

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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October 7, 2013
Start: 2:15 p.m.
Recess: 2:41 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,
14th Fl.

B E F O R E:

JAMES VACCA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Gale A. Brewer
Daniel R. Garodnick
David G. Greenfield
Vincent M. Ignizio
Peter A. Koo
G. Oliver Koppell
Darlene Mealy
Deborah L. Rose
Eric A. Ulrich
James G. Van Bramer
James S. Oddo

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Let me know, gentlemen behind the media; can I start? We start on time; that's the way we should run, on time. Okay, ready?

Good afternoon; my name is James Vacca and I'm Chair of the Committee on Transportation. Today we're here to vote on Intro 1049 of 2013, introduced by my colleagues in the Staten Island Delegation, Council Member Oddo, Council Member Ignizio and Council Member Rose.

This bill would expand service for the Staten Island ferry to operate every half-hour from 7 a.m. until 2 a.m. on weekends, effective in six months unless staffing levels at that time do not permit it. Regardless, this change must take place within 18 months of the bill's enactment. It would also require that the service for the ferry be expanded to every half-hour at all times by May 1st, 2015 unless an extensive report from DOT determines that it is not economically feasible. If it is not, the DOT must revisit this determination every two years.

A bill of this kind has been long in coming; it's been many years since service has been

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2 amended to account for the increase in demand in
3 ridership. As a Council Member who represents
4 communities that are underserved by public
5 transportation, I not only understand, but I support
6 this legislation.

7 While the original bill called for full
8 half-hour service 24/7, the amended version of the
9 bill strikes an important compromise, while at its
10 heart recognizing the necessity of half-hour service
11 24/7.

12 Instead of ferries arriving every half-
13 hour until 7 p.m. on weekends, half-hour service
14 would be extended to 2 a.m.; that's seven extra trips
15 to accommodate commuters and tourists alike. It
16 would also codify that the DOT must review the
17 feasibility of full service in the future, ensuring
18 that future Staten Island Council Members do not have
19 to revisit this type of negotiation.

20 I wanna thank my colleagues in the Staten
21 Island Delegation, the Transportation Committee staff
22 and the administration for working hard on this bill.
23 With that said I want to turn it over to my
24 colleagues; let me first turn it over to Minority
25 Leader, James Oddo.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Thank you, Mr.

3 Chairman; I appreciate your time and the Committee's
4 time and the support on this bill; I don't think it's
5 hyperbole to say that enacting this legislation is a
6 pivotal juncture in shaping Staten Island's future; I
7 don't believe it's an exaggeration to say that this
8 legislation is vital to the collective effort to
9 revitalize and improve the North Shore of Staten
10 Island; it is a huge win for Staten Island commuters,
11 for our residents and the future borough.

12 Within six months we will improve service
13 on the weekends and by establishing a date certain
14 where we will have 24/7 of 30-minute service is a
15 critical, critical message to send to those folks on
16 the sidelines waiting to invest in the North Shore.

17 So I wanna thank my colleagues in the
18 Staten Island Delegation, Council Member Ignizio and
19 Councilwoman Rose for the united effort. I wanna
20 thank the 40-plus colleagues who co-sponsored the
21 bill. I want to thank folks who worked on it, Laura
22 Popa, Lyle Frank, Molly Murphy... I'm gonna
23 mispronounce your name... how do I say it, Gafar
24 [phonetic]?

25 MALE VOICE: Yeah.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes. Thank you,
3 thank you so much, Jonathan Masserano [phonetic]; I'd
4 like to thank my counsel, Chris DeCicco. I would
5 like to also thank Nicholas and Rashenda [phonetic]
6 from the St. George Civic Association, the Ferry
7 Riders Committee, who came to my office several
8 months ago, which really was the impetus to starting
9 this fight all over again. I would like to thank the
10 Chairman and two people lastly, one was our former
11 colleague, former Councilman and Congressman, Mike
12 McMahon who started this fight initially many years
13 ago; we took his bill as our guide; I appreciate his
14 support throughout this. And lastly, I'd like to
15 thank Speaker Quinn, whose legacy on Staten Island
16 grows with enacting this bill; she has been a
17 wonderful friend, not only to me, but to our borough
18 and her tenure ends on December 31st, but the impact
19 she has had on our community will certainly outlive
20 that and I wanna thank her on the record. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, Council
22 Member Oddo. Council Member Ignizio.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you very
24 much, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to thank the great
25 Minority Leader, Jimmy Oddo, who is the quarterback

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2 of this bill and has done a great job working with
3 both the administration and the Council in ensuring
4 its passage.

