

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

----- X

February 15, 2018

Start: 1:55 p.m.

Recess: 2:57 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: LETITIA JAMES
Public Advocate

COREY D. JOHNSON
Speaker for the Council

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne Adams
Alan N. Maisel
Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Andrew Cohen
Andy King
Antonio Reynoso
Barry S. Grodenchik
Ben Kallos
Bill Perkins
Brad S. Lander
Carlina Rivera
Carlos Menchaca
Chaim M. Deutsch
Costa G. Constantinides
Daniel Dromm
Deborah L. Rose
Diana Ayala

Donovan J. Richards
Eric A. Ulrich
Fernando Cabrera
Francisco P. Moya
Helen K. Rosenthal
I. Daneek Miller
Inez D. Barron
James G. Van Bramer
Joseph C. Borelli
Jumaane D. Williams
Justin L. Brannan
Kalman Yeger
Karen Koslowitz
Keith Powers
Laurie A. Cumbo
Margaret S. Chin
Mark Gjonaj
Mark Levine
Mark Treyger
Mathieu Eugene
Paul A. Vallone
Peter A. Koo
Rafael Espinal, Jr.
Rafael Salamanca. Jr.
Ritchie Torres
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Robert F. Holden
Roy I. Lancman
Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Stephen T. Levin
Steven Matteo
Vanessa Gibson
Ydanis A. Rodriguez

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

Invocation Delivered by:
Reverend Cécé Alfred Salomon Loua,
Trinity Church, 75 Broadway, New York, NY 10006

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CLERK: Quiet please. At this time
4 please place all electronic devices to vibrate, all
5 electronic devices to vibrate. Will all non-Council
6 employees please leave the main floor of the Chamber.
7 Thank you.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All rise for the
9 Pledge of Allegiance.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise. [Pledge of
11 Allegiance]

12 CLERK: Adams.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Present.

14 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Present.

16 CLERK: Ayala.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Present.

18 CLERK: Barron.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Present.

20 CLERK: Borelli.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Happy to be
22 here.

23 CLERK: Thank you. Brannan.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Happy to be
25 here.

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2 CLERK: Cabrera.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Here.

4 CLERK: Chin.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Here.

6 CLERK: Cohen.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Here.

8 CLERK: Constantinides.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Here.

10 CLERK: Cornegy. Deutsch.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Here.

12 CLERK: Diaz.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Here.

14 CLERK: Dromm.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Here.

16 CLERK: Espinal. Eugene.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.

18 CLERK: Gibson. Gjonaj.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I'm here.

20 CLERK: Grodenchik. Holden.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Here.

22 CLERK: Kallos. King.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Present.

24 CLERK: Koo.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Present.

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2 CLERK: Koslowitz.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Present.

4 CLERK: Lancman. Lander.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Here.

6 CLERK: Levin. Levine.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Here.

8 CLERK: Maisel.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Here.

10 CLERK: Menchaca.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Presente.

12 CLERK: Miller.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Present.

14 CLERK: Moya.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Present.

16 CLERK: Perkins.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Present.

18 CLERK: Powers.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Here.

20 CLERK: Reynoso. Richards.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Present.

22 CLERK: Rivera.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Present.

24 CLERK: Rodriguez.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Here.

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2 CLERK: Rose.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Here.

4 CLERK: Rosenthal.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here.

6 CLERK: Salamanca.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Present.

8 CLERK: Torres.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I'm here.

10 CLERK: Treyger.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Here.

12 CLERK: Ulrich.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Here.

14 CLERK: Vallone. Eugene.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.

16 CLERK: Van Bramer.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Here.

18 CLERK: Williams.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Here.

20 CLERK: Yeger.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Here.

22 CLERK: Matteo.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Here.

24 CLERK: Cumbo.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Present.

2 CLERK: Speaker Johnson.

3 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Here.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All quiet in the
5 Chambers. All rise for the Invocation.

6 CLERK: All rise.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: The Invocation
8 will be delivered by Reverend Cécé Alfred Salomon
9 Loua, the Priest for Pastoral Care and Community at
10 Trinity Church at 75 Broadway in the Borough of
11 Manhattan.

12 REVEREND CECE ALFRED SALOMON: Thank you
13 Speaker, Corey Johnson, Public Advocate Patricia
14 James and Council Members for this opportunity to
15 offer the invocation for this meeting. I'm honored
16 and humbled. I'm conducting this invocation as a
17 clergy and a staff member of Trinity Church Wall
18 Street. My name is Cece Alfred Salomon Loua. Let us
19 pray. Holy and undivided Trinity one God, I thank you
20 for your presences among us, and in our hearts here
21 at this moment. Please look upon us. The city of
22 New York we are women and men with different sexual
23 orientations. We are students, immigrants documented
24 and to be documented. We are believers of different
25 faith traditions and non-believers. We are from

2 different horizons. We are people of color and
3 white, we are of diverse opinions. But you have
4 brought us together to live and work with you. All
5 of us in this room have homes to return to where we
6 can stay warm and relaxed after this meeting, but
7 many of your children in New York lack that chance.
8 We are at work in this room, but many of your—of our
9 brothers and sisters as you're blessed, and they look
10 food and a drink, and they count on the decisions
11 that this Council is about to make. You love and
12 each of us equally. I ask your blessing upon your
13 trusted servant leaders, the Council Members of New
14 York City as they gather to do the work you have
15 given them to do. May their meeting be governed by
16 your pastoral spirit of righteousness, in
17 consideredness (sic) compassion for fair justice to
18 worship. Assist them in their humanness. Give them
19 your supreme wisdom to mend their differences, and be
20 open to others' ideas and beliefs so they can find
21 common ground when they reach agreement on what is
22 best for our community and beyond, you who protected
23 them, oh, mighty God when they return home. I pray
24 in your holy name, amen.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Amen. Please be
3 seated. A motion Pastor? A motion to spread the
4 invocation in full upon the record. Council Member
5 Chin.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you Madam
7 Public Advocate, and thank you Reverend Loua. Born in
8 Guinea, West Africa Reverend Cece Alfred Solomon Loua
9 is staff at the Trinity Church on Wall Street in
10 Lower Manhattan. Reverend Loua studied philosophy
11 and theology throughout Africa and France before he
12 became a Jesuit in 1989, ordained Deacon in 1998 and
13 then a priest in 1999. He was receives in the
14 Episcopal Church in Detroit on July 6, 2006. Since
15 September 2017, he has been preparing couples for
16 weddings--

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
18 [shushing for quiet]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --youth for
20 baptism, and presiding over these services on behalf
21 of Trinity Church. Reverend Loua has also made it
22 his mission to visit parish-Parishioners and
23 community members who are homebound, hospitalized,
24 and in nursing homes throughout New York City. Thank
25 you, Reverend Loua for all that you do for our

2 community. Madam Public Advocate, I would like to
3 make a motion that the Invocation be spread in full
4 upon the record. Thank you.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So moved.

