13 What would be tougher is closing and shuttering
14 some of our doors, of some of our most vital
15 social services programs in the City of New York,
16 and that is why I urge us all to vote yes on
17 today's package. With a footnote: in City
18 Island, we have a firehouse, which ladder will be
19 shuttered, you know, pretty soon. And The Bronx
20 delegation had a meeting today, and we said this
21 is something that we want to join forces on and we
22 want to see it reinstated because the other day a
23 woman nearly drowned a day after a massive town
24 hall meeting took place to discuss the fire ladder
25 closing. That is why we need to come back to the

1
2 table, and I want to thank our Speaker, I want to
3 thank the local Council Member Jimmy Vacca, and
4 the entire Bronx delegation for addressing this
5 issue because we know that these vital services
6 are what we are here fighting for today. Thank
7 you. [applause, cheers]

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
9 Avella.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Thank you,
11 Mr. Leader. I'm not going to repeat some of the
12 comments that my colleagues have made against the
13 property tax.

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please!

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: But I would
16 remind this body that the two people who voted
17 against the 18.49 percent, who are still left in
18 this body, Council Member Jimmy Oddo and myself,
19 remember what that vote meant, and the retribution
20 that some of us had to suffer afterwards. We
21 voted that way because we believed it was the
22 wrong approach, and I think I speak for my
23 colleagues today who are going to vote for--
24 against the property tax today, we still believe
25 it's the wrong approach. Real leadership is not

1
2 simply taxing the people of this City. That is
3 the easy way out. And some of my colleagues
4 think, "Oh, it's a tough political vote, we're
5 going to, we're going to lose votes if we vote for
6 the property tax." But in the end, you're going
7 to get up and say you solved the fiscal crisis.
8 You're not going to realize the impact that this
9 tax is going to have on homeowners and property
10 owners. After that 18.49 percent increase, I had
11 homeowners come to my district office and
12 literally cry, literally cry because they couldn't
13 afford the increase. These were senior citizens,
14 these were new homeowners that were mortgaged out
15 to the hilt. And Council Member Ignizio made a
16 very good point: if you don't think increasing
17 the property tax is not going to worsen the
18 mortgage foreclosure crisis, you're crazy. Every
19 little increase makes this situation worse. Why
20 can not we work together, look at the budget,
21 eliminate the waste, and again, if you think we've
22 cut to the bone, you've got another thing coming.
23 Look at the budget, line by line, have a
24 bipartisan approach, and come up with a budget
25 that doesn't tax people. We're already the most

1
2 heavily taxed people in the country. How many
3 more times are we going to stick our hands into
4 the wallets of our fellow New Yorkers? I'm voting
5 against the property tax and I would certainly
6 urge my colleagues to do so.

7 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

8 Council Member Brewer.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I am also
10 voting for the bills that are before us today. I
11 guess you could look at this as either half full
12 or half empty, and I choose to look at it as half
13 full; because if you talk to people in the
14 community, they care about many things, but
15 certainly security, schools and affordable
16 housing, employment. And I remember in the 1970s,
17 'cause I was working for City and State government
18 at the time. There was no safety net, there was
19 no ability to get government services if you were,
20 if you were not housed. Now we have the safety
21 nets, and we cannot lose them. We have to make
22 sure that if you are unemployed, as many, many New
23 Yorkers coming into my office and your offices
24 are, there are opportunities for making sure that
25 they don't lose their home and they don't lose

1
2 their rental apartment. And I think between the
3 one shots at HRA, and between what the small
4 business service is doing, there are
5 opportunities. Certainly we could look at
6 efficiency with Alan Gerson and others, we have to
7 look at a new assessment for property, because
8 that's often what is driving up the cost of
9 property. And we have to look at ways in which we
10 can merge services that are silo effect at the
11 same time. And something that I know well, we
12 need to improve the technology to dilute and get
13 rid of any silo that exists in that world. So I
14 look forward to paying down, so that we don't have
15 the huge budget deficit in 2010. I don't know how
16 we're going to deal with the \$1 billion
17 opportunity that the State is throwing at us in
18 terms of cuts, but I do believe that this is the
19 only way we have to go at the present time. I
20 want to thank Preston Niblack , Jeff Rotus
21 [phonetic] and that incredible staff, and I really
22 love and know Mike McMahon, Joe Addabo, Hiram
23 Monserrate, and Anthony Como a little bit, but he
24 seems like a really nice guy and we're going to
25 miss him. But those three others are the best

1
2 public service imaginable, we're going to miss
3 you. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Dilan?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: Thank you,
6 Mr. President Pro-Tem. I'm going to be very
7 brief, 'cause I think a lot of what has been said
8 about my position has already been said, and I
9 won't, I'll try not to be redundant. First I just
10 want to start by saying that I want to thank the
11 Speaker for the overall tone of the discussion on
12 this debate, whether you agreed with her position
13 on this particular item or not. I will be voting
14 no on the property tax items today, just simply
15 from the perspective that I do not believe the
16 homeowners in my district, and districts like
17 mine, can sustain a further property tax. I, it's
18 clear what Jimmy Oddo said, spending in the City,
19 since many of us have gotten here, has increased
20 by \$20 billion, which is a tremendous clip. Not
21 all of it is the fault of the Mayor or the
22 Administration, and I want to be clear I voted on
23 many of those budgets. I voted to approve many of
24 those budgets. But the fiscal realities that
25 we've faced in the past as compared to the fiscal

1
2 realities we will face in the future, clearly
3 states that budgets of \$60 billion and up are
4 unsustainable in New York City's future, as we go
5 forward. So I think we do need to re-look how we
6 are going to reduce the size of the budget of this
7 City. Clearly a lot of those issues, federal and
8 state aid on many of the major uncontrollable
9 spending costs, haven't been forthcoming. They
10 need to be forthcoming for the overall health of
11 this City. And I would just finally say to my
12 colleagues who, you know, are fighting to restore
13 services, many of you are voting to levy taxes
14 today, and I appreciate your position, I respect
15 your position, and we can restore these items now,
16 but with the revenue shortfall that comes to us
17 for next year's budget in '10, we may not be able
18 to tax our way out of this then. So we're going
19 to have to revisit these serious cuts as we
20 approach next year's budget and the ability to
21 continue to tax our way out of these problems may
22 not continue to be there, so we have to be mindful
23 of that, and be prepared--

24 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Time.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: --to take

1

2 the hard cuts. Thank you, Mr. President.

