

(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).

REGULAR MEETING – CITY COUNCIL

-JUNE 28, 2021-

Regular meeting of the City Council was called held on Monday, June 28, 2021 via ZOOM Webinar.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. by the Council President.

Roll call showed the following members present: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

Also Present: Anthony Moretti, Director of Administration; Christopher Millea, City Solicitor; Robert Strom, Finance Director; David Dimaio, City Council Budget Analyst; Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel.

On motion by Council Vice-President Brady, seconded by Councilman Ferri, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

Council President Paplauskas announced that Christopher Goodinson of Cranston is present on the call and he is Senior Patrol Leader for Troop 1 Conimicut Narragansett Council and he is present this evening to earn his Eagle Scout Merit Badge.

I. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS

EMILY SANITA - Citation

Council Vice-President Brady asked that this be continued to the September meeting.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Council, it was voted to continue this item to the September Council meeting. Motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to accept written comment and place it on the record. Motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS & PUBLIC COMMENT

Anthony Liberatore, 18 Bank St., appeared to speak regarding the Budlong Pool issue and stated that the pool has been open since 1936 and it has been a traditional spot for Cranston residents ever since. The only reservation he has is that the pool has been closed since August 2019 and while you are having discussions, you might want to take into consideration before announcing the pool is open, will it be good enough to start this year? The issue being you can't start that pool up until it is cleaned, until it is filled with water, which is as soon as you turn the water on, it would cost the City \$4,300 to \$4,500 in the water bill. He also stated that there has never been a guarantee that when you hit that start button that the pool is going to operate properly because it is so old. Over the years, we have replaced many of the major mechanical issues with it, but when there is a pump and a motor involved, sitting for three years, there could always be an issue. He thinks the Council is doing a wise thing and just discussing it, not making any announcement. If you make a decision this evening, which you said you were not going to, you are going to give yourself two weeks to get that pool ready and prepared to go since the playground camp would normally start July 6th, which would bring you somewhere to the middle of July 6th, which would only give you approximately five weeks before the children return back to school. Being involved with the pool for many many years, I tis not just turn on the switch and have clear water. It is very much involved.

Carmen Pierre Canel, 195 Newman Ave., East Providence, appeared to speak on behalf of doulas and the importance of women expecting mothers to have access to doulas during their pregnancy and during their birth experience.

III. RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION URGING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PASS HB5929 "THE DOULA REIMBURSEMENT ACT"

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to approve the above Resolution.

Under Discussion:

Councilwoman Germain sated that this Resolution came with a lot of passion because before she was a Council Member, she was working with a lot of advocates and she herself giving birth and know firsthand how important it is to have culturally competent support. Sometimes when you are a black woman or low-income family woman and you need that support, you need to have someone that can understand you, that can support you. Not every woman can afford to have a doula and that is why she has been working on this Bill.

Councilwoman Renzulli stated that she agrees with Councilwoman Germain of how this is extremely important. She herself had twins and was lucky enough to have a doula purely because she had a friend who was studying to become a doula. She could not afford one either and she did have complications in her births. If she did not have a doula, she thinks she could have been in a much worse situation because she had someone there to advocate for her and help her. There is no question that this Bill will save lives and be good for women of color and women carrying multiples, but it also makes strong economic senses because women who use doulas require fewer expensive medicine during childbirth, which will save them hospitals and insurers a ton of money. She does have some amendments she would like to make to this Resolution after everyone else speaks.

Councilwoman Vargas stated that doulas are not just used during pregnancies, but obviously, also a support system even after the pregnancy as well as during childbirth and provides emotional support. She asked to be added as co-sponsor of this Resolution. She also stated that she would like a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor's Office and to the Sponsors of the Bills at the State. She encouraged that the House and Senate Bill numbers be also included in the Resolution.

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to amend the above Resolution as follows: line #49, after "Doula Reimbursement Act", add "(H5929 Substitute A and S0484)". Motion passed unanimously.