6 Adoption of Minutes also Council Member Chin.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: A motion that the
8 Minutes of the State Meeting of January 11, 2018 be
9 adopted as printed. Thank you.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

11 Messages and papers from the Mayor.

12 CLERK: M 16, Board of Standards and
13 Appeals appointment.

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Rules, Privileges and
15 Elections.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Communication
17 from city, county and borough offices.

18 CLERK: Okay. Sorry, Mr. Speaker. M 17
19 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Housing and Buildings.

21 CLERK: Preconsidered M 18, Transfer of
22 City funds.

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Finance.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Petitions and
25 Communications.

2 CLERK: None.

3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Land Use Call-
4 ups.

5 CLERK: None.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
7 Chambers as we now hear from the—as we now hear from
8 the Speaker Corey Johnson.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

10 Yesterday, shortly after we ended the Stated Meeting,
11 news broke of yet another school shooting. This time
12 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland,
13 Florida. Another senseless tragedy has occurred due
14 to gun violence. This is now the 18th school
15 shooting in 2018. The 18th. It is heartbreaking to
16 see that this now the new normal. As always, of
17 course, our thoughts and prayers are with the
18 students, faculty, staff or Marjory Stoneman Douglas
19 High School, the victims and their families, but
20 thoughts and prayers are not enough. Now, we again
21 call for the President of the United States and the
22 Congress to do something and ensure that these
23 tragedies are prevented. We also have sad news close
24 to home. Felix Palacios, a former staff member of
25 the Council's Community Engagement Division passed

2 away. Felix was born and raised in Brooklyn. His
3 calling to public service came in working for the
4 Districting Commission in the early 1990s, and later
5 joining the staff of Council Members Andrew Rodriguez
6 and Sarah Gonzalez serving the communities of Council
7 District 38, Council Member Menchaca's District. The
8 neighborhoods of Red Hook, Sunset Park, Greenwood
9 Heights and portions of Windsor Terrace, Dyker
10 Heights and Borough Park. For over 20 years he was
11 committed to serving these neighborhoods and
12 committed in services to the needs of this diverse
13 constituency over that period of time. His wonderful
14 smiling grin and knowledgeable input and social and
15 political discourse will be sorely missed. Let us
16 please take a moment of silence. If folks could
17 stand in honor of Felix, in honor of all the victims
18 yesterday, those we lost and those who will forever
19 be traumatized by the events of yesterday. [moment
20 of silence] Thank you. Now, I'd like to wish my
21 colleagues and all the—all of our Asian-American New
22 Yorkers a very happy Lunar New Year as Council
23 Members Koo and Chin talked about yesterday, the year
24 of the dog, and I want to thank Council Members
25 Margaret Chin and Peter Koo for providing us with an

2 amazing lunch. They even saved me a pork bun because
3 I was late.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yeah.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, I am happy. Also,
6 I'd like to extend my well wishes to my Jewish
7 colleagues and all Jewish New Yorkers on this happy
8 Purim. Jumping into our docket for today, also—one
9 thing and in the remarks but I want to acknowledge
10 I'm really glad that the Legislature and the Governor
11 are moving the primary this year because it coincides
12 with September 11th and also with Rosh Hashana, and I
13 think it's important that we do that, and I'm glad
14 that's being done from the 11th to the 13th. Jumping
15 into our docket for today, we begin today by voting
16 on a resolution calling on Congress and President
17 Trump to sign HR 4937, which provide Ravi Ragbir and
18 opportunity to pursue immigration relief so that he
19 is not separated from his family while his case goes
20 through the court system. Ravi personifies the need
21 for compassionate, fair and just immigration
22 policies, and we, the New York City Council continue
23 to do everything in our power to stand up for
24 immigrant communities in our city and across the
25 nation. We stand with Ravi and urge our federal

2 officials to stand with him as well. Moving on, we
3 will vote on two finance items, and a few land use
4 items. Beginning with Finance items, we'll vote on
5 two Article Xi Property Tax resolutions. The first
6 resolution would approve an exemption for a property
7 located at 2524-26 Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard in
8 Council Member Bill Perkins' district. This
9 exemption would not-would support the preservation of
10 18 units of low-income rental housing. The second
11 resolution for the property located at 147-18 Archer
12 Avenue in Council Member Daneek Miller's district, it
13 would approve a technical amendment to an exemption
14 previously granted by the Council in November of
15 2015, which supported the new construction of 449
16 units of affordable rental housing. Next, we're
17 voting on the following land use items. The first
18 item is a landmark designation of Peter P. and Rose
19 M. Huberty House located at 1019 Bushwick Avenue in
20 Council Member Antonio Reynoso's district. The house
21 was designed in 1900 and contributed to-to the
22 development of Bushwick Avenue as one of Brooklyn's
23 most prestigious residential streets. We'll also be
24 voting for the approval of an Article XI property tax
25 exemption for a project known as Hopkinson Park Place

2 in Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel's District.

3 This project would facilitate development of three 4-

4 story buildings containing 25 affordable

5 homeownership units. That completes the highlights

6 of today's docket. I look forward to proceeding with

7 today's vote, and I hope everyone has a great

8 President's Day weekend and a holiday weekend and I

9 look forward to seeing hopefully many members up in

10 Albany this weekend for BLAC Caucus Weekend. I turn

11 it back to you, Madam Public Advocate.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Discussion of

13 General Orders. Seeing none, Report of Special

14 committees.

