

*(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**

**-FEBRUARY 28, 2022-**

Regular meeting of the City Council was called held on Monday, February 28, 2022 via ZOOM Webinar.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 P.M. by the Council President.

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

Also Present: Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff; John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor; Robert Strom, Finance Director; Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel; David Dimaio, City Council Budget Analyst.

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

### **I. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS**

None.

### **II. PUBLIC HEARINGS & PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **III. RESOLUTIONS**

None.

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**IV. REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE  
(Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair)**

***RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REAL ESTATE TAX ABATEMENTS***

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

***RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MOTOR VEHICLE TAX ABATEMENTS***

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

***1-22-01      ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, LOCAL RI-153, CUSTODIAN UNIT***

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

**ORDINANCE COMMITTEE  
(Councilman Matthew R. Reilly, Chair)**

***12-21-02      ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 10 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF  
CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC' (Tabor St.)***

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

***1-22-02      ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 10, CHAPTER 04, SECTION 140 OF  
THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'MOTOR  
VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC' (General Provisions, Administration and Enforcement –  
One Way Highways)***

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

Under Discussion:

**Councilwoman Renzulli** stated that the Ordinance states that the City will send notices and she questioned if the Council typically assigns that to a certain department and who will be responsible for sending the notices. She also asked if that should be added in the Ordinance. She also stated that the Ordinance states that notice should go out ten days before the City Council votes on adoption. She stated that perhaps the notice should go out ten days before the Ordinance Committee meeting so people have the opportunity to speak at that meeting before it goes to the full City Council.

**Council President Paplauskas** asked one of the sponsors to see if they were in agreement to amendments or have suggestions. He also stated that he is sure everyone received an e-mail from the City Clerk inquiring about who was going to have responsibility of sending out the notices.

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**Councilwoman Marino** stated that with respect to notices being sent out, she specifically does not think it is wise to designate it to a specific department. She does not want to micromanage the Administration Executive Office. This way it gives leeway as to what department they see fit to provide notices. She understands that the Clerk's Office is understaffed, but that is something that should not be permanent so by keeping it broad like this, it provides the option for another department to take on that task if the Mayor and Administration deem appropriate. In terms of "notice shall be mailed at least ten days before the City Council votes on adoption of any such Ordinance", the intention is that the City provides notice at least once, not on a continual basis, to residents. This way, there is minimum burden to the City, but yet, it is providing property owners notice and it would be up to the property owners to then be responsible to reach out and follow through to see if that was adopted.

**Council President Paplauskas** asked Administration, if this Ordinance passes this evening, where would they see these notices coming out of? He would feel more comfortable if this fell under the Traffic Engineer. Director Moretti stated that his knee jerk reaction was City Clerk's, but it is something to be considered for the Traffic Engineer. He likes the idea of not tying this down and see where resources are at that time.

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": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Reilly, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -9.

**1-22-03            *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 10, CHAPTER 12 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – TRAFFIC REGULATIONS FOR SPECIFIC STREETS' (Shaw Ave.)***

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

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR UN-DOCKETED ITEMS**

**Roy Witt**, 96 Concord Ave., appeared to speak and stated that his main concern is in the last year or so, there is a large amount of litter and trash on his street and also the area of Pontiac Ave. and Rolfe Square, especially on a windy day. This is an unsightly thing for our community. He asked if the City has any Ordinances regarding this issue and if it is enforced. Council President Paplauskas stated that this may be an issue that could be discussed in the Public Works Committee if the Chair is agreeable to placing this on the docket. Council Vice-President Ferri stated, absolutely. Director Moretti stated that there is an Ordinance on the books regarding littering. To enforce this, the person would have to be caught by the Police. The Public Works Committee would be the best place to discuss this issue.

**George Grammas**, 67 Carrie Ann Dr., appeared to speak and stated that he is in the process of building a pocket food pantry at Cranston High School East and is looking for donations of canned food or individually wrapped nutritious snacks to stock it.

**Council President Paplauskas** asked Mr. Grammas when he plans on having the pantry open. Mr. Grammas stated that he's hoping to open March 26<sup>th</sup>. Council President Paplauskas asked all Council members if they have any donations, they be brought to the Council Chambers by the end of March and Mr. Grammas can pick them up. Councilwoman Germain thanked Mr. Grammas for this wonderful idea. She had this idea a long time ago. She feels that every child should have something to eat at school. This is a project she is working on and she would like to partner with Mr. Grammas so they do not duplicate anything. Mr. Grammas stated to Councilwoman Germain that he would be happy to work with her on this and he will definitely keep in touch with her about this.