3 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

4 Council Member Gerson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Mr. Leader,
6 my colleagues, let us keep the context, the proper
7 context in mind. We are talking about rolling
8 back property taxes to levels where they were for
9 the years after 9/11 when we were able to come
10 together as a City and invest in the resources
11 necessary to bring our City of that crisis to a
12 point where we could afford to lower property tax
13 levels. We are unfortunately, no one can deny,
14 that as a result of Wall Street, this City faces a
15 real structural deficit. And this is not about
16 cradle to grave government, this is about basic
17 protections and basic livability, police, fire,
18 sanitation, schools that work, supporting the
19 infirm and the most vulnerable among us in a way
20 that befits a humane city. History, if we want to
21 look at history, history teaches us that the
22 greatest harm, the greatest harm to individual New
23 Yorkers comes from when we do not sustain and make
24 those basic investments in basic humanity and
25 basic services. It behooves us to strike the

1
2 proper balance between revenue enhancement and
3 expenditure reduction. This undesired, no one
4 wants this increase, but coming at a time when
5 most New Yorkers will also receive an even greater
6 property tax rebate, at the same time as we
7 tighten our belt is the financially and socially
8 responsible thing to do to protect all New Yorkers
9 and to sustain the economy, the livability and the
10 humanity of our City, and we must now get to work
11 on the next fiscal crisis. And yes, when we will
12 not have the \$400 rebate, and I'm glad the Mayor
13 has agreed to a property tax commission which will
14 find a way to protect vulnerable New Yorkers from
15 assessments in property taxes at that time. But
16 to get there, we must take this action now. Thank
17 you.

18 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

19 Council Member Vacca.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Yes, I rise
21 to also oppose any increase in property taxes. I
22 have to let you know that what the Council's
23 considering today relative to an increase in
24 property taxes is just the beginning of what
25 homeowners can face, because the State is

1
2 proposing to get rid of the Star rebate, and then
3 there will be no \$400 rebate next year, because
4 that was done to mitigate the eight point--18.9
5 percent increase of 2002, and this is the last
6 year of that. So, the real estate tax, to me, is
7 one of the most regressive of taxes. It hurts
8 people regardless of their ability to pay. Many
9 of our homeowners are senior citizens, many are
10 facing foreclosure, and next year, they can expect
11 an increase in their bills on a one-family house
12 of up to \$800, on a two-family house of \$1,000 or
13 more. I'm not supporting that. I don't always
14 agree with the budget crunchers, because when the
15 budget crunchers say that it's going to be such a
16 small amount, they don't tell you what the
17 assessments have looked like since 2002. We have
18 raised the rate, but the assessments have gone up
19 every year, unbelievably, and they've yet to come
20 down, even though the market has driven down what
21 you can sell your house for today. A commission?
22 A commission to study real estate taxes. Is that
23 like the one that was going to study water rates?
24 Where's the commission that was going to stop the
25 water rates, which went up eleven percent last

1
2 year, and are going to go up twelve percent this
3 year, and are going to hit the same people over
4 and over again? The same budget crunchers who
5 when it comes to my community, and I thank my
6 colleague Joel Rivera for mentioning it, are
7 eliminating a ladder company when they admit the
8 next nearest ladder company on City Island is ten
9 minutes away. Well, no thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
11 Monserrate.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank
13 you, thank you, very much, Mr. Chair. Just want
14 to outline that I also will be voting no on this
15 tax increase on property owners. Particularly, my
16 concern is that now as foreclosures are at record
17 highs, this could actually push more homeowners
18 into foreclosure. I am a strong believer in
19 progressive taxation. I don't believe that
20 increasing homeowners' taxes like we did in, for
21 the fiscal year 2003, when we raised them over
22 18.5 percent at the same time that real property
23 assessments were also going up, making major
24 burdens, particularly for residents in Queens and
25 the outer boroughs. I look forward to taking this

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

message to Albany, speaking to the issue of a more, much more progressive income tax that will raise taxes on the wealthy, and perhaps even going so far as to make a suggestion that the City of New York should be allowed to increase the hotel tax even more so, if necessary. Average working families in this City should not continue to bear the brunt of this very regressive taxation scheme. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member Vann.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Thank you, thank you, Mr. Public Advocate. Unfortunately, legislation or legislating is not a science. Every member's indicating what they believe will be the case, that's unfortunate but that's the reality. If I believed as others believe, then I would probably vote the way that they did, but we will find out eventually. I believe that voting for the property tax increase is a preventive method. I believe that, I don't want to have to vote for an increased taxation going forward next year, the year after that, or year after that. I'm drawing the line here. I'm going to vote for

1
2 this, but I'm not going to vote for any other
3 property tax, not matter what the circumstance may
4 be, and I do it because I think this is an
5 opportunity here to stop it, once and for all.
6 Regrettably, I'll be voting against 837. It's a
7 matter of principal, based on my legislative
8 history, and what I've stood for previously,
9 though I clearly understand the need for it, from
10 DC37's perspective, and I congratulate them on
11 their win, but for me, as rare as it is, it's a
12 vote on principle. And finally, I want to
13 congratulate Bed-Stuy Restoration of the Bed-Stuy
14 community. We made a significant step in our Bed-
15 Stuy gateway business improvement district, it's
16 on the road, will happen shortly, and I want to
17 thank all that's involved to get it to this point.
18 Notions, I have the merchant's association, Bed-
19 Stuy Restoration, and many others. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
21 Stewart.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Thank you.
23 I'd like to see this, this debate, I see it's two
24 sides. And we have to look at the alternatives.
25 Do we want to continue safety on our streets? Do

1

2

we want quality of services to our seniors?

3

Continue quality education in our schools?

4

Adequate health services? Do we want to continue

5

quality of life in our districts? Or do we want

6

to go back to the '70s? Brothers and sisters, I

7

think most of us don't want to go back to the

8

'70s, and we should at least plan, and if we don't

9

plan now, make the changes, we will, if we fail to

10

plan, that mean we planning to fail. And so,

11

brothers and sisters, I think we should at least

12

consider this and vote for the tax increase.

13

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member

14

Stewart, thank you. Seeing all this, I'll just

15

make a couple of comments. And first I want to

16

congratulate the stamina and the fortitude of the

17

new Bronx County Commissioner on Elections, Naomi

18

Silie for being with us all day. You know, so.

