

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES, AND ELECTIONS

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January 22, 2014  
Start: 12:24 p.m.  
Recess: 12:37 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
CITY HALL

B E F O R E:  
BRAD S. LANDER  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MARGARET S. CHIN  
INEZ E. DICKENS  
RAFAEL L. ESPINAL, JR.  
DANIEL R. GARODNICK  
VINCENT IGNIZIO  
MARK LEVINE  
MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO  
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ  
DEBORAH L. ROSE  
JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

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

2 [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Good afternoon and  
4 welcome to the first meeting of the New York City  
5 Council Committee on Rules, Privileges, and  
6 Elections. I think it's most popular meeting of the  
7 meeting of rules, committees, and privileges, and  
8 elections that I'm familiar with. But I do hope  
9 you'll all come back for future meetings so when we  
10 consider rules reforms and many other various in  
11 sundry items. I'm Council Member Brad lander and  
12 I'm honored to chair this committee. Before we  
13 begin I want to introduce the other members of the  
14 committee and the other council members who are  
15 here today. We're honored to be joined by Speaker  
16 Mark-Viverito who's a member of this committee. The  
17 other members of the Rules Committee at least for  
18 the next hour or two Council Member Donovan  
19 Richards from Queens, Council Member Margaret Chin  
20 from Manhattan, Council Member Debbie Rose from  
21 Staten Island, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez from  
22 Manhattan, Council Member Rafael Espinal from  
23 Brooklyn. We're pleased to be joined by the  
24 Minority Leader who's an ex officio member of this  
25 committee and if you've gotten and read the

2 documents perhaps a future member as well as a  
3 number of other council members; Council member  
4 Julissa Ferreras from Queens, Rosie Mendez from  
5 Manhattan, Mark Weprin from Queens, Corey Johnson  
6 from Manhattan so welcome to all of you. And I also  
7 want to acknowledge the Committee Council Amotala  
8 Booth [sp?] and in a little while I'll think her  
9 and some other staff for the strong work that they  
10 did in getting ready for today's hearing.

11 Today we're considering a proposed  
12 slate of officers, committee chairs, and members  
13 that will enable the city council to move strongly  
14 forward into the new term under the leadership of  
15 Speaker Mark-Viverito. The leaders and chairs put  
16 forward here reflect the diversity of our city, of  
17 our boroughs, and of this council. They've got  
18 relevant experience, expertise, and life history  
19 that makes them ideal for their appointments. Just  
20 a few examples; our public housing committee chair  
21 grew up in public housing and has spent years  
22 assisting and organizing residents. Our immigration  
23 committee chair proposed today is the first  
24 Mexican-American in the council and has taken  
25 strong leadership in his community and beyond at

2 immigration issues. Our health committee chair is  
3 the first openly HIV positive member of this body  
4 and a longtime advocate for better health services.  
5 They and the other chairs and leaders proposed here  
6 will be able to work closely with the de Blasio  
7 administration toward our shared goals of reducing  
8 inequality through more broadly shared prosperity  
9 in a thriving economy, expanding educational  
10 opportunities, creating and preserving affordable  
11 housing, addressing the challenges of  
12 sustainability and resiliency facing our  
13 neighborhoods in the city and so much more given  
14 all the committees that are laid out here. In  
15 addition the leaders and chairs proposed today will  
16 not hesitate to provide strong and independent  
17 oversight to hold the de Blasio administration  
18 accountable, to exercise the council's duties under  
19 the charter, to help identify areas of concern and  
20 improve the functioning of our government in ways  
21 that improves the lives of the people of New York  
22 City. With these committees in place the council  
23 will be able to advance legislation, negotiate  
24 budget and land use proposals, shine a spot light  
25 on critical issues and include the perspectives of

2 the full array of New Yorkers in debates over the  
3 future of our neighborhoods and our city. And I  
4 hope and I believe that when New Yorkers look at  
5 the slate we're presenting, when they look at the  
6 council, when they look at the, at our committees,  
7 they will see people that have their back, people  
8 that look like them, people who are asking the  
9 questions they want asked and moving forward the  
10 legislative priorities and goals that they want to  
11 see move forward. And I'm proud of the, again the  
12 committee chairs, leaders, and committee members  
13 that we are putting forward today. So let me call  
14 peoples' attention to the materials which are  
15 before you. We have some copies for members of the  
16 press and the public. Again I apologize we, we, we  
17 didn't imagine such a fully subscribed committee  
18 meeting but more copies are on the way and you'll  
19 have them soon and additional copies will be  
20 available at the stated a little later.