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Councilman Campopiano stated that this is a wonderful idea and commended Mr. Grammas. Council President Paplauskas asked Director Moretti if he could get word out across City Hall about bringing donations in. He asked Mr. Grammas what is the best way for people to get the donations to him without going to City Hall. Mr. Grammas stated that if the people give him their address, he can pick up the donations. He also stated that there will also be a box at Cranston High School East to drop off donations as well as a box at the Greek Orthodox Church on Oaklawn Ave. Council President Paplauskas stated that people can also reach out to him and he can connect them to Mr. Grammas. Councilwoman Renzulli asked Mr. Grammas if he's looking for more snack food or more focused on meals for the homes. Mr. Grammas stated that he is looking for any individual wrapped snacks such as granola bars. He also stated that he will have a flyer done by the end of the week. Council President Paplauskas asked Mr. Grammas that when he gets the flyer done, send it to him and he will distribute it to the City council and the Administration.

**Jon Doucette**, 759 Pontiac Ave., appeared to speak and stated that he lives near a commercial building, which was recently sold and he has heard it would be turned into low-income housing. He asked if, in the City, it is possible to convert a commercial building into low-income housing or if there is something or some procedure that the neighborhood would be notified about, if that were to happen. He also stated that he reached out to the Zoning Department and no permits have been pulled for that sort of situation yet. Director Moretti stated that if it is a Change of Zone or something like that, the City would send out notices. There are State and City guidelines that the City has to follow. He asked Mr. Doucette to send one of the Council Members an e-mail and we can connect him with the right person to try to get him some information on that.

### **VI. ELECTION AND/OR APPOINTMENT OF CITY OFFICIALS**

None.

### **VII. REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS**

None.

### **VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

#### ***LEGAL EXPENSE ANALYSIS FOR 7/1/2021 – 12/20/2021.***

No discussion was held.

#### ***REQUEST TO BE CONTINUED IN SERVICE FOR ONE YEAR DEPUTY CHIEF ROBERT RYAN, CRANSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT***

**Director Moretti** appeared to speak.

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to approve the above request. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Reilly, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8. Councilwoman Marino was not present for roll call vote.

**Director Moretti** stated that prior to this meeting, Councilwoman Vargas had inquired about trash collection and we were informed at approximately 6 pm that trash is delayed this week for all residents by one day due to the Monday holiday and also due to the storm this week.

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### IX. COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

**Council President Paplauskas** asked for a moment of silence for the people in the Ukraine.

- ***GEORGE GRAMMAS, LIFE SCOUT WITH TROOP 6 CRANSTON – BUILDING A ‘POCKET FOOD PANTRY’ AT CRANSTON HIGH SCHOOL EAST AS AN EAGLE PROJECT***

**Council President Paplauskas** thanked Mr. Grammas for coming out this evening and stated that this is a wonderful Eagle Scout project and thanked him for that.

**Council President Paplauskas** stated that the City Council survey regarding ARPA Funds is completed. He thanked Councilwomen Renzulli and Vargas for their hard work as well as Mr. Dimaio and Mr. Garcia from the Library. He also stated that there should be a link to that starting tomorrow and we can all share it.

### X. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

#### COUNCIL VICE-PRESIDENT FERRI:

- ***Economic Development Update – all current development and upcoming development***

**Franklin Paulino**, Director of Economic Development, appeared to speak and stated:

- Park Theatre – announcement of reopening was announced on February 22nd and seating capacity is going to be 1050 patrons.
- Legion Bowl – there was an announcement of proposal for a four-story multi-use development of mix use with 74 residential units.
- Garden City – six new stores; J Crew had an expansion inside the store; Nike is under construction and will be opening Spring 2022; Ulta is also coming to Garden City; Providence Diamond is moving to a new location in Garden City; Edible Arrangements closed their store.
- Ribbon cutting for a real estate services will be held on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 932 Oaklawn Ave.
- The Small Business Advisory Board will be meeting in March.
- Economic Development is still working on the CARES Act CDBG Fund for \$1,000 Grant and the \$2,500 up to \$7,500.
- Currently, we have helped 27 businesses for \$1,000 Grant and 8 businesses for Grant ranging from \$2,000 to \$2,500. We also have helped 17 businesses with Grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$7,000.
- Upcoming events that we will be having in the City of Cranston: the Governor is planning to visit the City of Cranston the third week of March to small businesses on Rolfe Square and Park Ave.
- We are also working on an RFP for Rhode Island Rebound to take it outside for small business grant.
- He is also working on two other major projects, which he is not able to discuss at this point.