19

[applause] And congratulate her. I hear Board of

20

Election meetings go all day, also, so this is

21

good prep for your future. I want to congratulate

22

DC 37 on their stamina and fortitude, as well, to

23

get Intro 837 passed. I want to congratulate all

24

of the members that I think this body again has

25

been the most deliberative and open body about the

1
2 issues before it. I think that I want to thank
3 the Speaker and the Finance staff and all of the
4 members that tried to come up with alternative
5 cuts, and come up with other ideas to push
6 forward, to make sure that we try to find ways to
7 make sure that our City stays safe, that our
8 children stay educated, and that our streets stays
9 clean. I don't think anyone here believes that
10 we've done enough, though, and I would agree with
11 the speakers that have all said we need to do more
12 to make sure City agencies take more out of their
13 budget that is unnecessary, that we do more to go
14 after the Department of Education, which has
15 billions of dollars in lines that they don't need,
16 shouldn't have, and we need to go after. We need
17 to do more to go after the other agencies that
18 have budgets that are really wasting money doing
19 redundant work, chasing after people to do
20 unnecessary checks and balances in a time of
21 austerity. But for us to not think that we're on
22 the precipice of a worldwide recession, and we
23 need to do something about it; for any one of us
24 to think that the tax increase that we had to do
25 in 2001 did not bring us back to the black and add

1
2 positives to our budget, and to our economy, are
3 mistaken. My community is part of the main,
4 primary areas that are dealing with the highest
5 rate of foreclosures due to predatory lending
6 practices and predatory practices by people that
7 are doing service. So we need to make sure that
8 we have services. I will have people that will be
9 hurting, I will have constituents that will have
10 problems, I will have constituents that will have
11 to fight to create services and safety nets for,
12 and that's what we need to do as Council Members
13 to fight to protect our districts in every way
14 possible. We cannot say that the fight to cut and
15 the fight to protect are not equally important,
16 but the fight to protect our communities is what
17 we need to do every day. Yes, we will have to do
18 more, and make other major decisions between now
19 and the time that we get out of this problem, to
20 resurrect our City and to hold on to what's most
21 precious, and that's to continue making this City
22 the best City in the United States and the best
23 City in the country. So I'm going to be voting
24 yes to the increase, knowing that we have to
25 continue our safety net, we have to continue to

1
2 protect those that are in trouble, and we have to
3 continue to speak up to those issues that are most
4 important to us. I want to also thank the
5 concerned Citizens for Motorcycle Safety.

6 Democracy happened at City Hall today. They were
7 concerned about a bill that the hearing had
8 happened, they showed up to talk about it, and I
9 hope that they had an opportunity to talk to every
10 member here today. And I'll cut myself off at
11 this time. [laughter] That, there are no more,
12 as seeing there's no one else, what's the next--?

13 SPEAKER QUINN: Reports on special
14 committees, of which there are none, we'll please
15 move onto the reports of the standing committees.

16 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
17 Civil Service and Labor, Intro 837, residency
18 requirement for City employees.

19 SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general
20 orders.

21 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
22 Economic Development, Intro 848.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general
24 orders.

25 CLERK: Preconsidered reso 1736.

1

2

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

3

4

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Finance, Intro 842.

5

6

SPEAKER QUINN: Couple on general orders.

7

8

CLERK: Intro 879, Hotel Occupancy Tax.

9

10

SPEAKER QUINN: Amended and coupled on general orders with a message of necessity.

11

12

CLERK: Intro 887, property taxes.

13

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

14

15

CLERK: Preconsidered Reso 1740.

16

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

17

18

CLERK: Preconsidered Reso 1741.

19

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

20

21

CLERK: Preconsidered M1258 and Reso 1742, M--

22

23

SPEAKER QUINN: Coup--Oh, sorry, go ahead. No, go ahead.

24

25

CLERK: [laughs] MN1.

1

2

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

3

4

CLERK: Preconsidered M1259 and Reso 1743, MN2.

5

6

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

7

8

CLERK: Preconsidered M1260 and Reso 1744, Capital Budget Modification.

9

10

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

11

12

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Land Use, LU861 and Reso 1745.

13

14

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

15

16

CLERK: LU876 and Reso 1746 through LU903 and Reso 1756.

17

18

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general orders.

19

20

CLERK: LU939 and Reso 1757.

21

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled to be filed pursuant to a letter of withdrawal.

22

23

CLERK: LU941 and Reso 1758, through LU953 and Reso 1769, various applications.

24

25

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general

1

2 orders.

3

4

5

CLERK: Report of the Committee on
Parks and Recreation, Intro 877A, naming of 49
thoroughfares and public places.

6

7

SPEAKER QUINN: Amended and coupled
on general orders.

8

9

10

CLERK: Report of the Committee on
Rules, Privileges and Elections, Preconsidered
Reso 1737, qualifications of Council Members.

11

12

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general
orders.

13

14

15

16

CLERK: Preconsidered M1254 and
Reso 1770, approving the appointment of Naomi C.
Silie, as the Bronx County Commissioner of
Elections.

17

18

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general
orders.

19

20

21

CLERK: Report of the Committee on
Transportation, Intro 546A, Parking Regulations
During Snowstorms.

22

23

SPEAKER QUINN: Docketed and referred
to the Committee on Transportation.

24

25

CLERK: Preconsidered 895.

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general

1

2 orders with a message of necessity.

3 [background noise]

4 SPEAKER QUINN: General order
5 calendar.

6 CLERK: Resolution appointing
7 various persons Commissioner of Deeds.

8 SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on general
9 orders, and I would now ask for a roll call on all
10 items that have been coupled on the general - - .
11 I just want to make two quick announcements, that
12 following the end of the Stated Meeting, there
13 will be a reception in the Committee Room to honor
14 and thank Council Members McMahon, Monserrate,
15 Addabo and Como for their service, and wish them
16 the best of luck, and all are invited to that. I
17 also just want to make note on the announcements
18 attached to your agenda, the next Council meeting
19 on January 7th is a charter meeting, so by charter
20 requirements it starts at noon, or some facsimile
21 close to noon. But the start time will be noon,
22 so please note that on your schedules. Thank you,
23 and if now we could have a roll call on all the
24 coupled general items, please.

25 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: I just want to

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

remind all of the members that during the roll call, you should not ask for permission to explain your vote on the topics that you talked about during discussion of general orders. So, and since it's almost 5:00 o'clock, I'm going to try to keep to that rule. So, don't try to double up on your conversations. Roll call.

CLERK: Addabo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Yeah, may I--I didn't speak, so may I be briefly excused?

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABO: Real quick, I want to thank Speaker Quinn for her efforts on Intro 837, the residency bill, and the staff for working things out with DC37. And you know, in an effort to expand the fairness and equity amongst our city workers, I too also hope that in the coming year this, this choice of where to live can be expanded to others, including engineers, carpenters and communication workers. So, I hope that they can do this in the coming year to expand the residency requirements for other city workers. I vote no on Intro 887, no on Reso 1741, yes on all others. Thank you.