15 CLERK: None.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Reports of

17 Standing Committees.

18 CLERK: Report of the Committee on

19 Finance Preconsidered Reso 189, Organization Funding.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General

21 Orders.

22 CLERK: LUs 23 and Reso 191 and LU 24 and

23 Reso 192, Tax Exemptions.

24 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General

25 Orders.

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2 CLERK: Preconsidered M 18 and Reso 193,
3 Transfer of City Funds.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General
5 Orders.

6 CLERK: On the General Order Calendar, LU
7 7 and Res 194, Landmark Designation.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General
9 Orders.

10 CLERK: Preconsidered LU 25 and Reso 195,
11 Tax Exemption.

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General
13 Orders.

14 CLERK: Resolution Appointing Various
15 Persons Commissioner of Deeds.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General
17 Orders, and I would ask for a roll-call vote on all
18 of the items on today's General Order Calendar.

19 *

20

21 CLERK:

22

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES:

24 CLERK:

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES:

2 CLERK: Adams.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Aye on all.

4 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: With
6 permission to explain my vote.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just want
9 to quickly say that I've watched this particular
10 property many, many years, and I am just excited that
11 we will now be able to have new affordable
12 homeownership opportunities in the district and that
13 25 units I'm very excited and I'm pleased, and so I
14 invite-I vote aye on all.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations.

16 CLERK: Ayala.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Aye on all.

18 CLERK: Barron.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye on all.

20 CLERK: Borelli.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye on all
22 except Land Use 7 and Reso 194.

23 CLERK: Brannan.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye on all.

25 CLERK: Cabrera.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

3 CLERK: Chin.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye on all.

5 CLERK: Cohen.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

7 CLERK: Constantinides.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye on

9 all.

10 CLERK: Cornegy. Deutsch.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye on all.

12 CLERK: Diaz.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Aye on all except

14 LU 7, Resolution 194 and Resolution 182.

15 CLERK: Dromm.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

17 CLERK: Espinal. Eugene.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

19 CLERK: Gibson.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Aye on all.

21 CLERK: Gjonaj.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Permission to

23 explain my vote.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: There's no
3 question that the Peter Paul Huberty House is a
4 structure of history value, but it's also the
5 family's home, and we must respect the rights of
6 private citizens and their property. And as a home
7 that has been well maintained by the same family for
8 over 90 years, I see no reason for the city to place
9 an undue burden on this family and override their
10 wishes. Homeowners should and can be trusted to make
11 informed decisions about their own property, which
12 for many is the single largest investment. So, I
13 vote yes on all except for Land Use 7 and Resolution
14 194.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

16 CLERK: Grodenchik. Holden.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye on all except
18 I'm voting no on LU 7 and Resolution 194, and
19 Resolution 182.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

21 CLERK: King.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Aye on all.

23 CLERK: Koo.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye on all.

25 CLERK: Koslowitz.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye one all.

3 CLERK: Lancman. Lander.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye.

5 CLERK: Levin. Levine.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye on all.

7 CLERK: Maisel.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

9 CLERK: Menchaca.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Aye on all.

11 CLERK: Miller.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Permission to
13 explain my vote.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Madam

16 Public Advocate. I will voting today in support of

17 Reso 182 calling for the Congress to provide relief

18 for Ravi Ragbir-Ragbir not solely for Ravi-for Ravi,

19 but for all the immigrant families who have been

20 viciously torn apart because of the latest policies

21 of this administration. Critics of the-of the

22 advocates that have rallied on Ravi's behalf over the

23 past few weeks have argued that his deportation

24 warrants-is-is warranted because of his prior

25 convictions, but this Council has demonstrated in the

2 recent past that it believes in redemption for those
3 who have transgressed, and that Ravi has paid his
4 debt to society and his mandated Criminal Justice
5 System. All of—of good conscience know that this
6 government's effort to separate Ravi from his family
7 are motivated by xenophobic policies coming out of
8 Washington, D.C. The New York City Council, which
9 prides itself on being the most progressive
10 legislative body in these United States cannot
11 validate these actions of this administration that
12 has routinely and openly denigrated all immigrants
13 documented and undocumented and harbors particular
14 resentment towards immigrants of color. Thus, I will
15 be voting aye.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

17 CLERK: Moya.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye on all.

19 CLERK: Perkins.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Aye on all.

21 CLERK: Powers.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye on all.

23 CLERK: Richards.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye on all.

25 CLERK: Rivera.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Aye on all.

3 CLERK: Rodriguez.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Permission to
5 explain my vote.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I'm very proud
8 that we are voting on the resolution calling into
9 allow Ravi to stay in our city. We cannot divide
10 families. I believe that even though someone has
11 made any error in their life, something that in the
12 case of Ravi has not been decided yet because his
13 case is still pending in New Jersey. It should bring
14 us to believe and think that every human being
15 deserves a second chance in their life. Many of us
16 are examples of that. We have a second chance in
17 many aspects in our life, and I think that someone
18 such as Ravi that have been fighting not only for
19 himself, but also for Amanda Morales, for the
20 millions of undocumented that contribute with
21 billions of dollars to our economy, but no one ask
22 them for their immigration status when they go to
23 Home Depot, to Target to Marshal's. However, we
24 don't want to allow them to stay in our country. The
25 last immigration reform happened under Republican

2 Ronald Reagan. It is time for us to maintain our
3 family united to fight for Ravi, to fight for all
4 immigrants and to fight for immigration reform, and
5 with that I vote ayes.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

7 CLERK: Rose.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye on all.

9 CLERK: Rosenthal.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye on all.

11 CLERK: Salamanca.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Aye on all.

13 CLERK: Torres.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye on all.

15 CLERK: Treyger.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

17 CLERK: Ulrich. Vallone. Van Bramer.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye on all.

19 CLERK: Williams.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: May I be

21 excused to explain my vote?

