

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

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March 11, 2013
Start: 12:17 p.m.
Recess: 12:26 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: ERIC MARTIN DILAN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Diana Reyna
Matthew Eugene
Andy King
Margaret Chin
Ruben Wills
Peter Koo
Letitia James

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

Diana Reyna
Chairperson
Small Business

Rafael Perez
Position
Organization

Matthew Eugene
Council Member
Veterans

Andy King
Council Member
Organization

Margaret Chin
Council Member
Lower Manhattan Redevelopment

Ruben Wills
Council Member
Organization

Peter Koo
Council Member
Organization

Letitia James
Council Member
Sanitation & Solid Waste Management

Kevin Pin
Committee Clerk
Organization

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2 RAFAEL PEREZ: For the Committee on
3 Small Business, today's date is March 11, 2013.
4 The meeting is being recorded by Rafael Perez
5 [phonetic].

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Good morning.
7 This is the Committee on Small Businesses. Today
8 is March 11th, and we're happy to have this hearing
9 on a pre-considered introduction for relief for
10 Hurricane Sandy victims, small businesses that are
11 trying their very hardest and best to get back
12 into our economy, rebuilding during this recovery
13 effort. I'd like to take this opportunity to
14 thank my co-sponsor, Council Member Chin, who, in
15 conjunction with the Mayor's office, had brought
16 this bill with me to be able to have it pre-
17 considered. It has been on the fast track ever
18 since. Today, in passing this bill, as we vote
19 for it, this will allow business owners to apply
20 for waivers for certain fees for permits,
21 licenses, and inspections they might have incurred
22 in the course of rebuilding. While these fees may
23 be significantly less than the cost of the
24 renovations themselves, they can add up to
25 hundreds, and even thousands of dollars. This

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2 bill would not waive the regulatory requirements
3 that exist to protect public safety and consumers,
4 but it will reduce the financial burden we place
5 on entrepreneurs who are putting everything they
6 have to restoring this city to what it was before
7 Hurricane Sandy hit. I would like to especially
8 thank the Mayor's office of Tucumbo Chabawale
9 [phonetic], the administration's Chief Business
10 Operations Officer, for his effort in making sure
11 that we negotiated a bill that makes most sense
12 and be able to gather what would be most
13 beneficial to the small business community. I
14 would also like to acknowledge the members of the
15 Committee who are present here today, Dr. Matthew
16 Eugene, Council Member Andy King, Council Member
17 Margaret Chin, and to my right, I have Council
18 Member Ruben Wills and Council Member Peter Koo,
19 and I'd like to just truly thank the staff of this
20 committee, Jeffrey Compana [phonetic], I always
21 Latino-ize him, the Council to this committee, and
22 Faith Corbett, our Policy Analyst, and their
23 director, Tearza Nasar [phonetic], without whom we
24 would not be able to get this far so quickly, and
25 so we understand the dire need our small

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2 businesses have in order to see better days ahead
3 of them, and I wanted to just take this
4 opportunity to give Council Member Chin a moment
5 to express her appreciation as well.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
7 Chairwoman. I'm glad to be here today to vote in
8 favor of the pre-considered intro that will codify
9 the Mayor's executive order to waive fees relating
10 to various permits, inspection, and applications
11 for businesses recovering from damage caused by
12 Hurricane Sandy. I would like to thank Council
13 Member Reyna for co-sponsoring this bill, and all
14 the legislative staff who worked on this
15 legislation, Tearza Nasar and Jeff Compana and
16 Faith Corbett. This legislation is especially
17 meaningful to small business in areas of my
18 district, like the South Street Seaport, who saw
19 their properties completely flooded and destroyed
20 by Hurricane Sandy. These businesses are
21 rebuilding from the ground up, and to the tune of
22 hundreds of thousands of dollars. I'm
23 particularly pleased that this legislation extends
24 the fee waiver to businesses that had to relocate
25 locally, or share space with their neighbors. The