-JUNE 28, 2021-

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to amend the above Resolution as follows: line #52, after “A copy of this resolution is transmitted to the”, add “Governor and Sponsors of both the House and Senate Bill”. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Marino thanked Councilwomen Germain and Renzulli for bringing forth this Resolution and thanked the State for taking the initiative and hopefully it will bring this full to home plate as a positive step forward for women’s health. She asked that she be added as co-sponsor of this Resolution.

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Council Vice-President Brady, it was voted to amend the above Resolution as follows: line #18, add another paragraph to state: “WHEREAS, the occurrence of severe maternal morbidity and maternal death is significantly higher among twin and other multiple pregnancies compared to singles in pregnancies with worse perinatal outcomes”. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Council Vice-President Brady, it was voted to amend the above Resolution as follows: line #36, after “private insurance programs”, delete “with fewer c section” and add “as studies show, a doula’s assistance can prevent complications and significantly lower cesarian and pre-term rates as well as increase breastfeeding rates”. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to amend the above Resolution as follows: line #15, after “WHEREAS”, add “the problem”. Motion passed unanimously.

Roll call was taken on motion to adopt the above Resolution as amended and motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

IV. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

**FINANCE COMMITTEE OF JUNE 7, 2021
(Council Vice-President Edward J. Brady, Chair)**

5-21-02 *ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO APPLY EASTERN AND WESTERN POLICE IMPACT FEES TOWARDS RENT*

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to adopt the above Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilman Donegan stated that for anyone on the call this evening, what this is is it is to apply Eastern and Western Police Impact Fees towards what the City pays for rent for the Headquarters of the Police Department.

Roll call was taken on motion to adopt the above Ordinance and motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

-JUNE 28, 2021-

5-21-03 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 5 OF THE CODE OF THE CIYT OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'BUSINESS LICENSES AND REGULATIONS' (Fireworks Vendors)*

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Council Vice-President Brady, it was voted to adopt the above Ordinance.

Under discussion:

Councilman Donegan stated that this change was approved by the City Council in the budget during the budget process.

Roll call was taken on motion to adopt the above Ordinance and motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REAL ESTATE TAX ABATEMENTS

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -8. Councilwoman Vargas was not present for roll call vote.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MOTOR VEHICLE TAX ABATEMENTS

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -8. Councilwoman Vargas was not present for roll call vote.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TANGIBLE TAX ABATEMENTS

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote 9-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

TAX INTEREST WAIVER APPROVALS

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to approve the above list of Tax Interest Waiver Approvals. Motion passed on a vote 9-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR UN-DOCKETED ITEMS

Carl Santucci, 32 Fernbrook Ct., Chair of Conservation Commission, appeared to speak regarding the rodent control issue and stated that there may be a few other reasons for what is happening in these areas. He would like to be either consulted or be part of this way of mitigating this or even just for the Conservation to be in discussions with anyone that would be working on this simply because there are ways to eradicate rodents but there are side effects from many many pesticides. He pleaded with the Council to just consider the Conservation Commission as part of this method of getting this to a solution. Council President Paplauskas suggested that Mr. Santucci and Director Moretti exchange phone numbers or e-mails and figure out how to loop the Conservation Commission in on this.

-JUNE 28, 2021-

VI. ELECTION AND/OR APPOINTMENT OF CITY OFFICIALS

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

- *Re-Appointment of Dr. Taino J. Palermo for term to expire on July 30, 2024*

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilman Ferri, it was voted to re-appoint Dr. Taino J. Palermo as a member of the Library Board of Trustees. Motion passed on a vote 9-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

CRANSTON HISTORIC CEMETERIES COMMISSION:

- *Appointment of John Hill by Council President for term to expire on June 28, 2024*

No action needed.

VII. REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS

None.

VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- *LEGAL FEES REPORT FROM 7/1/20-6/28/21*

No discussion was held.