**Council Vice-President Ferri** addressed the \$1,000 Grant that is still being offered and he stated that it does not seem like a lot of businesses are taking advantage of that and he had recommended it to a business approximately three months ago and they said that it the application was so difficult that it was not worth the \$1,000 to fill out the application. He asked if Director Paulino has run into this problem with other businesses being frustrated with the process in applying for that \$1,000. Director Paulino stated not that he has, but his office will walk them through it. The only issue with that \$1,000 is the paperwork. They have to have receipts and that is one of the issues that they are confronting and the problem is that they have a problem getting the receipts to his office, but the application is pretty simple and if they need help, we would be glad to help them.



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**Council President Paplauskas** stated that Councilwoman Marino had to step away from the meeting for a family emergency.

**COUNCILWOMAN GERMAIN:**

- *Implementation of the Ordinance regarding Eden Park Dr.'s One Way during school hours*

**Councilwoman Germain** stated that last month, an Ordinance was passed making Eden Park Drive a one-way during school hours and she would like an update if this has been implemented.

**Director Moretti** stated that he was not sure what the question was for this item, but if the question is if the signage has been put up, he does not have an answer to that, but he can follow-up on that tomorrow.

**Councilwoman Germain** asked if there is a timeframe after an Ordinance is passed that signage has to be put up or taken down. Director Moretti stated that, typically, the City Clerk sends out notification to all the departments of all Ordinances that are passed and then at that point, Mr. Mulcahy will notify the personnel at Highway to manufacture the signs and they then will go out. Typically, they are very attentive to it, it is within days, barring staffing storage in that department.

**Council President Paplauskas** asked that Eden Park signage be placed on the next Public Works Committee agenda for update as well as Village Ave. sign that was passed a few months ago.

- *Littering Enforcement and Procedure*

**Councilwoman Germain** stated that this issue is a real one. She would like to hear from legal on the enforcement. Director Moretti stated that he thinks it is a good idea to refer this to the Public Works Committee to give further thought.

**COUNCILWOMAN VARGAS:**

- *Black History Month*

**Councilwoman Vargas** stated that today is the last day of the month, which is Black History Month and we need to make sure that we acknowledge and understand and know the history of the past so we can continue to move forward united as a nation. She also stated that as we start the first day of March tomorrow, she would like to recognize the women she serves on the City Council with as well as Rosalba, our Clerk, and all the women, a Happy Women History Month throughout the month of March.

**XI. COUNCIL BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER**

None.

**XII. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COUNCIL\***

**Council President Paplauskas** stated that the Council meetings will be going back in person in March and continuing hybrid model of Zoom and YouTube and we will try to get back in person.

\* 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.

**2-22-01**      ***ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH RHODE ISLAND LABORERS DISTRICT COUNCIL 1322, TRADESPEOPLE/MECHANIC UNIT. Introduced pursuant to Charter Sect. 11.02.1. Referred to Finance Committee 3/7/2022.***

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**2-22-02      *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 15 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION'. Sponsored by Councilman Donegan and Councilwoman Marino. Co-sponsored by Councilwomen Germain and Vargas. Referred to Ordinance Committee 3/17/2022.***

**CLAIMS REFERRED TO CLAIMS COMMITTEE – THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022.**

- ***Property Damage Claim:***
  - *Judith Bresette or Wendy Murray from alleged incident on December 23, 2021.*
  - *Pentagon Properties from alleged incident on January 7, 2022*
  - *Michael Markarov from alleged incident on January 27, 2022.*
  - *Assunta Colella from alleged incident on January 29, 2022.*
  - *William Connolly from alleged incident on January, 2022.*
  - *Donald Mangiarelli from alleged incident on February 3, 2022.*
  - *Michelle Colaneri from alleged incident on February 7, 2022.*
  - *Teresa Tatro from alleged incident on February 8, 2022.*
  
- ***Personal Injury Claim:***
  - *Rosa Reyes from alleged incident on December 24, 2021.*
  - *Vilma Gutierrez from alleged incident on January 10, 2022.*

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to refer the above new business to the respective Committees. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Reilly, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8. Councilwoman Marino was not present for roll call vote.

**XIII. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ON CLERK’S DESK**

None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

/s/ Rosalba Zanni  
Acting City Clerk

(See Stenographic Notes of Ron Ronzio, Stenotypist)