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2 drive to reopen and rebuild that these small
3 business owners have demonstrated, despite not
4 having a storefront to operate out of, deserve to
5 be rewarded. For example, in my district, the
6 Salty Paw, a pet grooming business at the seaport,
7 is currently out of a nearby vet office until
8 their storefront is habitable again. Likewise, -
9 - , a sushi restaurant on - - , have made a deal
10 with a nearby café, to use their kitchen to fill
11 out take-out orders in the evening. Businesses
12 like this, who have remained in the neighborhood,
13 but cannot operate out of their original
14 storefront, have been excluded from almost all
15 grants and loan programs post-Sandy. I believe
16 that the provision included in this legislation
17 that extends fee waivers to businesses that have
18 relocated, is essential to ensuring that all of
19 our small businesses can rebuild and prosper, so I
20 thank you, and I urge all my colleagues to vote
21 yes on this legislation. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: At this moment,
23 I'd like to ask my colleagues if anyone from the
24 committee has any further comments? No? Okay,
25 yes? Council Member King?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you,
3 Madam Chair, and I just want to give thanks and
4 kudos to you and Council Member Chin and the
5 Mayor's office for making sure that we're able to
6 get this passed and push as fast as possible for
7 the people of New York. Today, this signifies
8 that we put the people first to actually get some
9 things done in an orderly time, what we got hired
10 to do, so thank you again, and I will be voting on
11 it today.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Council Member
13 Eugene?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you
15 very much. Let me first and foremost commend and
16 congratulate also Madam Chair, and also Council
17 Member Chin and all of my colleagues who work
18 hard, and also do work hard to make this decision
19 possible, the one we are going to pass this
20 morning. We all know that the small businesses,
21 they are the backbone of the economy. They are so
22 important to the economy of the United States. It
23 is very important, in this moment of difficulty,
24 that we, from the City of New York, we do
25 everything possible to help them overcome this

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2 very difficult moment. It is good for New York,
3 good for the economy, good for the United States.
4 I think this is the right thing to do. I commend
5 you for that, and I will vote yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you so
7 much. I just want to, before we move on to a
8 vote, I want to share the additional ancillary
9 success of our Hurricane Sandy--in relationship to
10 small businesses, that has come out of this
11 hearing that we had previous to today's date, we
12 have been joined by Council Member James. The
13 City Council, in conjunction with the Department
14 of Small Business Services and New York State
15 Department of Financial Services will co-host
16 insurance seminars for small business owner in
17 every business recovery zone in the city, so I
18 urge every small business who is interested to
19 attend. The Department of Financial Services,
20 Insurance Mobile, will be in the Seaport area next
21 Tuesday, March 12th, from 9:00 A. M. to 5:00 P. M.
22 Again, that's March 12th, from 9:00 A. M. to 5:00
23 P. M. They will be in front of the old Fulton
24 Market stalls on South Street, between Fulton and
25 Beakman, so I encourage everyone who has insurance

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2 issues, as a small business, to go and attend
3 March 12th, Tuesday, from 9:00 A. M. to 5:00 P. M.,
4 in the Fulton Market Stalls on South Street.
5 Without further ado, I'd like to call a vote.

6 KEVIN PIN: Kevin Pin, Committee
7 Clerk, roll calling the Committee on Small
8 Business. Council Member Reyna?

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I vote aye, and
10 I'd like to also thank Amy Stokes, who watched
11 over making sure that our fiscal impact statement
12 was here in time, thank you.

13 KEVIN PIN: James?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Aye.

15 KEVIN PIN: Eugene?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Aye.

17 KEVIN PIN: Chin?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

19 KEVIN PIN: Koo?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

21 KEVIN PIN: Wills?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Yes, can I
23 take a quick second to explain my vote?

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Absolutely.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Madam Chair,

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2 you and Council Member Chin have done a tremendous
3 job on this bill. Your leadership is more than
4 noteworthy. In the last hearing, I had some
5 apprehensions and elements I thought may have left
6 out a few small business issues, but through your
7 line of questioning and responses given, I am now
8 proud to vote aye on this bill. Thank you.

9 KEVIN PIN: King?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Aye.

11 KEVIN PIN: By a vote of seven in
12 the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
13 abstention, the item has been adopted. Members,
14 please sign the committee report.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: This hearing is
16 adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Ben Knowlton, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Knowlton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" at the beginning.

Date 3/25/13