

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND ETHICS

----- X

February 14, 2020

Start: 11:09 AM

Recess: 1:45 PM

HELD AT: 250 Broadway
Committee Room - 14th Fl

B E F O R E: STEVEN MATTEO
 Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Margaret S. Chin
 Vanessa L. Gibson
 Karen Koslowitz
 Stephen T. Levin

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

1 COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND ETHICS

2 (sound check) (pause) (gavel)

3 CHAIRPERSON MATTEO: Good morning,
4 everyone. I'm Steve Matteo. I'm Chair of the
5 Standards and Ethics Committee. I've been joined by
6 my colleagues Karen Koslowitz and Margaret Chin. The
7 Committee on Standards and Ethics is meeting today
8 regarding a pending disciplinary matter opened on
9 January 15, 2020 pursuant to Section 10.80 of the
10 Council Rules. Because it is necessary for the
11 Committee to discuss confidential personnel issues I
12 am making a motion for the Committee to move into
13 Executive Session pursuant to Article 7 of the Public
14 Officers Law. Do I have a second?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I second.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I second

17 CHAIRPERSON MATTEO: Recognizing a second
18 a motion has been made, a second the committee move
19 into executive session. All those in favor of said
20 motion say aye. Aye. Noting that the ayes have it,
21 I'm now going to close this portion of the meeting
22 and reopen in executive session. Before we proceed
23 into executive session, I will note for the public
24 that that committee may vote on certain items of
25 business during the session, and as a result there

1
2 may be an additional open session of the committee
3 later today. Thank you. [gavel] [pause] [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON MATTEO: Good afternoon
5 everyone. Thank you and thank you for your patience.
6 Again, I'm Steven Matteo. I'm Chair of the Committee
7 on Standards and Ethics. I'm joined by Steve Levin,
8 and Karen Koslowitz. Margaret Chin was with us this
9 morning in Public Session and also in Executive
10 Session. I'm also—we are also joined by our General
11 Counsel Jim Caras, and our committee to the Counsel
12 Ben Smith. The Committee on Standards and Ethics
13 opened a meeting earlier today regarding a pending
14 disciplinary matter initiated pursuant to Section
15 10.80 of the Council Rules. Because it was necessary
16 for the committee to discuss confidential personnel
17 issues in conjunction with the pending disciplinary
18 matter, the Committee voted to move into Executive
19 Session pursuant to Article 7 of the Public Officers
20 Law. We are now returning to open session to make
21 public the outcome of today's vote regarding the
22 pending disciplinary matter. Based upon a wide
23 ranging investigation conducted by both the Council's
24 Office of the General Counsel, and the Special
25 Counsel retained by the committee to investigate and

1
2 prosecute this disciplinary proceeding the Committee
3 voted today to issue multiple charges against Council
4 Member King. In sum, the charges allege that between
5 2017 and up until just two days ago, Council Member
6 King engaged in conduct that violated multiple
7 provisions of Council Resolution Number 1138 of 2019,
8 violated certain laws of the City of New York, the
9 rules and policy of the Council as well as possible
10 certain laws of the State of New York. More
11 specifically, the charges we voted to issue against
12 Council Member King are as follows: Disorderly
13 conduct, conflicts of interest violations, violations
14 of Council Resolution Number 1138 of 2019, and
15 violations of the Council's Anti-Discrimination and
16 Harassment Policy, which allegedly occurred in 2017.
17 As you all know, on October 28, 2019, the Council
18 unanimously, except for Council Member King, voted to
19 issue the most sweeping and serious sanctions ever
20 posed against a Council Member. Among those
21 sanctions was the placement of a monitor in Council
22 Member King's office to protect his staff against the
23 sort of egregious behavior laid out in the
24 Committee's Report supporting the resolution and to
25 ensure that the Council's Rules and policies were

1 adhered to by Council Member King. Since Council
2 Member King's return from the one-month suspension
3 imposed on him by the Council, it is alleged that he
4 repeated worked to circumvent the monitor, and he has
5 violated the large majority of the provisions of the
6 resolution. Additionally, and since the issuance of
7 our report, both our Committee Counsel and the
8 Special Counsel were approached by additional
9 witnesses with new information regarding alleged past
10 misconduct by Council Member King. Among this
11 misconduct was a completely unacceptable-unacceptable
12 violation of the Council's Anti-Harassment and
13 Discrimination Policy. Finally, and again, we cannot
14 at this time provide great detail, but there are also
15 allegations of misappropriation by Council Member
16 King of public funds for his own personal benefit.
17 We, of course, take such violations of the public
18 trust incredibly seriously, and are also issuing
19 charges specific to his apparent misconduct. I must
20 stress how deeply and profoundly troubled this
21 committee is by the allegations set forth in the
22 charges. While we do not issuance of these charges
23 lightly especially so soon after the prior charges
24 and resulting resolution we must also must—we must

1 also act to protect our Council staffers, and address
2 alleged violations of the Council Rules and city and
3 state laws. We're here to serve the people of the
4 city and act as stewards of the public trust. If any
5 member among us fails to honestly and steadily carry
6 out those responsibilities, appropriate action must
7 be taken to address that conduct. With that,
8 pursuant to the Rules of the Council and the
9 procedures of the committee, we will hold a
10 disciplinary hearing on these charges on March 9,
11 2020 beginning at 10:00 AM. The hearing will be held
12 in executive session and Council Member King will
13 have a right to be represented by counsel at the
14 hearing. The Council Special Counsel, Carrie Cohen
15 will again present the case against Council Member
16 King to the committee. While the proceedings are
17 confidential, after the committee deliberates on the
18 charges, the findings and recommendations of the
19 committee will be made public in a report to the
20 Council. This concludes our summary of the
21 committee's votes during today's meeting, and I'm now
22 going to adjourn the meeting. Thank you. [gavel]
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date: February 18, 2020