Director Moretti addressed the rodent issue and stated that there is a pretty deplorable localized condition in the Stadium area that the City is trying to address from various points. Since this was brought to the City's attention, the City cited an individual in the neighborhood to stop feeding wildlife. That person has been arraigned in Municipal Court and it is continued to the next hearing for a pretrial later this week. The City is requesting a consent agreement for the City or its agent to go onto that property. This is receiving the number one focus of the Administration at this point. We have a comprehensive effort going on with himself, as Chief of Staff to the Mayor, along with Police Chief Winquist, Director Mason from DPW and David Rodio from Inspections and Solicitor Millea. This afternoon, Colonel Winquist had a red alert issued in the area within a two-mile radius of Caporal St. to reach approximately 30,000 contacts. The alert was letting people realize that there was a problem in the area that has been identified and ways that they could help out to lessen further expansion of that issue. The Administration is also working on a letter to go out to the neighbors in that area and we tried working with DEM, but DEM tells us that they cannot be involved in this issue. This problem will not be fixed short term with our bating program. It is well beyond that so in an emergency basis, we will go out to a reputable extermination company to address the issue in the most professional manner possible and abide by all environmental concerns.

Council President Paplauskas asked that Director Moretti keep this in his communications for the next Council meeting to give the Council an update on how things are going and then maybe get another update a few weeks after that at the August Public Works Committee meeting. Director Moretti stated that that would be fine. His first discussion with an extermination company is there is not going to be a quick fix to this and when he described the situation, they said it could be several months so certainly the Administration would be happy to do a status update on a monthly basis as the Council wishes. Another measure the City is trying to take is ask Solicitor Millea to take a look at all our Ordinances on the books to see where there is any holes and have him spearhead a more comprehensive look at the Ordinances on the books and they invite anyone to participate in those discussions and give input.

-JUNE 28, 2021-

IX. COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Council President Paplauskas announced that we are on track for in-person meetings in the Council Chambers for the July 26th meetings where there will be an Ordinance Committee meeting prior to the regular Council meeting. The technology upgrades in the Chambers have been going well. He wished everyone a Happy and Safe Fourth of July and also announced that there will be fireworks in Cranston for the first time in years thanks to Cranston Cares at the Atwood Ave. field.

X. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

COUNCILMAN FERRI:

- *Update from Economic Development regarding what activity there is and what projects are being worked on*

Councilman Ferri stated that people are always asking him about economic development in the City. He questions if there can be an update either monthly or bi-monthly as to what is going on in the City as far as economic development goes, such as what new projects are being worked on, what new businesses are being drawn to the City, just as general information so we can answer people with knowledge of what is going on. Economic Development Director Franklin Paulino gave an update. He stated that Rolfe Square has been paved, new lighting has been installed and new trees have been planted and new striping of crosswalks has been done. The small businesses there are very happy with the project. After this project, we will be moving to Knightsville. He has already spoken to some of the businesses there to see what the issues are, their ideas and their concerns and any input that they may have. We have done various ribbon cuttings for various banks such as Chase Bank in Garden City, Navigant Bank on Phenix Ave. and Centreville Bank on Rolfe Square. They are helping small businesses with a special grant that they have for \$1,000.

- *Report from Public Works or Administration regarding what roads are being paved or are on the verge of being paved*

Councilman Ferri suggested that maybe the Council can have an update on a monthly or bi-monthly basis on such things as road paving. He receives a lot of phone calls from people that want their roads paved. He knows there is a list, he knows there is a book with 300 pages in it, he knows the roads are all rated, but what he does not know is whether or not someone's road is going to be paved. He asked if it is possible that the Council can have some kind of a list to say to people that their road is not going to be paved this year, but it is on the verge of needing it and it is a possibility it will happen next time. He does not know what the big secret is.

Director Moretti stated that there is no big secret. The Administration defers to Director Mason for many many factors. He certainly does have a list and he does things in phases or we call them rounds. The next rounds scheduled are Fountain Ave., Meadow Ave., Princess Ave., Chestnut, Byron, Pengrove and Webster. He also has another round that he tentatively has plans for, but he points out that that could change. That would be the reluctance because things could change, if you promise people their road is going to be paved next year or the year after, it is probably hard to say because of a lot of factors. If it is helpful, he can have a list of the roads he just mentioned and leave that with Director Paula Smith and she will have it on hand if the Council Members have any questions and they can call her.

