

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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May 22, 2013

Start: 11:10 a.m.

Recess: 11:22 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
JOEL RIVERA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Gale A. Brewer
Council Member Elizabeth S. Crowley
Council Member Inez E. Dickens
Council Member Erik Martin Dilan
Council Member Lewis A. Fidler
Council Member Vincent J. Gentile
Council Member Robert Jackson
Council Member Karen Koslowitz
Council Member Darlene Mealy
Council Member James S. Oddo
Council Member Christine C. Quinn
Council Member Diana Reyna
Council Member James Vacca
Council Member Albert Vann

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

Erika Larsen
Appointee
New York City Youth Board

[gavel, background noise]

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Joel Rivera, I Chair the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections. Before we begin, let me introduce my colleagues who are here with us today. To my left, we have Council Member Inez Dickens, and we have Council Member Jimmy Oddo, Council Member Diana Reyna is joining us, and we have Council Member Karen Koslowitz; to my right we have Council Member Robert Jackson, Council Member Jimmy Vacca, Council Member Darlene Mealy's joining us, as well; we have Council Member Lew Fidler and Council Member Gale Brewer is here with us, also. I would also like to introduce new to the Committee is Amatula Booth [phonetic] who is going to be my right hand person and making sure that I know exactly what I'm saying. So, everyone, welcome Amatula to the Committee.

[applause, background comments] So, before us today we have one candidate for review. Her name is Erika Larsen, she is a resident of Staten Island. She is being recommended by the Council to, by the Council to the Mayor for appointment as

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2 a member of the Youth Board. If appointed, Ms.
3 Larsen will serve for an undefined term. First
4 let me briefly describe the functions of the Youth
5 Board. The Youth Board serves as an advisory body
6 to the Commissioner of the Department of Youth and
7 Community Development, with the respect to the
8 development of programs and policies relating to
9 the youth in New York City. The Board consists of
10 28 members appointed by the Mayor, 14 of whom are
11 appointed upon recommendations by the Council.
12 The Board must be represented, representative of
13 the community and include person representing the
14 areas of social services, healthcare, education,
15 business, industry and labor. The Board meets
16 quarterly and members serve without compensation.
17 Welcome, Ms. Larsen, will you please raise your
18 right hand to be sworn in?

19 FEMALE VOICE: Do you swear or
20 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, nothing
21 but the truth, so help you?

22 ERIKA LARSEN: [response inaudible]

23 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Great. Before
24 we have you state your testimony, we've been
25 joined by Council Member Al Vann, as well. Do you

1
2 have any testimony you'd like to provide.

3 ERIKA LARSEN: [off mic] Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Perfect. Just
5 state your name for the record and you may begin.

6 ERIKA LARSEN: Erika Larsen. First
7 I would like to thank Chair Rivera and the
8 Committee for considering my appointment. And I
9 would like to thank Council Member Gale Brewer for
10 suggesting that I apply for this position, for all
11 of your support. I would also like to thank
12 Council Member Oddo for his support and it was a
13 pleasure to meet you at Monsignor Farrell High
14 School on Staten Island a few weeks ago. Oh,
15 thanks. I'm so grateful to be here today and to
16 have this opportunity. I learned about this
17 opportunity through an internship with Council
18 Member Gale Brewer, and she suggested that I apply
19 for the position. And since then, I've reviewed
20 the minutes of previous board meetings, looked at
21 the budgets of the DYCD, and some of the many
22 youth programs offered by New York City. And one
23 of the major reasons that I'm so drawn to the
24 Youth Board is that I feel that the Board does
25 incredible things to promote the success and