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you very

24 much. I'm going to vote aye on all. I did want to

25 speak on Reso 182. It's often morbidly amusing to

2 hear people speak about why they will not support
3 this resolution or support—not deporting undocumented
4 immigrants using crime, using law, using the rule of
5 law and order as an excuse. Morality very often is
6 not equal to that. So, the shooting that we spoke
7 about just today was prejudiced legally, and we're
8 not talking often enough on changing those laws. You
9 can go back in time whether it's the Japanese,
10 whether it's Chinese, whether it's slaves. We can go
11 back to Germany, go back to the Congo where people
12 use nuggets of truth as an excuse, and many times
13 they use rule of law and order to cover up what was
14 victory. In this case, if you use the logic that
15 people are using to its largest exclusion, at
16 conclusion you are basically saying that for the
17 crime that was committed the fullest extent of the
18 law should be used. So, let's say for exam—example
19 if Ravi was not undocumented and the law was you can
20 get ten years, you are saying there should be ten
21 years. There should be no other discussion about
22 what the punishment should be. We are immediately
23 saying that the fullest extent of the law is morally
24 correct and should be applied here. That makes
25 absolutely no sense. The reason we are saying it is

2 because we're allowing the orange madness, and the
3 other madness that has occurred to permeate
4 throughout this country. There is no reason to be
5 targeting immigrants in 7/11 and other places,
6 targeting activists like Ravi to be deported when
7 they pose no public safety threat while we taught we
8 are almost silent when it comes to the imbalance.
9 Let's not make excuses here. This is bigotry and we
10 can replace ourselves in any part in history and use
11 those same excuse and people are going to look back
12 now [bell] and wonder why people didn't learn from
13 history. I'd like to vote aye on all. I also want
14 to point out the changes that's happening in-in the
15 budget mod, and I want to thank the Speaker, Carlos
16 Menchaca. We passed 1447 here. It was historic
17 dealing with the construction site safety. The
18 Administration promised there will be funding for
19 local groups to do that work that is happening today.
20 He doesn't like to get acknowledged, but I do want to
21 acknowledge Juan Martinez and Latonia McKinney for
22 helping the first step in getting this money to the
23 local groups on the ground who need to be trained.
24 With that, I vote aye no all.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

2 CLERK: Ulrich.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I ask for
4 permission to vote on all Land Use Items as well as
5 the General Order Calendar.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I'm voting no on
8 Land Use No. 7 with accompany Reso 194 and aye on all
9 others.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Thank you.

12 CLERK: Yeger.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: May I be excused
14 to explain my vote?

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you. I am
17 voting aye on all. I'm voting no on Land Use 7 and
18 Res 194, Resolution 182. As I explained earlier this
19 morning at the Immigration Committee led by my
20 brother Carlos Menchaca who did a fantastic job at
21 our inaugural committee, I am the child of an
22 immigrant. My father came here on a boat with his
23 parents, and his older brother. My grandfather
24 escaped Nazi Europe, Nazi occupied Europe to China
25 where he and his classmate from Yeshiva lived for

2 several years before they were welcomed into this
3 country. From both sides of my family, I was
4 welcomed into this country and my family, an
5 incredible opportunity, an incredible nation did this
6 for us, and did this for all of us because most
7 likely very few of us have ancestors who came here on
8 the Mayflower. I vote no because as Error Louis
9 mentioned yesterday, two days ago in his op-ed, the-
10 the person who we're doing this resolution for is not
11 the right example of what's wrong with immigration in
12 Washington. The-the problem with immigration in
13 Washington is that it's not recognizing our DREAMers.
14 It's not recognizing those who have come here who
15 have abided by the law who have done right by their
16 community and done right by America, and it's not
17 recognizing that we should put our arms around them
18 and welcome them in. I have utmost respect for my
19 colleagues, my brothers and sisters here in this
20 Council who support Mr. Ragbir, and who support his
21 cause. I vote not because I do not believe that we
22 should be lending our name to his effort. With
23 respect to LU 7 and Reso 194, I associated-that we
24 associate my comments-myself with the comments of
25 Council Member Gjonaj. I don't believe that the

2 Council should be enabling the big foot of government
3 on the neck of a private individual who owns his or
4 her house who's immaculately maintained that home for
5 generations by the record of this body I believe
6 since the 1930s. They've done well. They've done
7 right [bell] and they should be entitled to do so in
8 continuum without the foot of our government on their
9 necks, and with that I vote no.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

11 CLERK: Matteo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: No on LU 7 and
13 accompany Reso 194, aye on the rest.

14 CLERK: Cumbo.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye on all.

16 CLERK: Speaker Johnson.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I vote aye. [pause]

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay. All items

19 on today's General Order Calendar were adopted by a
20 vote 43 in the affirmative, 0 negative and 0

21 abstentions with the exception of Land Use 7, and

22 accompanying Resolution 194, which was adopted by a

23 vote of 37 in the affirmative, 6 negative and 0

24 abstentions. And now, to Resolution 182, which reads

25 as follows: A resolution calling upon the United

2 States Congress to pass, and the President to sign HR
3 4937, which would provide immigration relief for New
4 York resident Ravidath Ravi Lawrence Ragbir, and
5 denouncing the unlawful targeting of immigrant rights
6 activists for deportation by the United States
7 Immigration and Customs Enforcement, The first
8 person to speak on this resolution is Council Member
9 Menchaca.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you,
11 Public Advocate, and Council Members, colleagues,
12 today we'll be voting on Resolution 182, which calls
13 upon the--

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
15 [shushing for quiet]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --Congress to
17 pass legislation--

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
19 down, please. Keep it down.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --introduced by
21 U.S. Representative Nydia Valazquez, which would
22 permit Ravi Ragbir to pursue immigration relief so
23 that he may be--so that he may stay in the country
24 lawfully. I will say that one of the core messages
25 her is about due process, and what we're allowing for