Councilman Reilly asked Director Moretti if the list for this year is already budgeted for. Director Moretti stated, yes. Councilman Reilly asked if the Administration would be comfortable in providing that list to work off of. Director Moretti stated, yes, but if it changes though, he asked that the Council not throw it back at the Administration and represent to whoever you represent that this is what is identified but not committed to.

-JUNE 28, 2021-

COUNCILWOMAN MARINO:

- *Status of Budlong Pool*

Councilwoman Marino stated that earlier in June, she reached out to Director Moretti in regards to this issue having heard from some residents and recognizing their concerns was legitimate. She understands and appreciates the Administrations earnest attempts to look into this issue during that timeframe and she also understands the obstacles in the way. She has represented to members of the community and has not provided them with false assurance that this was going to be able to happen this year, but that we would make every effort to try to make it happen. What members of the public may not be aware of is that our budget begins April 1st and we were faced with the issue of the COVID restrictions and at that time, going back to April 1st, we had no reason to think that there would be such a change and we were expecting that it would be like last year. she thinks it is important that we make every effort next year to have this not be the case. She understands that there are going to be some question marks as to the condition of the pool given that it has not been operational for the last two years so it will be more important that it is addressed very early on in the season as early as possible and we can work with Parks and Recreation along those lines. The Budlong Pool is a treasure, it is a give back to our community that they deserve, it is nostalgic, it is historic and the people deserve that from us if we can make that happen.

Director Moretti thanked Councilwoman Marino and the City Council Members for sharing in this decision and for being supportive and understanding of our situation. The Mayor would love to have that pool open, but there are financial barriers. The economic factor is hiring lifeguards and also hiring of pool attendants at this stage it would be really hard. Mr. Liberatore’s comments pretty much supports where things are. What the Mayor would like to do is look into the possibility of using Park View School and work with the School Department and the Superintendent is fine with us using the pool and if we could get lifeguards, that is really what it comes down to now.

COUNCILWOMAN RENZULLI:

- *Update on APRA money*

Councilwoman Renzulli asked if there is any update on the APRA money coming in. Director Strom stated that the information he has right now is that we are in the process of calculating, based on our CAFRA report and using FY 19 as the base year and compare it to the actual revenues of 2020 and if you use the 4.1%, which is the formula, for the 19 or 20, we have a gain of approximately \$3,663,000 in revenue eligibility and what he is doing now that we are in the process of closing out 21, he wants to see how that follows with this 4.1% formula as well and they will determine the monies and he believes just from the revenue standpoint, we should come in pretty well considering what we budgeted for in for 22, which was \$7.8 million.

XI. COUNCIL BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

XII. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COUNCIL*

* These new matters are referred for public hearing to the appropriate sub-committee of the Council. They are listed here for referral and vote to a committee and for informational purposes.

6-21-01 ***ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 8.36 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘RODENT CONTROL’ COMPLAINTS. Sponsored by Councilman Donegan and Councilwoman Renzulli. Referred to Ordinance Committee 7/26/2021.***

6-21-02 ***ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 10.32.010 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – STOPPING, STANDING AND PARKING ON SPECIFIC STREETS – LOADING ZONES (Plainfield St. and Tweed St.). Sponsored by Councilman Ferri. Referred to Ordinance Committee 7/26/2021.***

-JUNE 28, 2021-

6-21-03 ***ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 6.08 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘ANIMALS GENERALLY – DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS’. Sponsored by Councilman Reilly, Councilwomen Renzulli and Germain. Referred to Ordinance Committee 7/26/2021.***

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Council Vice-President Brady it was voted to refer the above new business to the respective Committees. Motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwoman Marino, Councilman Ferri, Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Reilly, Council Vice-President Brady and Council President Paplauskas -9.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ON CLERK’S DESK

None.

• ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committee

(See Stenographic Notes of Linda Cordeiro, Stenotypist)