1

CLERK: Arroyo.

2

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic]

3

Aye.

4

CLERK: Avella.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Yes on all

6

items except I vote no on Intro 887 and

7

Preconsidered Reso 1741.

8

CLERK: Baez.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: [off mic]

10

Aye.

11

CLERK: Barron.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Just a

13

point of information, Mr. Chair, did you make that

14

rule up? That we can't--

15

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: No, sir, it's

16

a rule, it's a rule. [laughter]

17

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: This is the

18

first time I've heard it.

19

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: No, we haven't

20

enforced it, but it's been a rule.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh. So

22

you're just thinking 'em up as go along.

23

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: We just

24

haven't enforced it. And, and due to this is the

25

1

2 last meeting of the - -

3 SPEAKER QUINN: It is a rule, it is
4 a rule.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: It is a
6 rule? I see we have selective enforcement.
7 [laughter] I vote no on Intro 887 and no on
8 Preconsidered Reso 1741, and aye on all the rest.

9 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Well, we'll
10 find the number in a minute.

11 CLERK: Brewer.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [off mic] I
13 vote--[on mic] I vote aye on all, but I want to be
14 maybe the lone voice on 837 and the wonderful
15 workers at DC37, I think I've made it clear to the
16 terrific president, that I hope nobody moves out,
17 that it's not something that I, with my heart
18 support, because I want every single DC37 worker,
19 who is the backbone of all of our communities, to
20 live in the five boroughs, and I hope that we can
21 work together on affordable housing, so that
22 nobody ever, ever, ever, ever moves out of New
23 York City. I vote aye.

24 CLERK: Como.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: I vote no on

1
2 887, 879A, and Preconsidered Reso 1741. I vote
3 aye on all others.

4 CLERK: Comrie.

5 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Aye on all.

6 CLERK: De Blasio.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO:

8 Permission to explain my vote? In the interest of
9 preserving--

10 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: --our
12 services in this City, our safety, our wellbeing,
13 I'm voting for today's property tax proposal, and
14 I honestly believe we have no other choice. So
15 although I vote with great reluctance, I must vote
16 yes. When we approved tax cuts in the past, our
17 fiscal situation was not in peril; now the
18 financial future of New York City is much more
19 bleak, we've had proposals for numerous cuts to
20 our agencies, to our under-resourced schools, to
21 our short staff police force, to our overstretched
22 sanitation department. We cannot allow those cuts
23 to happen now or in the future, or that will
24 destroy the quality of life in our neighborhoods.
25 So, we have to make some tough decisions today.

1

2 And we thankfully, as part of the agreement today,
3 are able to say to all New Yorkers that we have
4 saved--

5 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: He didn't, he
6 didn't--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: --the
8 tax rebate. We have saved the tax rebate for this
9 year, which is crucial, and that will help
10 families right now. We have saved 500 police
11 officers, who will join us next year, who we need
12 to protect our neighborhoods. Now voting to
13 rescind this tax cut is not an easy decision for
14 any of us. Times are tight, New Yorkers are
15 hurting, a property tax increase will not make
16 things easier in the short run. But the
17 alternative is simply not an option, we cannot
18 allow our City to return to the bad old days of
19 the '70s, when crime was rampant, our schools and
20 subways were a national embarrassment, and basic
21 social services were only a dream. For two
22 decades, we paid the price for such short sighted
23 fiscal mismanagement. I salute the courage of my
24 colleagues in the City Council who are joined
25 today in taking the long view and the hard view on

1

2 this action, so that New York City can avoid the
3 unbearable pain of the past and start on a path to
4 a more secure future. I vote aye on all.

5 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: FYI, he did
6 not speak about it during general discussion.
7 [laughter]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: That is
9 correct, sir, thank you for noticing.

10 CLERK: Dickens.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS:
12 Congratulations to DC37 on Intro 837, and aye on
13 all.

14 CLERK: Dilan.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: [laughs] I
16 would say, Mr. President Pro Tem, we would trust
17 your enforcement on the rule, but I just saw you
18 commit a rule violation as well that I won't
19 mention. [laughs]

20 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: That was my
21 daughter, I'm sorry. [laughter]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: I just want
23 to take a brief second to talk about a subject
24 that I did not speak during general order
25 calendars, and that's to wish all of my colleagues

1
2 who are leaving this chamber well, in their future
3 endeavors. I know a lot of you are going to be in
4 positions to help out this City, and I know many
5 of you personally, and I also know that you guys
6 will not forget the City in which you live and the
7 City which you guys come from. So just, you know,
8 remember the little people of the City of New
9 York, because the Speaker's right, we know where
10 you live. [laughter] With that being said, I'm
11 going to vote aye on all, except for Intro 887,
12 and Preconsidered Reso 1741, and aye on all
13 others.

14 CLERK: Eugene.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Aye.

16 CLERK: Felder.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: May I be
18 excused to explain my vote, please?

19 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: He's--Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Thank you.

21 First of all, in terms of the rule, I'd like
22 clarification, not at this time, and suggestion
23 about the not speaking twice, whether you're
24 allowed to speak once before on one item and then
25 on another item. For the future, for the future,

1
2 I would just request consideration which we talked
3 about for a long time, to make the rule that you
4 speak once period on any items you want, either
5 before or after. And having said that, I vote yes
6 on everything besides Intro 887, Resolution 1741,
7 and Resolution 1541, and just would like to add to
8 that which was said that it's, we're going, we're,
9 the Council again votes to take the bucket to the
10 same old well, and ask homeowners to bear the
11 brunt of swelling budget among dwindling revenues
12 that continues and continues. And yet, for years
13 due to growing assessments and past rate hikes,
14 property taxes have accounted for an increasing
15 stake of that burden. I believe that it's
16 unacceptable, and it will hurt all New Yorkers,
17 not only homeowners, but all New Yorkers, in this
18 difficult time. Thank you. And I'm out of order
19 in wishing everybody happy and healthy holidays.

20 CLERK: Fidler.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: First, I'd
22 like to thank the Speaker and all of my colleagues
23 for their support of this very small increase in
24 the hotel tax, and I'd particularly like to thank
25 those of my colleagues who are voting yes, just so

1
2 that they never have to hear me talk about it
3 again. Having said that, I vote aye on all with
4 the exception for the reasons that have been
5 articulated so well by so many of my colleagues,
6 of Intro 887 and Preconsidered Reso 1741, on which
7 I vote no.