21 Resolution number one provides the  
22 titles and descriptions of the committees and  
23 subcommittees, includes amendments to ex officio  
24 officers and also to the meeting frequency  
25 requirement. We're currently required to meet

2 monthly but there's not that much of January left  
3 so we're amending it so that that requirement  
4 commences next month as opposed to this one. And  
5 the accompanying message M13 provides committee  
6 assignments, allowances, officers of the council,  
7 and the creation of new committees and  
8 subcommittees, an example we are concluding the  
9 work, the good work done by the committee on lower  
10 Manhattan and instead establishing a committee on  
11 recovery and resiliency which will be able to focus  
12 on the recovery on Sandy damaged communities and  
13 consider the resiliency of all neighborhoods at a  
14 critical moment moving forward. I want to say a few  
15 thank yous. A lot of work went into this document  
16 and we obviously appreciate the leadership of the  
17 speaker and her team in putting it together on the  
18 staff side last night during the blizzard fairly  
19 late into the evening. I want to recognize and  
20 thank our committee council Amotala Booth [sp?] as  
21 well as Nedire[phonetic] Joshua in the General  
22 Counsel's office, Garry Altman[phonetic] and John  
23 Lasansky[phonetic] in the Speaker's office, Joe  
24 Toronto[phonetic], Rachel Goodman[phonetic], and  
25 Michael Friedman Schnapp[phonetic] all of whom put

2 a lot of hours in getting us ready for today so  
3 thanks to all of you.

4 We could take comments now. If people  
5 have them we'll have a clock of a maximum of two  
6 minutes and let me ask whether there's any members  
7 who wish to comment beginning with Speaker Mark-  
8 Viverito.

9 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: I want to thank  
10 all of the council members that are here and the  
11 staff and the chair of this committee. Obviously to  
12 put together this list of assignments and  
13 chairmanships is one that comes after much  
14 deliberation, conversations, visits to districts to  
15 talk to members about their interest in issues, the  
16 work that we need to lay out. Very proud that as  
17 that deliberdate[phonetic], deliberation was  
18 happening, we were able to come up with assignments  
19 that are really truly reflective of the beautiful  
20 diversity that is New York City. And that lays out  
21 really the extensive scope of work and the agenda  
22 that we need to build to make New York City a  
23 better place to work on behalf of our individual  
24 constituents in our districts but obviously overall  
25 for the city of New York. And in the years and in

2 the months to come I look forward very much to work  
3 in true partnership with each and every one of you  
4 on behalf of New York City. And so thank you Chair  
5 Brad Lander for all the work that went into this  
6 and to my staff as well. And we look forward to the  
7 work ahead so thank you all very much.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you Madam  
9 Speaker. If there's any members who are members or  
10 not members of this committee. I recognize ex  
11 officio member and Minority Leader Vinny Ignizio.

12 MINORITY LEADER IGNIZIO: Thank you very  
13 much Mr. Chairman and then thank you Madam Speaker.  
14 I just wanted to convey to those that in the press  
15 and then those that are watching on television that  
16 I want to confirm what the speaker is, had just  
17 said. She has made a deliberative attempt to reach  
18 out to every member and to gage their interest in  
19 several committees and what they think they can add  
20 to assist the people of the city of New York and  
21 that's reflected here today. I think this is a very  
22 deliberative step towards bringing this body  
23 together and I think you know that's ultimately  
24 what we need as a council as we move forward into  
25 the budgeting process and then the law making

2 process for the next several weeks and months  
3 ahead. So I just wanted to commend you Mr. Chairman  
4 and commend Madam Speaker for bridging the gap  
5 between all sides of this body, bringing it  
6 together, and having this function is the rightful  
7 body that it is. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you Mr.  
9 Minority leader. Any other, either members of the  
10 committee or other council members who are here  
11 push to make any comments? Okay seeing none we will  
12 move on to the roll call on the, on the items on  
13 today's calendar. We are coupling the vote on  
14 resolution one regarding the committee and  
15 subcommittee designations, ex officio members, and  
16 meetings together with the message pursuant to M13  
17 addressing the committee assignments and  
18 allowances. And I would ask the committee council  
19 to call the role.

