

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

----- X

September 23, 2020  
Start: 10:23 a.m.  
Recess: 10:37 a.m.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing

B E F O R E: Daniel Dromm  
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Keith Powers  
Helen Rosenthal  
Diana Ayala  
Mark Gjonaj  
Vanessa L. Gibson  
Francisco Moya  
Barry Grodenchik  
Rory I. Lancman  
Jimmy Van Bramer  
Adrienne E. Adams  
Karen Koslowitz  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.  
Alicka Ampry-Samuel  
Farah N. Louis  
Steven Matteo

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

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

3

2 UNIDENTIFIED: What's this?

3 UNIDENTIFIED: Notes.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, okay.

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: At this time, can  
6 sergeants please start their recordings? Okay.  
7 Sergeant Holt, take it away.

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and welcome  
9 to the Committee on Finance. At this time, would all  
10 panels please turn on their videos? I repeat. All  
11 panelists, please turn on your videos. Thank you.  
12 To minimize disruption, please place all electronic  
13 devices to vibrate or silence. I repeat. Please  
14 plate all electronic devices to vibrate or silent.  
15 Chair Dromm, we are ready to begin.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Thank you  
17 very much. Thank you very much and good morning and  
18 welcome to today's finance committee meeting. I am  
19 Council member Daniel Dromm and I am the Chair of the  
20 committee. We have been joined by the following  
21 Council members. Council members Cornegy, Cumbo,  
22 Koslowitz, Rosenthal, Van Bramer, Grodenchik, Adams,  
23 Ayala, Moya, Powers, Louis, Matteo, Gjonaj, Amprty-  
24 Samuel, Chin, Brannan, Perkins, and Cohen. Today,  
25 the committee will be voting on seven items which

2 includes four bills, two land-use items and a  
3 transparency resolution. Let's start with the four  
4 pieces of legislation. Proposed intro number 2039A,  
5 sponsored by myself at the request of the Mayor would  
6 extend the deadline for the filing of an application  
7 or a renewal application due in calendar year 2020  
8 from March 16th, 2020 to July 15th, 2020 for certain  
9 real property tax exemption or tax abatement  
10 programs. The programs include the Senior Citizen  
11 Homeowners Exemption, the Disabled Homeowners  
12 Exemption, the Veterans Exemption, and the  
13 Alternative Veterans Exemption, the School Tax Relief  
14 Exemption, the Disabled Crime Victim Good Samaritan  
15 Exemption, the Clergy Exemption, and the Cooperative  
16 and Condominium Property Tax Abatement. Due to the  
17 COVID-19 pandemic, New York City was forced to shut  
18 down the normal order of business to help stop the  
19 spread of coronavirus which included gatherings of  
20 people at workshops, seminars, and in person visits  
21 top offices to normally assist people navigating  
22 technical matters by filling out real property tax  
23 application and renewal documents. According to the  
24 Department of Finance, approximately 2650 eligible  
25 initial and renewal applications were received after

2 the existing deadline of March 16th, 2020, but prior  
3 to July 15th, 2020. By extending the deadline for  
4 filing the property tax exemption and tax abatement  
5 programs to July 15th, this bill will make sure that  
6 these property owners can receive their tax benefits  
7 now instead of having to wait until next year to  
8 apply again.

9           Next is proposed intro number 1225A.  
10 This bill, which I have also sponsored, would require  
11 the Department of Finance to make best efforts to  
12 collect the name, telephone number, and email address  
13 of all owners of real property and, once such  
14 information is received, to ensure that it is  
15 maintained in a computer database used by the  
16 Department for purposes of administering the real  
17 property tax. Currently, the Department of Finance  
18 does not have a systematic approach to collecting and  
19 maintaining telephone and email contact information  
20 for property owners in order to communicate with them  
21 regarding their properties and property taxes.  
22 Instead, it primarily relies on physical mailings to  
23 contact owners. This bill will encourage the agency  
24 to collect the data necessary to use alternative,  
25 more effective methods of communication and outreach

2 to dismantle-- to disseminate information of  
3 property owners in a faster, more efficient way. I'd  
4 like to thank the counsel finance division staff who  
5 worked on these two bills. Senior counsel Rebecca  
6 Chiasson, assistant counsel-- assistant director  
7 Emra Edev [sp?], Assistant counsel Stephanie Ruiz,  
8 and finance analyst Luke Zangarle [sp?]. Excuse me  
9 if I messed up the pronunciation of that last name.

10 Next is proposed intro 1702A. This bill,  
11 sponsored by Council member Koslowitz, would require  
12 that Department of Finance to included notice of  
13 property tax bills that used prior year tax rate that  
14 the taxes due are subject to adjustment upon the  
15 adoption of the tax rate for the new fiscal year.

16 And the last of the bills is proposed  
17 intro number 1705A. This bill, sponsored by Council  
18 member Matteo, would require the Department of  
19 Finance to establish and maintain a system to contact  
20 property owners by email and provide access  
21 electronically to the receipt for an information on  
22 each payment made for charges on their statement of  
23 account. I will now give Counsel members Koslowitz  
24 and Matteo an opportunity to speak about their  
25 legislation. Council member Koslowitz?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: This is just  
3 to notify people. Many people get their bill in June  
4 and they get surprised with they get another bill and  
5 the bill that comes in June will tell them what this  
6 bill is all about and there will be another bill  
7 coming so they won't be surprised when they get the  
8 bill. I've gotten many calls in the office claiming  
9 that, I paid it and why am I getting another bill?  
10 So, this will alleviate that problem.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council  
12 member Koslowitz. Minority Leader Matteo?

