

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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April 30, 2012

Start: 10:56 a.m.

Recess: 11:25 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
JOEL RIVERA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
Elizabeth S. Crowley
Inez E Dickens
Erik Martin Dilan
Lewis A. Fidler
Vincent J. Gentile
Robert Jackson
James Vacca
Albert Vann
Karen Koslowitz
James S. Oddo
Christine C. Quinn

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

Michael McSweeney
Candidate for Reappointment
City Clerk

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Good morning,
3 ladies and gentlemen. My name is Joe Rivera, and
4 I'm the chair of the Committee on Rules,
5 Privileges and Elections. Before we begin, let me
6 introduce the members who are here with us today.
7 We have Council Member Lew Fidler, Council Member
8 Liz Crowley, Council Member Robert Jackson,
9 Council Member Leroy Comrie, Council Member Karen
10 Koslowitz, and Council Member Al Vann with us.
11 We've been joined by Council Member Oliver Koppell
12 in the audience, who is here to support the
13 candidate for today, and we have others who are on
14 their way. We also have the Committee staff. We
15 have Chuck Davis. We have Emerson Sykes
16 [phonetic], Jasmine Vega [phonetic], Alicia Vassal
17 [phonetic] and Deandra Johnson [phonetic] as well.

18 Today the Rules Committee will
19 consider the reappointment by the Council of
20 Michael McSweeney as the city clerk and clerk of
21 the Council. Mr. McSweeney is a resident of
22 Queens County. If reappointed Mr. McSweeney will
23 serve for a six year term that will begin on May
24 13th, 2012 and expire on May 12th of 2018. First I
25 will briefly describe the functions of the city

1 clerk.

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3 The office and duties of the city
4 clerk and the clerk of the Council are set forth
5 in Section 48 Chapter 2 of the City Charter. The
6 Council shall appoint a clerk who shall serve a
7 six year term. The city clerk may be removed on
8 charges by a 2/3 vote of all Council Members, such
9 a decision shall be subject to judicial review.
10 The city clerk receives a salary of \$200,853 per
11 year. As a clerk of the City Council, the main
12 function of the clerk is to attest to all laws
13 enacted by the Council. The clerk also attests to
14 all legislation desired by and affecting the city
15 requiring concurrent action by state legislature.
16 The clerk of the Council is also responsible for
17 keeping the transcripts of the proceedings of the
18 Council. As a city clerk, the clerk attests to
19 leases and deeds of city property, grants
20 agreements, bonds, tax notes and other forms of
21 obligations of the city. The city clerk has
22 charge of all papers and documents of the city
23 that include executive and administrative orders
24 of the mayor, certificates of judicial
25 appointments by the mayor, oaths of office of city

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2 employees, city marshals, bonds and referendum
3 petitions. Other duties of the clerk include the
4 qualification of commissioners of deeds and the
5 certification to the Board of elections of all
6 judicial vacancies. The clerk is also the
7 custodian of the seal of the city of New York. In
8 addition, the city clerk maintains two separate
9 and important bureaus under its jurisdiction—the
10 lobbying bureau and the marriage bureau. Welcome,
11 Mr. McSweeney. Will you please raise your right
12 hand to be sworn in?

13 MALE VOICE: Do you swear or affirm
14 that you will tell the truth, the whole truth and
15 nothing but the truth?

16 MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: I do.

17 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Do you have an
18 opening statement?

19 MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: I do. Perfect.
20 So just state your name for the record, and you
21 may begin.

22 MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: Sure. My name
23 is Michael McSweeney. Chairman Rivera and members
24 of the Committee, I am honored to have the
25 privilege to serve as the city clerk and clerk of

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2 the Council and I humbly seek the opportunity to
3 serve for another term. As a lawyer with an
4 interest in constitutional law and a background in
5 government and higher education, I have worked in
6 the forefront of two important constitutional
7 issues—marriage equality and regulation of
8 lobbying. I believe that my stewardship of the
9 office, particularly since the first day of
10 marriage equality in New York City has contributed
11 to the increase in the number of couples choosing
12 to tie the knot in New York City. I believe that
13 I have played a key role in the implementation of
14 the lobbying reform act of 2006 and management of
15 a lobbying enforcement mechanism that is robust,
16 fair and beyond reproach. Having the opportunity
17 to serve as city clerk for another term would
18 enable me to carry out the anticipated
19 recommendations of the lobbying commission and
20 secure the long term success of the New York City
21 marriage and lobbying bureaus. I thank you for
22 your consideration.

