

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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June 21, 2017
Start: 10:45 a.m.
Recess: 11:03 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie E. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Steven Matteo

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

2 [sound check, pause] [background
3 comments]

4 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Alright, good
5 morning everyone [gavel] and welcome to today's
6 Finance Committee meeting. Those who are in the
7 Finance, and I don't mean to interrupt the meeting
8 going on over there, but we're going to convene the
9 Finance Committee meeting this morning. Thank you
10 very much. My name is Jimmy Van Bramer and I'm
11 chairing the committee this morning in place of
12 Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland who could not be with us
13 today. Today the committee will be voting on six
14 items, and before we do that, let me introduce the
15 members. We have Minority Leader Steve Matteo,
16 Council Member Daneek Miller, Council Member Robert
17 Cornegy, Council Member Laurie Cumbo, and Council
18 Member Helen Rosenthal. Thank you all for being
19 here. On the agenda of the first two of the six
20 items, Proposed Introduction No. 1304-B and
21 Preconsidered Introduction No. 1649 both sponsored by
22 Minority Leader Steve Matteo would codify the
23 Council's successfully negotiated agreement with the
24 Administration to expand the Alternative Veterans Tax
25 exemption as part of the Fiscal 2018 Adopted Budget.

2 For many years despite the availability of the
3 Veterans exemption, veterans were still responsible
4 for paying the school tax rate on the exempted value
5 of their properties. These two bills will fully
6 exempt the veterans benefit from all property taxes,
7 and establish the maximum exempted values allowed.
8 Together, they will give a well deserved increase in
9 tax relief to veteran homeowners and their families.
10 I want to thank Minority Leader Matteo for his
11 leadership on this issue, and his advocacy on behalf
12 of our city's veterans. I also want to thank the
13 Administration for working with us to come to an
14 agreement on this important Council priority. The
15 committee will also be voting this morning on three
16 Land Use items.

17 The first resolution would provide a
18 partial 35-year Article 11 tax exemption for the FH
19 Homes project in Council Member Johnson's and
20 Rodriguez's districts in Manhattan. This exemption
21 would support the preservation of 41 units of housing
22 for low-income seniors. Both council members support
23 this resolution.

24 The second resolution would provide a
25 partial 40-year Article 5 tax exemption for the Tri-

2 Block Apartments in Council Member Cumbo's district
3 in Brooklyn. This exemption would support the
4 preservation of 97 units of rental housing for low-
5 income individuals and families. Council Member
6 Cumbo supports this resolution. The

7 The third resolution would provide a
8 partial 40-year Article 11 tax exemption for the new
9 construction of a housing project at 321 East 60th
10 Street in Council Member Kallos' district in
11 Manhattan. This new building would contain 21 units
12 of low-income rental housing. Council Member Kallos
13 supports this resolution.

14 Finally, the committee will be voting on
15 a transparency resolution that sets forth the new
16 designation and changes in the designation of certain
17 organizations receiving local, aging and youth
18 discretionary funding and funding pursuant to certain
19 initiatives in the budget. Organizations appearing
20 in the resolution that have not completed the pre-
21 qualification process conducted by the Mayor's Office
22 of Contract Services, the Council or another entity
23 are identified in the attached charts with an
24 asterisk. As with all transparency resolutions,
25 Council Members will have to sign a disclosure form

2 indicate—indicating whether or not a conflict exists
3 with any of the groups on the attached list. If any
4 Council Member has a potential conflict of interest
5 with any of the organizations listed, he or she has
6 the opportunity to disclose the conflict at the time
7 of their vote. As a reminder, please disclose any
8 conflicts you may have with proposed subcontractors
9 used by organizations sponsored by discretionary
10 funding. These disclosures must be made before the
11 subcontractor can be approved. Rowan Grants (sp?)
12 from the General Counsel's Office is here and can
13 assist you with any questions or concerns regarding
14 disclosures. Now, before we voted, I'd like to turn
15 it over to Minority Leader Matteo to speak on the
16 Veterans' Exemption.