2 him to do is to go and continue to show up and check
3 in as he's always done as a lawful resident of this
4 country, and give him that opportunity for due
5 process. This vote reminds us that whether you are
6 an immigrant or you were born in this country, you
7 have the right to due process. We all have that
8 right to defend out cases in court without arbitrary
9 intrusions from external sources including the White
10 House, which is doing what it's doing causing fear
11 and panic in our neighborhoods. The times in which
12 we live require us to remain open to all viewpoints
13 and ensure we have open spaces where people can voice
14 their opinions and their concerns, [bell] and that's
15 the most basic principle of civic engagement. I
16 thank the members of my committee that spoke out
17 against his resolution. I hear you. Let's continue
18 to talk. Thank you.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
20 Chambers, please. Council Member—Council Member
21 Williams.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. You
23 know, I said most of what I had to say, but I didn't
24 want—I don't want to leave lingering out there the
25 thought that we are going to separate people who need

2 assistance. We will not separate the DREAMers from
3 other undocumented immigrants and other people who
4 are in this country. Everyone needs assistance. All
5 of them should be treated as Human beings, and with
6 respect. What we are saying now the only people who
7 can make mistakes are those who have documents and
8 American citizens. Ravi had a green card. He was
9 here was here lately, and he made a mistake, and my
10 parents came here form another country. At any point
11 in time any of us can make a mistake. Most of us
12 have. We didn't get caught. So, what we are saying
13 is that are unworthy of redemption if you make a
14 mistake. You are unworthy of any sympathy if you
15 make a mistake, and again, why is it that Black and
16 Brown immigrants should be prosecuted to the fullest
17 extent of the law basically for this crime? I mean
18 Ravi served two years in jail. He served two years
19 at a detention center and two years house arrest.
20 What else do you want him to do to pay for the crime
21 that he committed? [bell] We were told by the
22 Orange Madness that they focused on violent crimes.
23 That's another conversation, but this wasn't that.
24 We should be careful of the precedence that we set,
25 and learn from history from those that were set

2 before. I'm very proud to stand with Ravi, and I'm
3 very proud that this body is going to vote for this
4 resolution. Thank you.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
6 Chin.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Today, I stand with
8 my colleagues in support of Ravi Ragbir's continued
9 and permanent presence in the United States. Some
10 have claimed that his past precludes him from our
11 support. Mr. Ragbir's identity is not defined by his
12 past. He's a husband, he's a father and he has been
13 an immigrant rights activist. He educates our
14 communities and provides sanctuary for the most
15 vulnerable immigrants among us. His past does not
16 define him. His work educating diverse communities
17 and providing sanctuary for the most vulnerable
18 immigrants after his incarceration has more than
19 earned our respect and support. As an immigrant and
20 as an advocate, I stand with Ravi Ragbir. Thank you.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
22 Lander.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, Madam
24 Public Advocate. Over the last couple of years I've
25 had the great good goof fortunate to get to know Ravi

2 Ragbir and see his extraordinary advocacy for making
3 our city a more loving and welcome and compassionate
4 place. I just want to underline what Council Member
5 Williams said. Let's remember President Trump took
6 the DREAMers hostage precisely to try to draw lines
7 that would harm other immigrants. That was his goal,
8 and that's the debate that is playing our right now,
9 but if you believe in compassion and in looking at
10 every individual individually and providing a path
11 for redemption, the resolution today is one to
12 support, and I would just add this. You know, Dr.
13 King-Ravi's work, if you're not familiar with it
14 Leading New Sanctuary NYC and opening up our
15 communities and our churches and our synagogues and
16 our mosques and even one Hindu Temple to be places of
17 sanctuary is quite extraordinary. Dr. King said that
18 love-justice is what love looks like in public.
19 Sanctuary is that love looks like in our place of
20 worship. Thank you.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
22 Dromm.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very
24 much, Madam Speaker-Madam Public Advocate. I, too,
25 also am supporting this resolution. I have know Ravi

2 Ragbir for the last eight years. I have written
3 letters of support for Ravi for all of the check-ins
4 that he's done over the last eight years. I have
5 worked with Ravi on immigration issues when I was the
6 Chair of the Immigration Committee. I have spoken at
7 forums with him. Ravi Ragbir is truly deserving of
8 the full rights and privileges, and Ravi Ragbir is an
9 asset to the United States of America and to the city
10 of New York. I vote in favor of this resolution.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those in
12 favor of this resolution, please say aye.

13 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those
15 opposed?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER: Today abstain.

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those
18 abstentions. If you oppose this resolution, please
19 approach the desk and have your vote recorded
20 accordingly, and now to General Discussions beginning
21 with Council Member Koo.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you, Madam
23 Public Advocate. [off mic] Today, I join my
24 colleagues--

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
3 Council Member Koo, your--That's okay.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I know. I join my
5 colleagues in mourning those--[background comments]-
6 in mourning those lost at yesterday's shooting at
7 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland,
8 Florida. A member of my staff actually attended this
9 school 23 years go. He spent the day yesterday like
10 too others fanatically reaching out to old high
11 school friends and other alumni desperately hoping
12 for news that would not confirm his worst fears.
13 This horrifying event happened in a wealthy, coast
14 elite-coast elite community--in a community that was
15 named--it was name for Florida's--let me see. I lost
16 my--that was named Florida's safest city last year,
17 and it jus goes to show that gun violence can happen
18 anywhere. And because gun violence can happen
19 anywhere we must have stronger restrictions and who
20 can buy those weapons of mass murder, heavy machine
21 guns, AR15s. These are weapons of sport. These are
22 military weapons designed to kill large numbers of
23 people quickly and efficiently. So enough is enough.
24 It's time to--it's time for meaningful gun control and
25 mental health education monitory. My heart goes out