8 CLERK: Foster.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: I'd like to
10 be excused briefly to explain my vote. I am
11 voting aye on everything, with the caveat that we
12 need to do something about making New York City
13 affordable. I am adamantly against lifting the
14 residency requirement because every year I put in
15 a Resolution asking for the State to look to make
16 police officers, firefighters, and even teachers
17 residents of New York City. And I think what this
18 does, it has nothing to do with DC37. What it has
19 to do with is doing more and more to displace low
20 and poor middle class, I mean, income people,
21 because New York is not affordable. And we very
22 much need to look into that, because the more and
23 more we exempt people from living in New York
24 City, the more and more we're going to see this
25 City be just for those that can afford it. Thank

1

2 you.

3 CLERK: Garodnick.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Moment
5 to explain my vote?

6 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I wanted
8 to express my vote of yes on all items on today's
9 calendar. I wanted to make one point about the
10 property tax increase, which is that my philosophy
11 on this was that we should be raising property
12 taxes until such point that we were satisfied that
13 we had cut sufficiently to justify asking New
14 Yorkers to dip into their own pockets to allow the
15 City to continue functioning. We now have seen
16 cuts from the Mayor for this year, at two-and-a-
17 half percent, next year, two-and-a-half percent,
18 and a full year, five. The additional seven
19 percent cut, which came out through the PEG letter
20 recently, the absence of the rebate for the next
21 fiscal year. And even if we are today to raise
22 the property tax to generate \$600 million, and a
23 hotel tax, we are still going to have a deficit of
24 \$1.1 billion next year. A deficit of \$1.1
25 billion, and that assumes a cut next year of \$280

1
2 million from the police, and \$575 million from the
3 Department of Education. So, to me, it is an
4 unfortunate circumstance, but it is a necessary
5 circumstance, and so I am going to be casting my
6 vote today, aye on all. Thank you.

7 CLERK: Gennaro.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Mr. Acting
9 Public Advocate, I'd like the opportunity to speak
10 on my vote.

11 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes, I'll
13 be supporting Intro 837. I want to, I want to be
14 associated with the conc--with the comments of
15 Chairman Addabo, with regard to basic fairness,
16 with regard to 837. It would be my hope in the
17 future that other employees that are part of the
18 career and salary plan will be able to take
19 advantage of this, as well, 'cause many of those
20 unions have the same language in their contracts,
21 as well. So I join Chairman Addabo in that, in
22 that sentiment. I would like to congratulate
23 Robert Jackson and Speaker Quinn for their work on
24 837. I also wish to thank in a very, very special
25 way, Council Member McMahon and Joe Addabo and

1
2 Hiram Monserrate, and Council Member Como, it's
3 been great to work with them. And I wish them
4 well, as everyone does, and I'll be voting yes on
5 all items today, with the exception of Intro 887
6 and Preconsidered Reso 1741, on which I'll be
7 voting no.

8 CLERK: Gentile.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: With
10 congratulations to my colleagues who are moving
11 on, I vote yes on all, except for Intro 887 and
12 accompanying Reso Preconsidered Resolution 1741, I
13 vote no on both.

14 CLERK: Gerson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Mr. Leader,
16 this Administration has made a commitment to an
17 incoming class of 250 incoming class of police
18 officers, of 250 in July--

19 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Same topic,
20 same topic, same topic.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Absolutely.
22 This relates--

23 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: You didn't
24 listen to the caveat.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Like--

1

2

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: You're not allowed to speak on the same topic.

3

4

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Like the motorcycles, Mr. Chair, any rate, we must expand that to the full compliment. With that, and with congratulations to my colleagues--

5

6

7

8

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Same topic. Same topic.

9

10

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: --I'm just, just doing the motorcycle thing, Mr. - -

11

12

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay, alright.

13

14

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Any rate, with that [laughter] with that, and with congratulations and best wishes to my colleagues, whom I'll miss, and happy holidays to all, I vote yes.

15

16

17

18

CLERK: Gioia.

19

20

COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: May I have a moment to explain my vote? Thank you, Council Member, President Pro Tem. I'm voting yes on all items, with the exception of 887 and Preconsidered Reso 1741, on which I will be voting no. I think now is the exact wrong time to be raising taxes. New Yorkers are struggling like never before.

21

22

23

24

25

1
2 They're watching the cost of everything go up,
3 whether it be the food they're putting on their
4 table, or their water bill, or trying to fill
5 their car up with gasoline. I mentioned to you,
6 Council Member, and in the Committee hearing
7 earlier, there's a woman who my office has been
8 working with over the past few weeks, trying to
9 prevent her home from being foreclosed. She
10 called my house, she called my office yesterday,
11 because she doesn't have enough money to buy her
12 children Christmas gifts. Now, this is not a
13 woman who would normally be considered poor in New
14 York, because she actually owns her home. Well,
15 we're helping her, and I hope she will avoid
16 foreclosure, and we put her in touch with Catholic
17 Charities to help her get some Christmas gifts for
18 her kids. But this woman is, is holding on by
19 just a thread. Raising her taxes, I do believe,
20 would force her from her home, and I know there
21 are thousands more like her around the City. And
22 for that reason, I have to vote no on raising
23 property taxes at this time. But I vote yes on
24 all other items. Thank you.

25 CLERK: Gonzalez.

1

2

COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye on

3

all.

4

CLERK: Ignizio.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes, I'd

6

like to vote no on 879A, 887, and 1741. Also vote

7

no on 497 and Land Uses 950 and 952. Aye on all

8

others.

9

CLERK: Jackson.

10

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: May I be

11

excused to explain my vote.

12

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Yes.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you.

14

First I'd just like to congratulate my colleague

15

Lew Fidler for introducing the piece of

16

legislation that we've been talking about for a

17

while. And finally, it's going to bring about

18

some additional moneys for New York City. And I

19

agree with him that it's not going to hurt the

20

average individual that is reserving a hotel room

21

in New York City, it's less than one percent. And

22

secondly, to all of my colleagues that are

23

leaving, I miss you all, and you know that we love

24

you here in the City Council. Mike and Hiram and

25

Joe, and to all my other colleagues I wish you all

1
2 a happy holiday season, and to make sure you and
3 your family are safe and sound. And I hope to see
4 you next year. And with that, I vote aye on all.