20 CLERK MARTIN: William Martin, Committee  
21 Clerk. Roll call vote committee on Rules. Council  
22 Member Lander.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye.

24 CLERK MARTIN: Rodriguez.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

2 CLERK MARTIN: Chin.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

4 CLERK MARTIN: Rose.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

6 CLERK MARTIN: Richards.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye.

8 CLERK MARTIN: Espinal.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

10 CLERK MARTIN: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

11 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: I vote aye.

12 CLERK MARTIN: By a vote of seven in the  
13 affirmative, zero on the negative, and no  
14 abstentions both items have been adopted.

15 [applause]

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you. I want  
17 to make a couple of closing comments before we  
18 adjourn the meeting just on the next steps for the  
19 rules committee. One important item, there are many  
20 important items in these documents but one  
21 important item that the committee took today and  
22 that we hope the full council will take as well is  
23 to expand the membership of this rules committee to  
24 better reflect the diversity of the council. We're  
25 adding the Minority Leader. We just voted to add

2 the Minority Leader, to add Council Member  
3 Garodnick, Council Member Dickens, Council Member  
4 Levin, and Council Member Williams to this  
5 committee. As a result the committee will be in a  
6 stronger position as we move forward in the coming  
7 weeks to consider the advice and consent  
8 appointments put forward by the mayor as well as  
9 proposals for rules reform to strengthen the  
10 council as a body which we'll be taking up in this  
11 committee. The first appointment will be  
12 considering is Mayor de Blasio's nomination of Mark  
13 Peters to serve as the Commissioner of the New York  
14 City Department of Investigation, a key position in  
15 guaranteeing integrity, combatting corruption, and  
16 improving New York City government. We look forward  
17 to fair and thorough hearing next week and it has  
18 been scheduled or is in the process of being put on  
19 the calendar for next Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at  
20 10:30 a.m. We'll do that out in the, out in the  
21 chambers where we'll give Mr. Peters a fair and  
22 thorough hearing about his qualifications and his  
23 vision for the department of investigation  
24 including his plans for appointing the first NYPD  
25 inspector general to provide strong and independent

2 oversight to help improve policing in all of our  
3 communities as required by the law that the council  
4 passed last year. And we'll look forward to  
5 receiving, people are welcome to come and testify  
6 at that hearing or if you have questions that you  
7 believe we should ask please reach out to us and  
8 provide them. We also look forward to receiving  
9 nominations for the Landmarks Preservation  
10 Commission, Taxi and Limousine Commission, and  
11 other positions that we anticipate will be coming  
12 in the future. And in addition we've committed to  
13 move forward this quarter with a rules reform  
14 process to make the council more responsive,  
15 transparent, and effective, taking the politics out  
16 of member items, ensuring fair consideration of  
17 legislation, other ideas as well. And we'll begin  
18 that process with a public hearing which will  
19 invite members of the public, good government  
20 groups, council members, and others to testify  
21 about proposals for changes that they believe or  
22 members of the public you believe would strengthen  
23 the council. I promise that we'll listen carefully  
24 and consider all the ideas not only the ones in the  
25 platform that some of us released in the fall but

2 all the ideas that people bring to us before we  
3 bring a specific proposal back to this committee  
4 and to the full council to consider later this  
5 year. So with that, I hope that's enough of a  
6 teaser that some of you will come back to future  
7 meetings of the rules committee with thanks to the  
8 Speaker, to the other members of this committee and  
9 the other members of this council.

10 [gavel]

11 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: This meeting of the  
12 rules committee is adjourned.

13 [pause]

14 UNKNOWN FEMALE: We're looking to start  
15 pretty much on time so please stick around.

16 [laughter, background comments]

17 UNKNOWN MALE: That's the most serious  
18 reform, most serious reform at all I think to start  
19 the meetings on time.

20 [pause]

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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           January 22, 2013