23 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very
24 much. We've also been joined by Council Member
25 Inez Dickens and in the audience we have Council

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2 member Gale Brewer. Does any members of the
3 Committee have any questions for the candidates
4 today? We've also been joined by Darlene Mealy as
5 well. Seeing no questions, I would just state
6 that this - - of a book is normally held for like
7 five or six candidates, but obviously, the
8 contributions that you have given to the city of
9 New York warrants such a large book over here.
10 You've done a phenomenal job, and my suggestion is
11 to the Committee that we give an affirmative vote
12 to Mr. McSweeney. At this point, can the clerk
13 please call the roll?

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
15 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote in the Committee
16 on Rules. Council Member Rivera?

17 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I vote aye.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: Comrie?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Permission
20 to explain my vote? I just want to take the
21 opportunity to congratulate Michael on his
22 appointment and reappointment. He has done a
23 phenomenal job as city clerk. He has been able to
24 raise the level of professionalism of the city
25 clerk's office and also, has taken on some

1
2 unprecedented new responsibilities and has done
3 them with a great deal of expertise and style and
4 has raised the level of management throughout the
5 city clerk's office. So congratulations, Michael.
6 I vote aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: Fidler?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: [no audible
9 response]

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: Jackson?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Vann?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Dickens?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS:
16 Congratulations, and aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Crowley?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I vote aye
19 and congratulations [off mic].

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koslowitz?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: May I
22 excused to explain my vote? I just want to say
23 that I know Mike throughout his whole career. I
24 know him many, many years, and each job he had he
25 served well, and of course, he has done so well in

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2 the city clerk spot. I just want to say
3 congratulations, Michael, and I vote aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: Oddo?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I'd just like
6 to add my voice to thanks for a job well done,
7 Michael. We appreciate it out on Staten Island.
8 Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of nine
10 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
11 abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please
12 sign the Committee Report.

13 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA:

14 Congratulations. We also have the Speaker is on
15 her way, and she will be here momentarily. We'll
16 also leave the vote open for about thirty minutes
17 for other members who may need to come by.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
19 Vacca?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I vote aye
21 with much pleasure.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Roll call.
23 Continuation Committee on Rules. Speaker Quinn?

24 SPEAKER QUINN: I usually don't
25 talk; I usually just vote aye, which is generally

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2 a good rule to live by in the City Council, but I
3 just wanted to take a second before voting aye to
4 thank you, Mike. I think you have been not just
5 generally an outstanding city clerk and clerk for
6 the Council, but the way you and your staff
7 implemented marriage equality last July not only
8 sent a message to the entire city that this
9 government embraces everyone and treats all
10 families equally, it set a standard for the rest
11 of the country about how their governments should
12 act and treat people with the highest level of
13 respect and dignity and attention, and I know you
14 made us all proud that day, but I know Karen
15 agrees, you made Tom Manton [phonetic] very, very
16 proud that day by making the city what he always
17 hoped it would be—a place where people embraces
18 our diversity as our greatest strength, so with
19 the greatest of pride, I vote aye for the
20 reappointment of Mike McSweeney as the clerk of
21 the City Council and the clerk of the city of New
22 York.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote in the
24 Committee on Rules now stands at eleven in the
25 affirmative, zero in the negative and no

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abstentions.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
Dilan?

COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Current vote in
the Committee on Rules is now twelve in the
affirmative, zero in the negative and no
abstentions.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: roll call in the
Committee on Rules. Council Member Gentile?

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote in the
Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections is
now 13 in the affirmative, zero in the negative
and no abstentions.

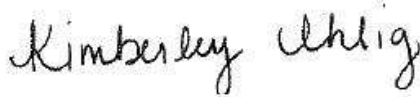
MALE VOICE: Rules is adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig 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

Handwritten signature of Kimberley Uhlig in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Date _____5/14/12_____