2 to all affected by this wildness. Let this be our
3 last lesson learned the hard way. Thank you.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
5 Council Member Cabrera.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you so
7 much, Madam Public Advocate. Today, I join those who
8 are paying for those in Parkland High School. This
9 personally hit me at home when I received a call that
10 the mother of my son-in-law who moved from the Bronx,
11 New York is actually the Assistant Principal in that
12 school. I had an opportunity to speak with her
13 yesterday. She, as you can imagine, she was a bit
14 shaken, traumatized by what took place. I just don't
15 understand how we could in America still allow an 18-
16 year-old to legally purchase an AR15. I've been in
17 the middle of shoot-outs. This stays with you for
18 the rest of your life. When people begin to shoot
19 you don't where to run. You see kids running all
20 over the place. It stays with you. I can only
21 imagine what these families are going through. We
22 must have a concert of voices coming together that at
23 the very least is law that permits 18-year-olds to
24 buy an AR15. Look, I lived down south for three
25 years. I understand the culture of down south where

2 people are raised with guns, children and so forth
3 but this is—this is unthinkable, baffling to me that
4 we still in the year 2018 allowing 18-year-olds to
5 buy guns and resulting now in 18 incidents, and we
6 had 17 deaths and 14 that still are in the hospital.
7 My prayers continue, but let's put some feet to our
8 faith because faith without [bell] works is dead.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
10 Council Member Menchaca.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you. So
12 we just voted on the resolution, Transparency
13 Resolution No. 8, which includes several
14 organizations that will provide construction site
15 safety training. Council Member Williams mentioned
16 it in his speech. I want to underscore the sensitive
17 needs of all construction workers that also include
18 limited English proficiency. Over the last few
19 years, New York City has experienced a surge in
20 construction related accidents, injuries and
21 fatalities affecting mostly Latino and immigrant
22 workers. Responding to the alarming statistics, this
23 Council has made it its priority to guarantee the
24 safety of all construction workers. Last year we
25 approved a comprehensive legislation package again

2 championed by Council Member Williams and this
3 Council 1447. This legislation sponsored also by
4 myself and 45 colleagues included an amendment to the
5 Administrative Code of the City of New York and the
6 New York City Building Code to include provisions
7 guaranteeing equal access to construction site safety
8 trainings addressing the needs of the individuals who
9 do not have equal access to such a training, and so
10 today now we are getting closer to that promise that
11 all safety can go to all construction workers, and so
12 I'm really excited to continued to do this work. I
13 will say that this is going to be part of our
14 conversations in the budget, but I'm really excited
15 that both the legislative pursuits of this—of this
16 goal is now being seen in our budget. Thank you so
17 much to our Speaker who continue to champion this
18 issue, and I know is dedicated to ensuring that we
19 all keep this in the front of our minds. Thank you.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

21 Council Member Williams.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I
23 want especially myself and my colleague's remarks on
24 this as well, and again thank the administration.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I
3 want to especially myself have and my—my colleagues
4 remarks on this as well, and again thank the
5 Administration for following through on what was
6 said. I know this is just the beginning, and I did
7 want to thank Council Member Menchaca and the
8 speaker, Council Members Rodriguez, Richards, Cumbo
9 and Espinal for the resolution that we voted on.
10 Again, with Ravi his wife is a citizen, and his
11 daughter is a citizen. Just want to just reiterate
12 because I don't think people understand. They're
13 basically saying I expect the people who don't
14 support it every single person who is on trial needs
15 to receive the highest possible punishment that can
16 ever happen for every law, everywhere, anywhere.
17 That is the only way that your opposition makes any
18 kind of logical sense. I know it may sound like it
19 does, but we've heard it all before in different
20 times for different people. It is a frustrating
21 thing to hear it again as if we're hearing it for the
22 first time, and have learned no lessons. Also, I'll
23 just leave what happened in Florida. I don't even
24 know the words to describe the frustration to hear
25 this happen over and over and over again. The Orange

2 Man in the White House, the Republicans and those who
3 continue to support him. The leadership of the NRA
4 continue to say prayers of condolences, and I just
5 want to make sure it is clear they apparently read
6 from the Bible many of them, and it's a different
7 book than I read from. As was said by my colleague,
8 the one I read from says faith without works is dead,
9 which means their prayers are hollow and meaningless.
10 I don't have the authority, but I don't think God
11 even respects the prayers that they are making. I
12 would like to say if you are not going to do
13 anything, guns are created to kill and maim. That's
14 it period. Machine guns are created to do that
15 expediently. That's it. If you're not going to do
16 anything, at least shut the hell up. Thank you.

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
18 Gibson.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: How do I follow
20 that? Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Good
21 afternoon to all of my colleagues. I, too, want to
22 join with all of you in expressing my sincerest
23 condolences and prayers to all of the innocent
24 victims in the horrific shooting that struck Florida.
25 I'm certainly no stranger to mass shootings that

2 continue to happen in this country, but it's outright
3 shameful that his federal administration refuses to
4 enact comprehensive and sensible gun reform
5 legislation. So, while the thoughts and prayers are
6 great, certainly we all continue to call for action
7 and making sure that we prevent these mass shootings
8 as much as possible. I want to wish all of my
9 colleagues and their constituents a very happy Lunar
10 New Year, and I also want to call two—my colleagues'
11 attention to in our agenda for today is the upcoming
12 hearing schedule for our preliminary budget process
13 that starts in March, and as the new Chair of the new
14 Subcommittee on Capital Budget, I'm very honored that
15 we will have our hearing on Tuesday March 6th jointly
16 with the Finance Committee with Chair Dromm, and then
17 if you look through the schedule for those committee
18 chairs I have already spoken to, we will have
19 separate hearings those five particular committees:
20 The Committee on Transportation, Environmental
21 Protection, Parks, Public Housing and Department of
22 Correction. So, look forward to having those very
23 critical conversations as it relates to the Capital
24 Budget. I also want to express my thoughts and
25 prayers to the family and friends of Bronx resident,