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2 wellbeing of New York City's youth. And I would
3 really welcome the opportunity to bring a youth's
4 perspective to the Board. I believe I can lend a
5 unique perspective as I'm actively engaged with
6 young people every day. And I'm currently a
7 student in the CUNY system at the MacAulay Honors
8 College at Hunter, —and many of my classmates grew
9 up participating in DYCD programs. So, I would
10 look forward to discussing ideas with my
11 classmates, as well as my professors at CUNY.
12 I've had many experiences leading youth run
13 organizations on Staten Island, so I've served as
14 the Vice President of the Youth Board for the
15 Staten Island Heart Society, I led a New York
16 State championship winning marching band, and I
17 was also part of running the Muscular Dystrophy
18 Association Super Dance, which was the largest
19 student led fundraiser for MDA, and it raised over
20 \$200,000 in nine months. I've enjoyed
21 opportunities working with my peers and I have
22 valued the experiences gained from determining how
23 we can we improve organizations and ensure that
24 they're run as efficiently as possible. And I'm
25 really concerned about the extraordinary

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2 challenges that today's youth face. So, issues
3 such as homelessness and prostitution, cyber-
4 bullying and just a general lack of awareness
5 about the risks of unsafe sexual activity; and
6 just real, a lack of good role models. And I
7 would really embrace the opportunity to be a part
8 of a board that is dedicated to resolving these
9 issues in New York City.

10 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Great, thank
11 you very much. We've also been joined by Council
12 Member Vincent Gentile. I'm going to first call
13 on Council Member Gale Brewer to make some
14 statements.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you
16 very much, Mr. Chair. It is an honor to be here
17 with Erika Larsen, who was an intern in our
18 office. As I think many of you know, we have
19 many, many interns, and very few take the
20 opportunity to go for a position like this, even
21 though it's offered. I think that the Youth
22 Board, if she's confirmed, will be very fortunate.
23 In our office, Erika has stood out, obviously as
24 students who both Hunter and Macaulay are ones,
25 are ones that have been selected because of their

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2 academic achievements, and to a certain extent
3 their outside efforts. But you can be a Macaulay
4 Hunter student and still not rise to the level of
5 importance that Erika Larsen has risen to in our
6 office. She is an extraordinary writer, she's
7 somebody who is a leader among other staff and
8 interns, and she's somebody who does that extra
9 mile that I think so many individuals perhaps want
10 to but don't actually accomplish. So, I am beyond
11 delighted, a) that she's working in our office, b)
12 that she could be on the Youth Board, and c) that
13 she lives in Council Member Jimmy Oddo's district.
14 Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: With that
16 being said, we'll turn it over to our Minority
17 Leader, Council Member Jimmy Oddo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman, welcome, Erika. How did you find
20 out about the internship? How did you end up
21 interning for Council Member Brewer.

22 [background comment, laughter]

23 ERIKA LARSEN: So [laughs] so I
24 actually found out through the Macaulay Honors
25 College, but so my advisor for the Macaulay Honors

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2 College really encouraged me to apply because I'm
3 very interested in law, but I had never really
4 looked into City government before this past fall.
5 So it's been a really wonderful opportunity.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Well, you
7 should really take a moment and find that advisor
8 and thank him or her.

9 ERIKA LARSEN: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Because you
11 could not have chosen a better public servant than
12 Council Member Brewer. And I want to tell a quick
13 story. I took a ride just to clear my head, and
14 my girlfriend and I took a ride, and we ended up
15 in some little restaurant on a Saturday afternoon
16 in Middletown, New York. And there was a couple
17 of senior citizens at the other table, and I
18 couldn't help but overhear a story and they were
19 talking about a democratic club in the 1970s, and
20 they were talking about Governor Kerry and this
21 woman's name. And how one was supporting one over
22 the other. And I came back to City Hall, and I
23 said the one person who might know about this
24 person is Council Member Brewer. Not only did she
25 recognize the name right away, she ended up

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2 calling that person. Who was the lady?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Marianne
4 Krupsack [phonetic].

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Marianne
6 Krupsack. Only Gale Brewer would know immediately
7 it was Marianne Krupsack, and have Marianne
8 Krupsack's phone number. So, she is, again, she
9 is a great role model, and I'm sure you've learned
10 a lot. And I just want to thank you because you
11 cast Staten Island in a very positive light. And
12 all of us across the five boroughs tend to focus
13 on the negative too often when it comes to our
14 young people. And particularly in our borough,
15 you know we have lots of problems, particularly
16 with prescription drugs. So, when we have a young
17 person who gets it and is a role model like you
18 are, we ought to celebrate you. So, I commend you
19 for stepping forward and being a leader.