5 CLERK: James.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: May I be
7 excused to explain my vote?

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Difficult
10 times require bold and committed leadership to
11 preserve essential and core, and core services in
12 New York City. I recognize that the property tax
13 is a regressive tax that really needs reform. I
14 would urge that we would form a commission to
15 immediately study a much more progressive tax
16 system. In addition to that, I want to thank the
17 Pratt Area Community Council and all of the
18 individuals who have supported the Fulton Street
19 bid, as well as the Bed-Stuy gateway bid. And I
20 am happy that so many services have been restored,
21 including services to the Department of Education,
22 CUNY initiatives, ACS, Department of Sanitation,
23 Department of Social Services. I'm happy that our
24 seniors will now have a elder abuse prevention
25 program in place. The community board has been

1
2 restored, as well as a significant amount of
3 funding to the City Council. As a result of that,
4 I vote on aye on all. Thank you.

5 CLERK: Katz.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: I'm voting
7 aye on all. Just two very quick comments, if I
8 can. The healthcare trust fund was mentioned
9 before. Part of it, by the way, is in the
10 November 2010 plan. I would hope that we not only
11 take some of the money from that to try and help
12 some budget gaps, but also just study what can be
13 done property with that money. And I think that
14 that's a good idea. It may be of perfect use
15 where it is, but I think it's also good to take
16 another look at what we're doing. Second thing
17 is, I'd like to just congratulate again Councilmen
18 Addabo, Monserrate and McMahon and Como, but
19 especially the three that were in my class coming
20 in, I think there's always an affinity towards the
21 folks that you actually came into the legislative
22 body with. And so I wish them well as they go on
23 to bigger and better things. Congratulate them
24 and represent us well where you're going. I vote
25 aye.

1

CLERK: Lappin.

2

3

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I wish my colleagues well, we will miss you. And wanted to abstain on 877A and vote aye on the general order calendar.

4

5

6

7

CLERK: Liu.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

9

CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

10

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Aye

11

on all.

12

CLERK: Martinez.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Can I

14

conclude the subject I started but I didn't finish in my time?

15

16

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: No.

17

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Oh, okay.

18

I will be voting aye on all, and I want to

19

congratulate my colleagues and wish them the best,

20

I know they will be fighting for our City up in

21

Albany. And congratulation to DC37.

22

CLERK: McMahon.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Thank you,

24

Mr. Chairman, I request leave to explain my vote.

25

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Thank you.

As I cast my vote, last vote in the Council, I regret that I am not voting with the majority of the group that I've come to work with so closely on this particular, the matters before us today, or at least three votes. As we all know, our nation finds itself mired in one of the deepest recessions it has ever known, but it is cyclical, and we must look at it in those terms. First and foremost, it is our obligation on every level of government to get the economy going again. That's what the people in the City, State and nation expect us to do. And right now, the economy of this City is sputtering along like a car without gas, or running out of gas, and a vote to raise property taxes at this time, and hotel taxes at this time, would be like pouring sand into that engine, and causing the engine not only to stop, but to freeze and perhaps to be damaged forever. It is therefore my belief that this vote is not correct at this time. I understand that the City must balance it's budget, but we must balance it on an annual basis, not on a multi-year basis, and taking votes now, in anticipation of what may

1
2 occur in a year or 18 months or 24 months from
3 now; although, some may deem prudent, it's
4 certainly not fair to the homeowners facing
5 foreclosure, rising costs, loss of jobs. If
6 indeed there are a 100,000 jobs that have been
7 lost over the last year, how are those people
8 going to pay this increase in taxes? At the same
9 time, we've allows the uncontrollable costs in the
10 budget to spiral out of control, and that is where
11 we need to address our efforts. Lastly, I could
12 never vote for a budget that cuts fire services in
13 my borough and all the boroughs of this great
14 City. And I know that you guys have fought hard
15 to save some of the police officer positions, but
16 when we once had 40,000 cops just eight years ago,
17 and we now have 36,000, and the way it looks from
18 here, we are losing another 1,500 over the next
19 year. We need to get our priorities better into
20 line. Having said that, I respect those who
21 disagree with me. I vote aye on all items, except
22 for 879A, Intro 887 and Preconsidered Resolution
23 1741. I wish you all the best from the bottom of
24 my heart. I congratulate my colleagues Monserrate
25 and Addabo. And I commend my colleague Jim

1
2 Gennaro for running, no matter what your political
3 perspective, I think we can all agree that he ran
4 a good hard race like a real gentleman, that we
5 know that he is, and we wish Anthony Como as well.
6 [applause]

7 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Just for the
8 record, I knew it was his last vote, so I allowed
9 him to go longer. That's going to be the last
10 one. [laughter]

11 CLERK: Mendez.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Permission
13 to explain my vote?

14 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Tough time
16 require tough decisions, and oftentimes those
17 decisions are not popular ones. I don't think
18 that everyone here is totally happy, they think we
19 could've done better in some issues, and done more
20 in other areas, or done less in other areas. But
21 all in all, there are very few choices, and we are
22 in a fiscal crisis. And these were the only
23 measures available to us with this time period.
24 Having said that, I vote aye on all. Thank you.

25 CLERK: Monserrate.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank you very much. I'm going to be voting no on Intro 887 and aye on all, and thank you to all my colleagues. Be well. Yeah, I'm voting aye on all and on the Resolution, also. No? The accompanying resolution, is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Permission to vote on the Resolution so you can leave now?

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: I vote aye on 887 and no on the accompanying resolution, and aye on the rest. [background noise] Alright, I'm going to pass, I'll get right back, Leroy. [background noise] Talk about a last--I pass, I'll get back to you.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay.

[background noise]

CLERK: Palma.

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I vote aye.

CLERK: Reyna.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Monserrate, Monserrate, let's go back, he's ready now.

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Slight brain glitch there. I'm voting no on 887, I'm voting no on Preconsidered

1

2 Reso 1741, and aye on the rest. Thank you for
3 your patience. [laughs]

4 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you for
5 your service. [background noise]

6 CLERK: Reyna.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Happy and
8 healthy and blessed holiday season to all of my
9 colleagues and all of the staff at the City
10 Council. I just wanted to vote aye on all except
11 Intro 887 and Preconsidered Resolution 1741, I
12 vote no.

13 CLERK: Sears.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: I'm very
15 quick, I just vote aye on all. Thank you.

16 CLERK: Stewart.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: I just
18 want to take this opportunity to wish my
19 colleagues a happy holiday. Also, the State
20 Senators elect, Addabo and Monserrate, I wish you
21 all the best; and Congressman Elect McMahan, I
22 wish you all the best, also. I want to thank the
23 Speaker and--Speaker Quinn and the staff for
24 listening to me and giving the time of the day
25 when I need it. Thank you. And I hope you

1

2 continue to do so next year. I vote yes on all.