17 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chair. I want to first thank everyone in this
19 committee and all of my colleagues for helping to
20 expedite the vote on this very important legislation.
21 The Alternative Property Exemption for veterans we
22 are voting on today makes it possible for us to
23 provide New York City veterans with further savings
24 on their property taxes. It allows New York City to
25 exempt them from most or all the school proportion of

2 the property tax as many of the municipalities in the
3 state already do. As part of our Budget Agreement
4 with the Administration, we are capping the exemption
5 to control the costs to the city, and give us some
6 fiscal certainty in the years to come. Most
7 importantly, this new exemption will save the average
8 veteran household hundreds of dollar more on their
9 property tax bill each year. It is going to have a
10 real impact on the lives of tens of thousands of
11 veterans and their families most of whom are seniors
12 at or near retirement and living on a fixed income.
13 Nearly 70% have served during a time of war, and the
14 majority are also homeowners. This money would be a
15 lifeline for them, and help them remain a vital part
16 of our communities. I believe as many of you do that
17 we need to provide more property tax relief to more
18 families to help them remain in the city, and we need
19 a more fair and equitable property tax system. But
20 until we can pass real property tax reform, we must
21 pass legislation and other measures like this, and I
22 cannot think of a better place to start than with a
23 bill that helps those New Yorkers who served and
24 sacrificed to preserve our freedoms and our great
25 democracy. I want to thank our great Council Finance

2 staff led by Latonia McKinney. I want to thank in
3 particular Ray Maduski (sp?), Emory Edev, and Eric
4 Bernstein for their help in getting this bill over
5 the finish line. I want to thank my colleagues on
6 the committee, and the Council particularly the
7 Speaker, my Staten Island counsel delegation, and
8 Jimmy Vacca for his strong support. I want to
9 finally thank Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland for
10 joining me early and-and giving me her support, and-
11 and help bring this bill to fruition. So, with that
12 said, I hope and urge all my colleagues to vote yes,
13 and thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Thank you very
15 much and congratulations Minority Leader Matteo.
16 This is a great victory for you and for all of our
17 veterans in the city of New York. I want to
18 recognize that we've been joined by Council Member
19 Ydanis Rodriguez, and Council Member Vanessa Gibson.
20 So, unless any member of the committee has any
21 questions, I would ask the Committee Clerk to call
22 the roll.

23 CLERK: Good morning. This is the
24 Committee on Finance, June 21, 2017. The Committee
25 is voting on Intro 1304-B, Preconsidered Intro 1649,

2 the Transparency Resolution and LU 679, 680 and 681.

3 We will begin with Chairman Van Bramer.

4 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: I vote aye.

5 CLERK: Council Member Rodriguez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] Aye.

7 CLERK: Gibson.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: [off mic] Aye.

9 CLERK: Cornegy.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: [off mic] Aye.

11 CLERK: Cumbo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [off mic] Aye.

13 CLERK: Miller.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Permission to

15 explain.

16 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I want to say

18 that it is not rare, but in this moment I want to say

19 that I absolutely and emphatically agree with the

20 comments and statements with my colleague Steve

21 Matteo of Staten Island there on the importance of

22 this legislation. Also, what he mentioned about why

23 we have to get to equity and fairness around the tax

24 system here in the city of New York that there is no

25 better place to start, and I look forward to working

2 with him on those issues as we move forward in the
3 future as we bring equity and fairness to homeowners
4 throughout the city that are really the backbone of
5 the city, and that—that very certainly needs to be—
6 work that needs to be done around this issue, and—and
7 the be place to start is with those who have served
8 us so admirably. So, I proudly vote aye on all.

9 CLERK: Thank you. Continuing with
10 Council Member Rosenthal.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I vote aye and
12 attach my comments to those of Daneek Miller. Thank
13 you.

14 CLERK: And finally, Council Member
15 Matteo.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

17 CLERK: By a vote of 8 in the
18 affirmative, 0 in the negative and 0 abstentions, the
19 items have passed.

20 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Thank you very
21 much. We will keep the role open for another 15
22 minutes for other Council Members to come and vote.
23 Congratulations. [background comments, pause]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON. This is Council
25 Member Vanessa Gibson of the Committee on Finance,

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

11

2 and the committee hearing on Finance is hereby

3 adjourned.

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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 July 16, 2017