2 the late Deborah Danner. Unfortunately, the verdict
3 was rendered by the judge this afternoon in Bronx
4 County, and the sergeant involved in her murder was
5 acquitted of all charges, and certainly it continues
6 to underscore the need to work with medical
7 professionals and crisis intervention teams and co-
8 response teams to make sure that we support first
9 responders as they respond to New Yorkers in
10 emotional distress. So, I want to continue to pray
11 for Deborah Danner's family. Certainly, this is not
12 a day that, you know, they are ever going to forget,
13 but we want to continue to keep them in our thoughts
14 and prayers, and I also want to remind everyone on
15 behalf of our BLAC Co-Chairs we will see you this
16 evening for the celebration of Black History Month
17 here in the Council Chambers at 5:30. Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you. So,
19 back in December I had a-a terrible tragedy in my
20 district where a house caught on fire that left a
21 mother and three young children dead and a father and
22 three young children critical in the hospital. And
23 also, over the last few months in Washington Heights,
24 there was a fire that left 17 people injured, and as
25 well as it was in the last few months in the Bronx,

2 and my colleague Council Member Ritchie Torres'
3 District, it left 13 people lead including their one-
4 year-old child. So, at the request of the Bronx
5 Borough President, today along with my colleague
6 Council Member Ritchie Torres, we have three bills:
7 Intro 609, which will mandate the Department of
8 Education to implement a comprehensive plan for
9 educating both children and parents about fire safety
10 prevention, and we're also looking to include all the
11 non-public schools, public schools as well. Intro
12 610 is also an intro today that we are introducing
13 and the fire that happened in the Bronx was a child
14 who turned on the knob of the stove and that caused
15 the fire. So, Intro 610 will require building owners
16 to put on a safety knob-safety toggles on all stove
17 knobs, and the third intro is Intro 6-which one is
18 that? Intro 603. Is that it? Alright, the third
19 intro is to [bell]-it's basically to educate
20 residents in the building to shut the door. The fire
21 that happened in the Bronx started in a room where
22 that door should have been shut. If that door was
23 shut, it would have contained the fire and the smoke
24 within that room. Since that door was not closed,
25 the fire spread pretty quickly throughout the

2 building that killed 13 people. So, this would be-
3 require building owners to put up the signage in the
4 building to let residents know that if there is a
5 fire in a room, to shut that door. So, I-it's an
6 honor to have these three bills proposed with my
7 colleague Council Member Ritchie Torres, and at the
8 request of the Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz and
9 looking for the passage of this bill, and I'm asking
10 all the members to please sign onto this critical-to
11 these three critical fire safety bills. Thank you.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
13 Council Member Lander.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, Madam
15 Public Advocate. With the 18th school shooting of
16 just the young 2018, I find it hard not to get numb.
17 So, one thing I want to do is just like call people's
18 attention to Aaron Feis, the football coach and
19 school security who threw himself in front of the
20 shooter to save students in that school. Let's make
21 sure we remember and pay attention to the victims
22 and-and humanize them. Let's also remember even on
23 those days, which are less and less rare, frequent
24 that there isn't a school shooting, 96 Americans are
25 killed with guns every single day, and this is a

2 political issue. The President's first act in office
3 was to remove common sense gun laws preventing people
4 with mental illness from getting guns. So, we just
5 urge you if you have not already to sign up for
6 either Moms Demand Action or Every Town for Gun
7 Safety. We're just going to have to keep organizing
8 if we don't want to be in this place day after day
9 after day. On a lighter note, but still an important
10 one, I'm proud to be joining the Speaker and Council
11 Member Richards in two bills that are being
12 introduced today calling on and compelling our city
13 to move forward on issues of fair housing. Fifty
14 years ago this year in the same month that Dr. King
15 was killed, he won passage of the Fair Housing Act.
16 President Obama took real steps to strengthen that
17 act, and unfortunately, then Ben Carson and HUD and
18 the president rolled that back just a couple of weeks
19 ago. Intro 601 and 607 being introduced by the
20 Speaker and by Council Member Richards will help make
21 sure the city keeps moving forward on this critical
22 issue even as the federal government tries to roll us
23 backwards. Thank you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
25 Barron.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Madam
3 Public Advocate. I just wanted to add my voice to
4 those who have expressed their condolences and
5 offered their prayers to the victims of this horrible
6 shooting, their families and we just pray that they
7 will be comforted as they go through this difficult
8 time. And I also want to say that I've been asked to
9 remind people that at 5:30 this afternoon we're going
10 to have a fantastic program, and pay tribute some of
11 the heroes that exist among us in our communities in
12 terms of what their contributions have been, and I do
13 also want to say that as my colleague has noted, the
14 bench trial that was held for the killing of Deborah
15 Danner resulted in the judge finding that sergeant
16 not guilty. And, I say that as long as officers who
17 kill people get away and are not convicted, there is
18 always going to be that element and that undertone of
19 not trusting the officers that are charged with
20 protecting us because they are not protecting us.
21 They are violating the rules, they're violating their
22 training. There's contradictory evidence that's
23 presented that says that they did such, but yet and
24 still they are not convicted. They get away with
25 murder, and it's an issue that repeats itself over,

2 and over and over, and we've got to make sure that we
3 continue to fight, and that we continue to raise the
4 issue of a justice system that does not bring justice
5 to victims of police violence. And, there was one
6 other thing. I think I said you're invited to be
7 with us this afternoon. We hope that you'll all
8 come. Thank you.

9 ALBERT JOHNSON: Thank you. Council
10 Member Yeger.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Madam
12 President. Madam Public Advocate. Sorry. I-I wish
13 to add my voice as well to my colleagues who spoke
14 about what happened in Florida. Council Member
15 Rodriguez and Council Member Perkins and my brother
16 from Brooklyn Council Member Williams were outside
17 this building earlier today speaking about it, and I
18 let go a little bit of what I said earlier. I, too,
19 am a parent, and I can't possibly imagine the feeling
20 of your child leaving to school in the morning, and
21 not knowing whether or not he's going to come home.
22 But for the grace of God, our children were not in
23 that building because we're here in a city that has
24 sensible gun laws. There is no reason that I can
25 possibly fathom that I understand why a private