5 This ferry proposal, the taxpayers ought
6 not look at it as a cost, but an investment into
7 Staten Island, which will in turn pay dividends and
8 economic activity back to the tax rolls. We are
9 seeing projects in the neighborhood of a billion
10 dollars directly adjacent to the ferry project coming
11 down the pike and that will pay back tenfold what the
12 taxpayers are going to be allocating in a terms of
13 enhanced ferry service. Great job by Jimmy Oddo and
14 we appreciate it; I know Staten Island will and this
15 is a great bill for you to pass, particularly as you
16 go off to greener pastures in Borough Hall and it's a
17 thankful... I wanna say my... give my thanks to the
18 Speaker, who, you know, when Jimmy, myself and Debi
19 turned around, as usual she was there standing with
20 us, standing by us and fighting for our borough's
21 equity that we would have one borough, one city and
22 we would have a universal transportation plan that
23 stays open 24/7. The city that never sleeps has
24 crossed the borders into Staten Island and we thank

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2 her and the administration for supporting the bill.
3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. Without
5 further comments I... we now welcome Council Member
6 Ulrich; let me introduce the other members that are
7 here, Council Member Garodnick, Council Member Koo,
8 Council Member Mealy, Gale Brewer, myself, Chair
9 Vacca, Council Member Oddo, Council Member Ignizio,
10 Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer to my left.

11 Okay, I will now ask the clerk to call
12 the roll, hearing no other speakers; please proceed.

13 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,
14 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on
15 Transportation. Council Member Vacca.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Vote aye and I urge
17 all members to vote aye.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I vote aye. Now
20 I can get to Staten Island, I can get off of Staten
21 Island and it's very... this is really exciting; this
22 is a real bill, real consequences, positively, for
23 all New Yorkers, not just Staten Island; this is
24 really exciting. The only request is, down the line
25 I would like to have a beer garden, when you get off...

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Done.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: and not just a
4 ferris wheel and shopping, I... [interpose]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Is the first round
6 on you, Gale; I just want to...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: 'Cause my husband
8 suggests that you put in a beer garden and not just
9 shopping and the ferris wheel; I think it's a great
10 idea; I will... [interpose]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Mr. Chairman, could
12 we get clarity on whether the first round is on Gale,
13 I ju...

14 [laughter]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The first round
16 can be on me, but I haven't seen a beer garden...
17 [crosstalk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I... okay, alright.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I think getting
20 clarity would get us into trouble, so why don't we
21 just leave at that... [interpose]

22 [laughter]

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank you, I think,
24 Gale.

25 [laughter]

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Who's next; I
3 lost track of this whole thing? Mr. Clerk?

4 WILLIAM MARTIN: Garodnick.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

6 WILLIAM MARTIN: Mealy.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye and I
8 would love to be put on this legislation.

9 [background comments]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN: Rose.

12 [background comment]

13 [laughter]

14 WILLIAM MARTIN: Van Bramer.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

16 WILLIAM MARTIN: Ignizio.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I vote yes.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN: Ulrich.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I vote aye and I
20 ask that I be added as a co-sponsor.

21 [background comment]

22 WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote of 8 in the
23 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions;
24 the item has been adopted. Members, please sign
25 Committee Report. Thank you.

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2 [background comment]

3 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Alright, thank you
4 all. For the record, I will leave the hearing open
5 until 2:40; we will leave the record open until that
6 time for members who have yet to arrive I'm sure who
7 would wanna cast their vote... [interpose]

8 [background comments]

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: This meeting is
10 temporarily adjourned.

11 [gavel]

12 [background comment]

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.

14 [background comments]

15 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council Member
16 Koppell has arrived; how do you vote Council Member
17 Koppell?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council Member
20 Koppell votes yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Yes.

22 WILLIAM MARTIN: Vote now stands at 9 in
23 the affirmative.

24 [background comments]

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: The most wonderful,
3 wonderful vote is here, dynamic, dynamic person.
4 Alright, now I call upon Council Member Rose.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye, aye, aye, aye,
6 aye. I am so happy, aye. Thank you, aye. Thank
7 you.

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, Council
9 Member Rose. Aye, aye, aye, as they say.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye, aye, yeah.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN: Vote now stands at 10.

12 [background comments]

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: ...member, so I will
14 hold it open till 2:45.

15 [beep]

16 WILLIAM MARTIN: Council Mem... Council
17 Member Greenfield.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Vote aye.

19 WILLIAM MARTIN: Vote now stands at 11 in
20 the affirmative. Final vote in Committee on
21 Transportation stands at 11 in the affirmative, 0 in
22 the negative and no abstentions.

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24

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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 _____ October 19, 2013 _____