13 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Thank you,  
14 Chair Dromm. Intro 1705 will create an electronic  
15 receipt system for payments on property taxes. Since  
16 the city instituted the electronic payment system,  
17 there has been no proof of payment issued by the city  
18 for online payers of property taxes. You can get a  
19 receipt if you pay in person at one of the New York  
20 City Department of finance centers, but not online.  
21 Payers have to wait for the next quarterly statement  
22 to know with certainty that TOS has properly  
23 attributed their payment to their account. This  
24 legislation will change and allow individuals to sign  
25 up for payment receipts related to their property or

2 at the point of payment so that they have a  
3 definitive statement from the city that their tax  
4 bill has been paid. This is just basic fairness and  
5 makes the online payment system the city has had for  
6 some time even more convenient. This legislation  
7 will not come into effect until next fiscal year  
8 because I am sensitive to adding the cost of our  
9 agencies during this challenging time, even if it is  
10 not a minimal cost and I wanted to ensure that this  
11 new feature did not make belt-tightening any harder  
12 than it needed to be. I think the administration for  
13 negotiating this legislation and good faith and  
14 appreciate the work that was done to bring the bill  
15 to passage, especially Kenny Grace. I want to thank  
16 Jason Goldman, our finance committee counsel Rebecca  
17 Chiasson, Emory Evas, Stephanie Ruiz, and my Chief of  
18 Staff David Carr. I also want to thank the Speaker  
19 and Chair Dromm for their support and I urge my  
20 colleagues to vote yes. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very  
22 much, Minority Leader Matteo. We have also been  
23 joined by Council member Yeger. Next, we have two  
24 resolutions related to the property tax exemptions.  
25 The two resolutions relate to a project called Albany



2 Kingston in Council member Cornegy's district. The  
3 resolutions would approve the termination of two  
4 prior article five tax exemptions granted by the  
5 Council in 2007 and consent to do voluntary  
6 dissolution of the current article five owners.  
7 Council member Cornegy is supportive of these  
8 actions.

9           The last item is the transparency  
10 resolution. The transparency resolution sets forth  
11 the new designation and changes in the designation of  
12 certain organizations receiving local, aging, anti-  
13 poverty, and youth discretionary funding and funding  
14 pursuant to certain initiatives in the budget. As  
15 with all transparency resolutions, Council members  
16 will have to sign a disclosure form indicating  
17 whether or not a conflict exists with any of the  
18 groups on the attached list. If any Council member  
19 has a potential conflict of interest with any of the  
20 organizations listed, he or she has the opportunity  
21 to disclose the conflict at the time of their vote.  
22 As a reminder, please disclose any conflicts you may  
23 have with proposed subcontractors used by  
24 organizations sponsored by discretionary funding.  
25 These disclosures must be made before the

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE 10

2 subcontractor can approve. Disclosure forms must be  
3 completed and submitted prior to the vote on the  
4 transparency resolution may be emailed to Charles  
5 Davis. We have also been joined by Council members  
6 Koo and Cohen and are there any questions on any of  
7 these legislations? Okay. I will now ask Billy  
8 Martin, committee clerk, to call the role.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Good morning. William  
10 Martin, committee clerk. Roll call vote Committee on  
11 Finance. All items are coupled. Chair Dromm?

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cornegy?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cumbo?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koslowitz?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rosenthal? Van Bramer?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

21 [background comments]

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Grodenchik?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Adams?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I vote aye.

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

11

2 [background comments]

3 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ampry-Samuel?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I would

5 just like to disclose on the record that today we

6 will be voting on a transparency resolution and my

7 brother is a teacher with the Department of Education

8 in the event there is a conflict. I vote aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Rosenthal?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'm sorry.

11 Did you call my name again, Billy?

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Yes. Council member

13 Rosenthal?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I vote

15 [inaudible 00:12:07].

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Ayala?

17 Council member Ayala?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Gjonaj?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I vote aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: Moya?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Powers?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I vote aye. Thank

25 you.

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

12

2 COMMITTEE CLERK: Louis?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I would like to  
4 disclose on this [inaudible 00:12:59] my sister is  
5 [inaudible 00:13:05].

6 UNIDENTIFIED: Cannot hear her.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council member, I  
8 apologize. We lost your audio for a moment.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Sorry. I'll do  
10 that. Can you hear me now?

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: All right. I just  
13 wanted to say I disclose on the record that my sister  
14 works as an adjunct professor at CUNY which may pose  
15 as a conflict and I wanted to vote aye on all.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: thank you. Thank you.  
17 Gibson?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Good morning. I  
19 vote aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Matteo?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: One moment. Okay. By a  
23 vote of 16 in the affirmative, zero in the negative,  
24 and no abstentions, all items have been adopted by  
25 the committee. Thank you.

2                   CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much  
3 and, with that, I will adjourn this meeting at  
4 approximately 10:37 in the morning. Thank you very  
5 much.

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

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 October 11, 2020