2 citizen not in law enforcement, they're not in the
3 military should have the ability to pick up an
4 assault weapon in this country legally. It is—it is
5 simply an unfathomable concept for me whether you are
6 a strong Second Amendment proponent or whether you
7 think nobody should ever have a gun any time, it—
8 there can't be a place where in America we think it's
9 okay that people are able to buy an assault weapon,
10 but that's the America we have, and that's because of
11 the Congress, and that's because of the president.
12 And, there's very little we can do here in this
13 Council other than be sad, offer our prayers, you
14 know, hug a child tonight, hug each other here. But
15 what we do know is that this problem is from
16 Washington, and it is a cancer on our country created
17 by people in Washington who just don't care.
18 Whatever reason we attributed to them whether it's
19 because of its political contributions or it's
20 because they come from a place in America where it's
21 okay to carry a gun, but it makes no sense. And we
22 have to continue doing what we're doing, and people
23 here have been doing it for far longer than I have.
24 [bell] Thank you, Madam President.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
3 Council Member Diaz.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Thank you, Madam
5 President. What happened in Florida affects all of
6 us. I hear people here today talking about prayer
7 and saying shut up. You know, the nation we could
8 pass all the laws that we—that we could pass and that
9 is good, and there should be laws. But ladies and
10 gentlemen, let me assure you that it is not the gun
11 the one that kills. It is the evil in people's
12 heart, and we should pass laws, and laws should be
13 there to prevent whatever, but ladies and gentlemen,
14 don't ever remember—don't ever forget that the evil
15 in people's hearts there's no one, there is no
16 president, there is no human being that could take
17 that evil out. That evil is the only way that that
18 even comes out is with the power of prayer. I know
19 you don't believe in the power of prayer. I know you
20 don't—sometimes you don't believe, and you might be
21 laughing at what I said, but ladies—ladies and
22 gentlemen, I'm pressing all of you believe me, the
23 only thing that could help is the power of prayers.
24 Like in Jesus they did the Bible always. We don't
25 believe in anybody, and then we come here, oh, they

2 pass laws, they come here and pass all the laws you
3 want, and I assure you the only thing that could help
4 to take the evil out of people's hearts is the power
5 of prayer. You don't have to agree with me, but even
6 though you do not agree with me, I do believe in the
7 prayer, the power of prayer. Thank you very much,
8 Madam. [bell]

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
10 King.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you Madam
12 Public Advocate. Happy Purim to my Jewish brothers,
13 and for those who celebrate the Lunar New Year,
14 enjoy. I rise today to just offer my condolences to
15 the families in Florida, and we are going through a
16 terrible ordeal, but as well as we are here in the
17 Bronx again, we insisted then as murder will set free
18 again. I remind us again that in November 2016, we
19 passed a resolution calling on Congress to amend the
20 United States Constitution, which clearly stated that
21 the Black at that time was consider three-fifths of a
22 human being. We've also designated March 5th Three-
23 fifths Clause Awareness Day, which is coming up on us
24 in a couple of weeks. Not only do I urge us to be in
25 the room at the National-National Black Theater that

2 evening, but being there to hear the conversation
3 that's going to take place, which is there are
4 reasons that a Deborah Danner gets killed, and a
5 murderer goes off. There's reason that the injustice
6 and fairness—unfairness that happens in this country.
7 And, sometimes while we pass legislation in this
8 body, sometimes we forget the root of all evil, which
9 our good Council Member Reverend Diaz just mentioned
10 because prayer means so much to us all. And when
11 we're outside of these walls and halls and even when
12 we start the day, we offer up prayers and words of
13 inspiration, and then we forget that moment when got
14 to go through trials and tribulations. So, I say to
15 us all, I remind us all our history has been such as
16 that injustice and bigotry lends to the country and
17 moves this country each and every day. Forty-five is
18 an example of it, but what are we going to do in the
19 city of New York? When do we stand up and fight and
20 stand together to fight the causes of injustice and
21 bigotry. So, to the Danner family, to all those in
22 Florida, I offer my condolences and support, and my
23 daddy and my mama raised me to be a gentleman and a
24 happy person in the spirit love. It's put happiness
25 in my heart. If I have offended anybody by being

2 happy in this place, I will pray for you because God
3 in charge. With that being said, blessings and
4 prayers to each and every one of us. God bless.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And lastly,
6 Council Member Rodriguez.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I pray
8 everyday hoping that our President open his heart and
9 stop the message of hate that has spread throughout
10 the whole nation. The hate that has a role in the
11 attack that took the lives away of those beautiful
12 lives in Florida. Eighteen shootings is too much,
13 and I believe with the Reverend—as the Reverend said
14 that as a person of faith, we have to keep praying,
15 but at the same time we also have to be proud and
16 redefining our American bills buy-in for immigrants.
17 The Americans that this President and the Right Wing
18 of this nation is trying to take it backwards. I
19 think that the shooting that happened yesterday is
20 also a reminder to our city: Let's be prepared.
21 Just a matter of time when the black market that is
22 selling those weapons throughout the nation are also
23 coming to our city. We have so many young people
24 dealing with mental health issues with enough social
25 workers, guidance counselors, and psychology in our

2 schools. I don't want to advocate to change our
3 schools as a state police in our city, but also I
4 think it is time for our city to put together a plan
5 on improving safety and advocating for a small
6 detector—a small detector in our—in our schools, but
7 I'm pretty sure that every single private school they
8 send the letter or email or test today to the parents
9 because today there's 1.1 million students discussing
10 what happened in Florida. I'm not too sure that our
11 parents in New York City public schools got a letter
12 [bell] encouraging the parents to be part of this
13 conversation and offering support on how to guiding
14 this conversation.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: It is an amended
16 tally with regards to Land Use 7 and accompanying
17 Resolution 194. It was adopted by a vote of 36 in
18 the affirmative and 7 in the negative, and now to
19 close, the Speaker Corey Johnson.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I want to thank
21 everyone for being here, of course, two days in a row
22 for stated meetings. Again, I wish everyone a nice
23 holiday weekend. I hope to see many of you in Albany
24 at BLAC weekend, and I want to just flag for folks
25 that our Preliminary Budget hearings on the Mayor's

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

55

2 Preliminary Budget begin in the beginning of March.

3 That schedule is attached to today's agenda. It can

4 also be found on the Council's website. This meeting

5 is now adjourned. [gavel]

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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 February 27, 2018