3 Thank you.

4

CLERK: Vacca.

5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I vote no on
Intro 887 and on the accompanying Resolution,
7 1741, and I vote aye on the remainder.

8

CLERK: Vallone.

9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Hiram,
it's okay, you don't actually get to vote on any
11 in Albany, anyway, so. [laughter]

12

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: We
don't want to start there, Peter.

14

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I vote aye
on all except 879A, 887 and Preconsidered Reso
16 1741.

17

18 SPEAKER QUINN: Thanks for wearing
a tie to vote no, Peter, thanks.

19

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: It's a
protest vote today.

21

CLERK: Vann.

22

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Yeah, I vote
aye on all except I vote no on 837.

24

CLERK: Weprin.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye on all,

1

2 and I too want to wish my colleagues that are
3 leaving us well, and we hope that they come back
4 and visit us often. Aye on all.

5 CLERK: Yassky.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: I vote aye
7 on all items. I just want to say on the, on the
8 property tax vote, you know, I told, I do believe
9 it's the responsible thing to do at this point,
10 that we will, when times get very tough next year,
11 we will need the funds that we are rolling over as
12 a result of this vote, to keep the street safe,
13 and to keep the streets clean. But I will tell
14 you, there is a lot of work that needs to be done,
15 and I wish more of it had been done by the
16 Administration in bringing the government down to
17 a size that we can afford with this economy. The
18 City budget has grown by 25 percent in real terms
19 in the last seven years. That was based on an
20 economy that we just do not have today, we don't.
21 And, you know, the Speaker and many of us on the
22 Council put forward suggestions for ways to reduce
23 spending, that are real. You know? The ads for,
24 on--the anti-smoking ads that the City pays for,
25 having teachers do jury duty in the summertime, so

1
2 we don't have to hire substitutes. Those are,
3 those are real things that you'd wish you didn't
4 have to do, but we cannot afford everything we
5 wish to do. And you know, I told the Speaker's
6 staff that I was going to vote no on the tax cut,
7 on the tax increase, I'm voting for it, because I
8 do believe it's responsible, but--But I, I want to
9 make publicly very clear to the Mayor and his
10 Administration that they can't, we cannot tax our
11 way out of this budget mess. And the easy work,
12 it's easy to reach for the tax button, which they
13 have done this time. The hard work is getting
14 into the agencies and going piece by piece and
15 taking out the parts that we do not need. They
16 need to do that work, but I, I vote aye on all,
17 and I wish to add my, my well wishes to, for all
18 of our departing colleagues, departing from the
19 City Council. Thank you.

20 CLERK: Oddo.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I vote no on
22 879A, 887, Preconsidered Resolution 1741, yes on
23 all others. And just wish my friends, Hiram
24 Monserrate and Joe Addabo luck in Albany, watch
25 your back. [laughter] To Anthony Como it's been

1
2 a pleasure, it's been a pleasure having you and I
3 hope to have you back here in a year or so. And
4 to my friend Mike McMahon who's in the, in the
5 room, who's been my partner in this for six years,
6 I think we've had a personal rivalry that's kind
7 of raised each other's game, and I think that was
8 good for Staten Island. And we were supposed to
9 run against you, we were supposed to run against
10 each other for borough president, but that got
11 shot to hell now, didn't it. [laughter] But,
12 Mike, it's been a pleasure, God bless.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: I
14 chickened out.

15 CLERK: Rivera.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Before I
17 give my vote, I want to say congratulations to
18 Naomi Silie, who's here with us. She's our
19 appointment to the Board of Elections, and she's
20 been here all day. [applause] Her mother has
21 been here with her patiently, so we want to, you
22 know, we had a conversation and I said, "Naomi, I
23 hope you ate your breakfast, I hope you had lunch,
24 'cause you will be here for a while." So, Naomi,
25 congratulations, to your mom, congratulations.

1
2 And I vote aye on all. And The Bronx was united
3 on this vote.

4 CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

5 SPEAKER QUINN: I vote, I vote aye
6 on all.

7 [pause]

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Just a point
9 of technical information, Lauren Axelrod from the
10 general counsel's office has been tearing me a new
11 one because I, I remembered that the rule on
12 9.150(b) it says a member shall not speak on any
13 matter at a Stated Meeting more than three times,
14 except by permission of a majority of the members
15 of the Council. So, I had said one time, but I
16 remember something different. I think this is
17 wrong, and we need to address it in the--

18 MALE VOICE: I want two minutes,
19 Mr. Chairman!

20 MALE VOICE: Mr. Chairman, we
21 should do another meeting.

22 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Lauren would
23 not let me leave [laughs] I want to thank Lauren
24 for being so diligent and having a copy of the
25 rules here. So. [applause] [background noise]

1
2 SPEAKER QUINN: For, just in
3 defense of Leroy, from when Peter Vallone was
4 Speaker, I do remember it the way Leroy remembered
5 it, so.

6 [pause]

7 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay, just to,
8 the tally for everything that has been done so
9 far. All item on today's, all items on today's
10 general order calendar were adopted by a vote of
11 51 in the affirmative, zero in the negative, zero
12 abstentions; with the exception, exception of
13 Intro 887, which was adopted by a vote of 33 in
14 the affirmative, 18 negative, zero abstentions;
15 and Resolution 1741, which was adopted by a vote
16 of 33 affirmative, 18 negative, zero abstentions;
17 Intro 879A which was adopted by a vote of 46
18 affirmative, five negative, zero abstention; LU
19 950 and Reso 1766 which was adopted by a vote of
20 50 affirmative, one negative, zero abstention; LU
21 952 and Reso 1768, which was adopted by a vote of
22 50 in the affirmative, one negative, zero
23 abstention; Intro 877A, which was adopted by a
24 vote of 50 in the affirmative, zero negative, with
25 one abstention; Intro 837, which was adopted by a

1

2

vote of 50 affirmative, one negative, zero

3

abstention. That's it. Next is--[background

4

noise] Next is discussion of Resolutions? Oh,

5

introduction and reading of bills? Introduction

6

and reading of bills.

7

SPEAKER QUINN: Bills are referred

8

to Committees as indicated on the agenda.

