

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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February 5, 2016

Start: 10:29

Recess: 11:18

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: MARK LEVINE
Acting Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Inez E. Dickens
Daniel R. Garodnick
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Margaret S. Chin
Deborah L. Rose
Jumaane D. Williams
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Mark Levine
Melissa Mark-Viverito
(Speaker for the Council)
Steven Matteo

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

2 [background comments]

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: All right, now we
4 can start. Good morning, everybody. We are going to
5 get underway. I'm Mark Levine. In case you are
6 confused, you did not wander into the Parks
7 Committee. I'm sitting in for Chair Lander today who
8 is out of town on previously planned travel as we
9 continuously adjourned meeting of the Committee on
10 Rules Privileges and Elections. We are joined today
11 by my colleagues on the committee Council Members
12 Chin, Dickens, Espinal, Garodnick, Matteo. [off mic]
13 Is Cornegy going to be here today? Okay, and more to
14 come. We're going to be voting today on two
15 preconsidered resolutions related to the
16 recommendations of the 2015 Quadrennial Commission.
17 The first resolution, sponsored by Council Member
18 Kallos, would eliminate all allowances also known as
19 lulus for council members who chair committees or
20 hold other leadership positions. The second
21 resolution, sponsored by the Speaker Council Member
22 Melissa Mark-Viverito would prohibit council members
23 from receiving outside earned income with some narrow
24 exceptions. At Wednesday's Joint Hearing with the
25 Committee of Government Operations, Council Member

2 Lander urged all members to vote in favor of these
3 resolutions. These are important pieces of
4 legislation that will, along with the four bills
5 being voted on in the Committee On Government
6 Operations this morning, institute important reforms
7 and will increase the transparency, effectiveness,
8 and efficiency of the city's government. Before we
9 begin, I want to thank committee staff for their work
10 on today's hearing. On the legislative side I want
11 to thank David Seitzer, Samita Dishmuk (sp?), Laurie
12 Wenn, and on the Finance side I'd like to thank James
13 Subudhi and I would also like to thank Habib Hussein
14 (sp?) from the General Council's office. If there
15 are any members of our committee. Oh, I see we've
16 been joined by the Speaker. So I'm going to pass it
17 off to you for an opening statement if you would like
18 to make one.

19 SPEAKER MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO: I would
20 like to add I think we covered everything in the--in
21 the hearing, but obviously this is a great set of
22 reforms that we're implementing. I'm glad it's
23 finally come. I know this is a conversation we've
24 been having for many years in this Council as those
25 that are in their third term along with me will

2 attest. And I'm very glad that it's being done under
3 my leadership. So I obviously encourage my
4 colleagues to vote yes, and look forward to this
5 being voted in full at the Stated Meeting. Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Thank you, Speaker,
8 and I believe Council Member Garodnick would like to
9 make a statement.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Yes. Thank
11 you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I wanted to echo
12 those thoughts, and obviously ask my colleagues to
13 support all the preconsidered resos before the Rules
14 Committee today, and also the ones before Government
15 Ops. I have the privilege of co-authoring one of
16 them with Council Members Kallos, Reynoso, Richards,
17 Cohen and Chin. That's the one that changes the
18 elected position of council member to a full-time job
19 by eliminating outside income. And I just wanted to
20 say to the Speaker's point we have come a long way.
21 Since when we first came into the Council I had asked
22 to chair a rules reform taskforce between 2006 and
23 2009, and that task force led to some changes in our
24 rules like making it easier to make amendments or
25 discharge bills from committee, and formally

2 delineating the Council's harassment and
3 discrimination policy. But the most transformative
4 rules reforms eluded us back then. Until this term,
5 the council had less appetite for changes that
6 address member item funding, and even the fundamental
7 responsibility of our jobs. SO, I want to recognize
8 Speaker Mark-Viverito for her willingness to support
9 all of these reforms. It means a lot. Our bill
10 specifically eliminates almost all outside income,
11 which removes the potential for real or perceived
12 undue influence. Ending the lulus finally is also a
13 tremendous step forward. I have objected to lulus
14 since I joined the Council in 2005, and to my wife's
15 chagrin, have declined the lulu every single year
16 because I did not believe it was the right way to
17 compensate members. And I'm pleased that the City
18 Council today is taking the step to kill the lulus.
19 For the Government Operations Committee, financial
20 disclosures also deserve to be online. It's
21 important for public officials to have to make these
22 disclosures, and when we make them, the public
23 shouldn't have to go hunting too hard to figure out
24 how to access them. These plus direction to the
25 Quadrennial Commission that future raises should be

2 prospective are important substantively, and
3 symbolically to avoid conflicts, and they strengthen
4 our elected officials' commitment to their
5 constituents and to the City. I'm very pleased we
6 are moving forward with all of them, and I thank the
7 temporary chair, the Speaker, the permanent chair,
8 and also the Chair of Government Operations. So
9 thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Thank you, Council
11 Member Garodnick. Are there any other members who
12 would like to make a comment? If not, we'll proceed
13 to the vote. I'd like to ask the Committee Clerk to
14 please call the roll.

15 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk.
16 Roll call vote Committee on Rules, Privileges and
17 Elections two preconsidered resolutions are coupled.
18 Council Member Levine.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I vote aye on
20 all.

21 CLERK: Dickens.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye on all.

23 CLERK: Garodnick.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

25 CLERK: Chin.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye on all.

3 CLERK: Espinal.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

5 CLERK: Matteo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic] Aye.

7 CLERK: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

8 SPEAKER MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO: I vote

9 aye.

10 CLERK: By a vote of 7 in the
11 affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no abstentions,
12 both items have been adopted.

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: We are going to hold
14 the vote open for about 20 minutes. Thank you
15 everybody.

16 [background comments, pause]

17 CLERK: Continuation roll call, Committee
18 on Rules, Preconsidered Introductions, Council Member
19 Williams.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I vote aye.

21 CLERK: The vote now currently stands at
22 8 in the affirmative.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: This concludes our
24 meeting of the Committee on Rules.

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2 CLERK: The final vote, Committee on
3 Rules--on Rules, Privileges and Elections now stands
4 at 8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no
5 abstentions.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay. This now
7 concludes out meeting. [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 15, 2016