20 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very
21 much, Council Member. Any other Council Member?
22 Robert Jackson?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Well,
24 thank you. First, let me congratulate you for
25 willing to step forward in order to play a huge

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2 role in our City, as a youth leader. And
3 congratulating our colleague, Gale Brewer, who has
4 many, many interns working in her office. And I
5 just wanted to give you one piece of advice, which
6 I tell a lot of people: no matter what
7 organization or group that you're going to belong
8 to, know the rules that govern it, either the
9 constitution, the bylaws or the rules and
10 regulations, in order so that if there's any
11 changes that are going to be made, then you will
12 know how to make the changes based on knowledge
13 and strength of the rules and regulations that
14 governs it. And not from a position of you don't
15 know, and you're going along with somebody because
16 they say so. Have knowledge yourself. That's
17 extremely important in the process. If not, you
18 will be used by others. And one of the things you
19 do not want to be is used by others, you want to
20 be able to talk from a position of knowledge and
21 strength, representing the young people like
22 you've said you have. Thank you very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you.
24 Any other statements or questions? We've been
25 joined by Council Member Eric Dilan. Seeing no

2 others, I want to congratulate you. I believe
3 with those two astounding recommendations, you
4 should be fine in a vote. At this point in time,
5 the Chair recommends an aye vote and will the--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Mr. Chair,
7 I'm sorry, I don't know if she has relatives and
8 families here, I would like to know that. It
9 seems as though she does, so if, do you mind if I
10 inquire?

11 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Go right
12 ahead.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Do we have
14 family or friends that are here witnessing you
15 being sworn in and voted on today.

16 ERIKA LARSEN: I do. My
17 grandparents and my parents and my uncle and my
18 friend, all came to support me today.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: So your
20 family is here.

21 ERIKA LARSEN: Yeah, my family is
22 here to support me.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:
24 Congratulations, thank you.

25 ERIKA LARSEN: Thank you so much.

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COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS 13

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Well, the Chair recommends and aye vote, and will the Clerk please call the roll?

CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on Rules. Council Member Rivera.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I vote aye and congratulations.

CLERK: Dilan.

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: I have to think about this, I don't really like Gale Brewer or Jimmy Oddo. [laughter] So I don't know what to do. Naw, they happen to be two of my favorite people here, and I vote, I vote aye, yeah.

[laughs]

CLERK: Fidler.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: [off mic]
Aye.

CLERK: Jackson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye.

CLERK: Gentile.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: [off mic]
Aye.

CLERK: Dickens.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic]

3 Congratulations - -

4 CLERK: Vacca.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: [off mic]

6 Aye and congratulations.

7 CLERK: Crowley.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [off mic]

9 Aye and congratulations.

10 CLERK: Koslowitz.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye and
12 congratulations.

13 CLERK: Oddo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: [off mic]

15 Yes.

16 CLERK: By a vote of ten in the
17 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
18 abstentions, item's adopted. Members, please sign
19 the Committee report. Thank you.

20 [pause, background noise]

21 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA:

22 Congratulations. We're going to keep the vote
23 open for other members who will be coming up to
24 vote, as well.

25 [pause]

2 CLERK: Council Member Vann.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: I vote aye, I
4 vote aye.

5 CLERK: Current vote in the
6 Committee on Rules is now at 11 in the
7 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
8 abstentions.

9 [pause]

10 CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

11 SPEAKER QUINN: Aye.

12 CLERK: Final vote on the Committee
13 on Rules is 12 in affirmative, zero in the
14 negative and no abstentions. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: This concludes
16 the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.
17 Thank you.

18 SPEAKER QUINN: Yay! Yay!

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG 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 cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed word "Signature".

Date June 6, 2013