9

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Discussion of

10

Resolutions, one minute. Seeing one, Council

11

Member Mendez, Council Member Avella.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I'll make

13

this short. Today we are introducing

14

Preconsidered Reso 1735 and this body is sending a

15

message to Washington--

16

SPEAKER QUINN: Council Member

17

Mendez, just one second, if we could get, I know

18

folks are exiting, but if folks could be quiet

19

while folks speak about the resolutions, when

20

they're exiting, thank you. Sorry, Council Member

21

Mendez.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you

23

very much, Madam Speaker. So, today, in passing

24

this Reso we are sending a message to Washington

25

that at all levels of government we have a

1
2 responsibility, and the federal government created
3 public housing during the Bush years, it has been
4 chronically underfunded, and New York City Housing
5 Authority alone has not received \$502 million in
6 capital funds. This stimulus package, if
7 President Bush should sign it, would bring \$5
8 billion capital moneys to public housing
9 authorities across this country. We made a
10 commitment decades ago to create affordable
11 housing and to create public housing, and we must
12 adequately fund it and its infrastructure. And I
13 thank my colleagues for working on such short
14 notice to send this message to Washington. Thank
15 you very much.

16 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
17 Avella.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Thank you,
19 Acting Public Advocate. What is your exact title
20 up there?

21 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: President Pro
22 Tem, President Pro Tem.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Thank you.
24 I just want to speak a few seconds about Reso 497,
25 which, and I'm actually going to speak in favor of

1

2 it, it is based upon a resolution that I had tried
3 to introduce, which unfortunately the Committee
4 did not vote on. But the main reason for my
5 speaking is--

6

SPEAKER QUINN: Council Member
7 Avella, just if we could get quiet, I just want to
8 apologize, people are speaking out of--

9

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Yeah, quiet,
10 please, I'm sorry, quiet, please.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: But my main
12 comment is, I understand the Speaker, during the
13 caucus made a comment that she made my Resolution
14 better by this Resolution, and I have to say, no
15 Madam Speaker, you did not, this is a much watered
16 down version. And I have to say it's an absolute
17 disgrace that I was not given the opportunity to
18 submit an amendment to make this Resolution
19 stronger. And it only points out the lack of
20 democracy in this body that more points to
21 political favoritism than anything else. But I
22 still urge my colleagues to support it.

23

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Any other
24 requests for discussion on Resolutions? Seeing
25 none, all in favor of the aforementioned

1

2 Resolutions--Do I read that or you guys read that?

3 MALE VOICE: No, you read it.

4 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: All in favor
5 of the Resolutions 497, 1541 and 1735, vote aye.

6 GROUP: Aye.

7 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Any
8 opposition? General discussion?

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Oh, god, please no.

10 SPEAKER QUINN: Council Member
11 Foster and Council Member Dilan.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: I promise
13 I'll be brief, 'cause I'm ready to go, but I
14 followed rules as I was told not to mention
15 anything about my colleagues leaving when I voted,
16 I was supposed to do it now. And I would be
17 remiss--

18 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: That's true.
19 Please be quiet so that Council Member Foster can-
20 -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: I would be
22 remiss if I didn't say congratulations. But
23 especially to Hiram and Joe who, God puts people
24 in your path that otherwise you'd never meet. And
25 but for this body, and running into these great

1
2 two guys, by far, hands down, my two favorite
3 here, I would have never been to the Rockaways
4 that no wonder it's Far Rockaway, 'cause it's
5 really far. Joe had to meet me before we crossed
6 a bridge, and I really didn't know if it was a set
7 up or what, 'case I didn't know where we were
8 going. But for seven years we've been together, I
9 kind of feel like college and graduation and they
10 graduated and I'm on the extended program.
11 [laughter] But this is really just the beginning,
12 Joe, you've been with me through highs, lows, we
13 have our inside jokes. Albany's--well, Albany's
14 gain, sorry for you that you got to go to Albany,
15 really is our loss. And to Hiram, I don't, he
16 must've left, but Hiram, we were co-chairs,
17 partners in crime, he actually pushed me to the
18 floor during the shooting, 'cause I forgot the
19 rule when you hear guns, duck. I stood there and
20 looked. And it really, I can honestly say, I'm
21 much better a person because of the two of you.
22 So thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
24 Dilan.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: Yeah, I just

1
2 want to take a moment to acknowledge, and I see
3 that the gentleman is still in the chambers, but I
4 guess a colleague of ours, whose outcome of the
5 election that he ran is still uncertain, but I
6 just want to take time to appreciate Council
7 Member Jim Gennaro who ran a spirited campaign
8 [applause] for State Senate in Queens. And I'd
9 say, Jim, I don't know how the outcome is going to
10 turn out, and I see Jimmy Oddo giving me dirty
11 looks, I see you, Jimmy. [laughs] I don't know
12 how the outcome is going to turn out, but I
13 certainly wish you the best, and if it doesn't
14 turn out in your favor, I would hope that you
15 would consider that effort again. And to, to Mr.
16 President Pro Tem, I think you know me well, when
17 you served as Rules Chair, you know why I love the
18 intricacies of the rules of this institution. I
19 think the side debate that we had on the rules
20 here would only help this body in its proceedings
21 as we go forward. I do want to mention, just as
22 a, as a precaution to your strict enforcement of
23 the rules, and I know the Speaker will appreciate
24 that I say this while there's few members in the
25 chambers, but every member does have the

1
2 legislative prerogative to lay aside any item for
3 debate, which requires every minute, every member
4 to speak for ten minutes. And I know nobody wants
5 that, so a little bit of selective enforcement of
6 the rules, sometimes is a little helpful. So just
7 keep that in mind in the future. [laughter]

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: I'll remember
9 that. Anyone else for general discussion? I just
10 wanted to take the opportunity as the Chair of the
11 Queens Delegation to, I may be losing four
12 members, but I'm definitely losing three. And I
13 just want to thank Anthony Como, who is, who's
14 shown himself to be a real gentleman. I look
15 forward to working with him in public service.
16 Council Member Monserrate and Addabo, I'd say a
17 lot, but it's all been said, and everybody's
18 moving out the room. I'll talk to you personally.
19 And I want to also remind everyone as they go into
20 the Committee Room for a little libation, that
21 Council Member Jim Gennaro has been a great role
22 model and, and has run a great race, and we look
23 forward to him hopefully moving on. But if he
24 stays with us, working with us, in the great
25 capacity that he has, he's been a good friend and

1

2 colleague. With that, I want to wish everyone a
3 happy, blessed and productive holiday season. God
4 bless everyone.

5

6

SPEAKER QUINN: [off mic] We are
adjourned.

7

8

9

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Are adjourned,
we are adjourned for the year. [gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG 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.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature_____

Date September 17, 2009

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: